



**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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Policy Memorandum – ADMIN 106.3.4 (a)

To: Building Division Staff

From: Samir Ghosn
Deputy Community Development Director/Chief Building Official

Effective Date: **March 10, 2020**
(Revised: March 25, 1999 / July 13, 2009)
(Original Effective Date: January 26, 1998)

Regarding: **Licensed Architect Stamp and Signature on Tenant Improvement Drawings Required Plan Check and Inspections within a Special Flood**

Section 5538 of the California “Architects Practice Act” allows interior designers and other individuals to prepare drawings for interior alterations and for storefronts, “Provided those alterations do not change or affect the fire rated assemblies for walls or floor/ceilings, the structural system or safety of the building.” The safety of the building depends on structural safety, exit components and fire safety.

Fire safety depends on the building construction type, as defined in Chapter 6 of the California Building Code. Construction types can require different degrees of fire protection and fire rating assemblies for building components. This restriction excludes interior designers from preparing drawings for interior alterations within buildings, which involve alteration to the exit system (excluding doors) or alteration to any fire rated assembly, such as a rated stairway enclosure, elevator shafts, elevator lobby, floor/ceiling assembly, roof/ceiling assembly, fire protection of structural frame, fire alarm devices, etc.

Interior designers are also excluded from preparing drawings and recommendations for Building Code modifications and requests for alternate materials and methods of construction when it involves code requirements affecting either structural safety, fire safety, exit components, fire protection assemblies or fire alarm devices.

Effective immediately it is required that tenant improvement drawings be stamped and signed by a licensed architect unless exempted by Section 5538 of the California Architects Practice Act as interpreted by this policy.