

Development Services Department Building Inspections Virtual Inspection Program

Purpose:

To provide a virtual inspection program that will ensure code requirements are met while limiting the need for site visits by inspection staff.

Definitions:

Approved: Being of the general equivalence to an on-site inspection and acceptable to the building official

Videographer: For electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits, this shall be the licensed tradesperson listed on the permit or their appointed designee. For building permits, this shall be the general contractor listed on the permit, the property owner, or their appointed designee.

Eligibility:

ONLY the following inspections are approved for the Virtual Inspection Program:

Live video-only inspections:

- Like-for-like water heater change-outs with no gas system modifications
- Like-for-like HVAC system change-outs with no gas system modifications
- All inspections performed in the [Development Services Change-Out Program](#)
- All electrical energized inspections
- Like-for-like window replacement for up to five windows

Live video or still photo inspections:

- Mechanical inspection for pre-assembled walk-in coolers
- Antennae towers, excluding electrical services
- Re-inspections not to exceed 3 total deficiencies per trade or per grouped inspection
- Siding and door replacement
- Electrical elevated slabs above the second floor that are typical and do not include grounding
- Wallboard inspections for non-fire-rated assemblies not exceeding 30 linear feet
- Irrigation back flow preventer inspections, unless associated with auxiliary water systems
- Nonstructural framing not exceeding 30 linear feet
- Electric sign installation or replacement
- Duct sealant not exceeding 30 linear feet of HVAC duct systems only

Phone conference only:

- Residential layout inspections where no square footage is to be added and/or a survey is not required

(Continued on page 2)

Recorded Video:

- Recorded video may be used if connectivity issues interfere with a live video feed. Due to email storage limitations, recorded video can only be exchanged via text message.

Live Video Inspection Process:

- Schedule the inspection through the Austin Build + Connect website. Enter “Virtual Inspection Request” in the inspection request comments section. Include the videographer’s contact information, along with preferred time for inspection.
- The assigned inspector will contact the *videographer* and confirm a time for the inspection.
- The *videographer* must capture all areas of construction using Microsoft Teams, Google Duo or other approved means.
- The *videographer* shall have the necessary tools to capture all elements of an on-site inspection. These tools include, but are not limited to, flashlight, tape measure, pitch level, and screwdriver.
- Video should start at the street, where the address of the property is clearly visible.
- The *videographer* will proceed into the area of construction and follow the viewing inspector’s prompts.

Still Photo Inspection Process:

- Schedule the inspection through the Austin Build + Connect website. Enter “Still Photo Inspection Request” in the inspection request comments section.
- The first photo shall be taken from the exterior of the structure, clearly showing the property address. Additional photos should clearly show that corrections were made.
- The inspection should be able to readily identify that corrections were made and compliance with the applicable code has been met.
- All inspection photos must be uploaded to the permit before requesting the inspection.
- For re-inspections, deficiencies shall not exceed 3 total per trade or per grouped inspection.*

*Any deficiencies requiring testing for re-inspections are not eligible for the Virtual Inspection Program. Life safety issues will be reviewed at the discretion of the assigned inspector and may require an on-site inspection.

Inspector contact information is available on our [Building Inspector Phone List page](http://austintexas.gov/page/building-inspector-phone-list#bip!) (<http://austintexas.gov/page/building-inspector-phone-list#bip!>).

During the past year, DSD has added logical forms to help online visitors find answers to questions such as [business capacity](#) under reduced occupancy limits and [land status determinations](#). A cross-functional DSD team is now working to get customers the answers they need more quickly by improving customer routing as they find the answer to the question “Do I need a permit?” Internally, DSD teams such as [Marketing and Outreach](#) and [Community Engagement](#) are using improved work request forms to help streamline project tracking and serve internal customers more effectively.