



CITY OF VALDOSTA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Inspection/Permit Director, CBO

August 5, 2026

In 2019 House Bill 493 sanctions an alternative building plan review and inspection process that is commonly referred to as "Private Professional Provider". The provisions of O.C.G.A 8-2-26 establish the scope of the law, procedural requirements and the local jurisdiction's responsibilities when a Private Provider is involved in a project.

Private Providers are independent third-party entities and are required to be architects or engineers licensed in the State of Georgia. The Private Providers cannot be an employee of or otherwise affiliated with or financially interested in the person, firm or corporation engaged in the construction project to be reviewed or inspected. Per O.C.G.A 8-2-26(g)(1)(B), any plan review or inspection conducted by a Private Provider shall be no less extensive than plan reviews or inspections conducted by county or municipal personnel. In addition, the person, firm, or corporation retaining a Private Provider to conduct a plan review or an inspection shall be required to pay the plan review or inspection fee to the building inspection department as outlined in O.C.G.A 8-2-26 (g)(5)(6)

All Private Providers providing plan review or inspection services pursuant to HB 493 shall secure and maintain insurance coverage for professional liability (errors and omissions) insurance. The limits of such insurance shall be not less than \$ 1 million per claim and \$ 1 million in aggregate coverage for any project with a construction cost of \$5 million or less and \$2 million per claim and \$2 million in aggregate coverage for any project with a construction cost of more than \$5 million. Such insurance may be a practice policy or project-specific coverage. If the insurance is a practice policy, it shall contain prior acts coverage for the Private Provider. If the insurance is project-specific, it shall continue in effect for two years following the issuance of the certificate of final completion for the project. The permit applicant shall verify compliance with the insurance requirements.

Under the law, the Building Inspection Department retains the responsibility for issuing both permits and certificates of occupancy for both building and development projects. The City also maintains its responsibility for performing all plan reviews and inspections to ensure that site and fire codes are met. The City of Valdosta Building Inspection Department as the local government, the local building official and their building code enforcement personnel shall be immune from liability to any person or party for any action or inaction by a fee owner of a building, or by a Private Provider or its duly authorized representative, in connection with building code inspection services as authorized in O.C.G.A 8-2-26.

O.C.G.A 8-2-26(g)(18) If the local building official determines that the building construction or plans do not comply with the applicable regulatory requirements, the official may deny the



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permit or request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion, as appropriate, or may issue a stop-work order for the project or any portion thereof as provided by law, after giving notice to the owner, the architect of record, the engineer of record, or the contractor of record and by posting a copy of the order on the site of the project and opportunity to remedy the violation within the time limits set forth in the notice, if the official determines noncompliance with regulatory requirements, provided that:

- **(A)** A local building official shall be available to meet with the private professional provider within two business days to resolve any dispute after issuing a stop-work order or providing notice to the applicant denying a permit or request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion; and
- **(B)** If the local building official and the private professional provider are unable to resolve the dispute or meet within the time required by this Code section, the matter shall be referred to the local enforcement agency's board of appeals, if one exists, which shall consider the matter not later than its next scheduled meeting. Any decisions by the local official, if there is no board of appeals, may be appealed to the Department of Community Affairs as provided in this chapter. The Department of Community Affairs shall develop rules and regulations which shall establish reasonable time frames and fees to carry out the provisions of this paragraph.

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