

## Can a prospective tenant remodel or alter a space in a commercial building?

Many tenants want to remodel commercial spaces themselves instead of hiring general contractors. Spending time finding a contractor, meeting and discussing ideas, and paying the contractor's profit, are gives a tenant motivation to try remodeling themselves. Sometimes the project is small and barely worth a contractor's time. Does state law allow unlicensed people to remodel interior commercial spaces? The following requirements are in place regarding construction work and license requirements:

- Any project that exceeds \$30,000 in cost requires a general contractor. The cost of the project must include construction work and all wiring, HVAC, and plumbing. If the project is below \$30,000 a general contractor is not required. There is one exception. If a **building owner** wants to remodel a building to use for his or her personal business, not a rental, the building owner can obtain a building permit regardless of cost. **Please note that this exception does not include tenants that wish to rent spaces.**
- New trade work, such as HVAC, wiring, and plumbing, always requires a licensed contractor regardless of the total cost.
- Inspections departments require commercial plans for construction projects. Sometimes sealed drawings from architects or engineers must be submitted. This depends on factors such as structural changes, moving exit doors, or adding new structural loads to a space. When a tenant is considering a space to rent and remodel, a meeting with the building inspections department would be a good idea.
- The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires specific upgrades whenever interior renovations take place. Usually most existing spaces are not ADA compliant. A discussion with the building inspections department should take place before plans are drawn.

If you have questions please call Reggie Hucks with the City of High Point Inspection Services at 336-883-4249.