

FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING SAFETY COMMISSION

Department of Homeland Security

NONRULE POLICY DOCUMENT

TITLE: Residential Covered Porch Construction

DOCUMENT #: 2026-3-DHS

DATE ISSUED: September 9, 2026

ADOPTED BY: Indiana Department of Homeland Security

OVERVIEW

This policy addresses local units of government requiring a design professional to stamp plans for Class 2 structures that include a covered porch.

BACKGROUND

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) received complaints from industry professionals that there were local units of government requiring a design professional to stamp plans for Class 2 structures that included a covered porch.

Indiana law generally prohibits a local unit of government from requiring that a plan for a Class 2 structure be stamped by a design professional when constructed as prescribed by the Indiana Residential Code:

IC 36-7-2.5-35 More stringent rules, policies, or standards prohibited

Sec. 35. (a) A unit may not adopt or enforce any rules, procedures, policies, qualifications, or standards more stringent than those prescribed in this chapter.

(b) A unit may not require a design professional (as defined in [IC 22-15-3.2-3](#)) to prepare construction documents, plans, or other filings for a Class 2 structure as part of an application under this chapter when constructed as prescribed by [675 IAC 14-4.4](#) or a most recent published edition of the International Residential Code.

(c) A unit may require a design professional (as defined in [IC 22-15-3.2-3](#)) to prepare construction documents, plans, or other filings for a Class 2 structure as evidence or proof of equivalence of proposed alternate materials, appliances, equipment, or method of design or construction and once provided shall be permitted by the unit as an alternate.

The covered porches at issue do not propose the use of alternative materials, appliances, equipment, or methods of design or construction.

Moreover, the structural elements do not exceed the limits of Section R301 of the Indiana Residential Code, nor are they explicitly nonconforming with any specific provision of the Indiana Residential Code.

POLICY

Accordingly, it is the policy of IDHS that [IC 36-7-2.5-35](#) prohibits a local unit of government from requiring that plans for a Class 2 structure be stamped by a design professional based solely on the fact that a structure includes a covered porch.

Additionally, a local unit of government seeking to have additional requirements included in the Indiana Residential Code may submit a proposal to the Indiana Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission, as outlined in [IC 22-13-2-5.6](#). Such proposal shall include the following statutorily required documentation:

- (1) A resolution adopted by the unit to request an amendment to the building code that:
 - (A) specifies the building code language to be amended; and
 - (B) states the safety issue that is the basis for the proposed amendment.
- (2) A fiscal analysis of the estimated cost or savings resulting from the proposed building code amendment.

Replaces Policy Document: New

Posted: 09/30/2026 by Legislative Services Agency