



ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE

When Is An Administrative Variance Needed?

Any property owner may apply for a variance from any yard requirement provided the reduction is no more than fifty percent of the required setback. Variance requests are subject to the provisions outlined in Thurston County Code (TCC) 20.07.050.

Additionally, any property owner may apply for a variance from any buffer or setback required by TCC, Title 17.15 for an agricultural use, not including structures. Such Administrative Variance is limited to the half of the buffer farthest from the critical area. The variance decision is subject to the provisions of TCC 20.07.050, and based on analysis of special reports required in Title 17.

Conditions of approval may be attached to any variance granted by the Community Planning & Economic Development Department.

Note: If reduction of any yard setback is greater than fifty percent of the required setback, the Hearing Examiner is the approval authority. If reduction of a critical area buffer is within the half of the required buffer located closest to the critical area, a Reasonable Use Exception (RUE) would be required. Again, the Hearing Examiner is the approval authority. Both requests require a separate application process and public hearing.

How To Apply

Submit a completed application package to the Building Development Center with the applicable fee. Complete package requirements are outlined in the application.

Review Process and Timing

Administrative Variance applications are reviewed under the Type 1 procedure. This means that staff is the review authority and the review time can be

up to 58 days. Review times may be longer if a request for additional information is required. Workload may also affect the timeline.

Appeals

All decisions may be appealed. An Appeal form and associated appeal fee must be submitted within 14 days from the date of the decision. Administrative decisions are appealed to the Hearing Examiner for Thurston County. Hearing Examiner decisions may be appealed to the Board of County Commissioners. All appeal forms are submitted to the Building Development Center.

Expiration

If a building permit has not been issued, or if construction activity or operation has not commenced within three years from the date of final approval, the variance will expire. The variance will also expire when vacated for a period of three years.

I Still Have Questions...

The information in this bulletin is a general guideline of the procedures and rules. You should not rely on the bulletin to identify the specific requirements for your project. For additional information, speak with a staff member at the Building Development Center. Contact information is listed below. You may also review all Thurston County Codes online on the County website referenced at the bottom of this page.

Revised 1-2-19

Building Development Center

2000 Lakeridge Drive SW, Bldg 1, Second Floor; Olympia, WA 98502

Phone: (360) 786-5490; TYY/TDD Line: 711 or 1-800-833-6388; Fax: (360) 754-2939

www.thurstoncountybdc.com