



City of Pomona

# Fences, Walls & Arbors on Residential Properties

This handout applies only to fences and walls within residential zones and residential districts of specific plans. (If there is a conflict between these regulations and the specific plan provisions, specific plan regulations govern.)

## 1. Fence & Wall Permits

A Fence and Wall Permit is required when:

- A fence or wall is to be constructed where there is no existing fence or wall;
- A fence or wall is to replace more than 50 percent of an existing fence or wall;
- For fences and walls to be located in historic districts, Certificate of Appropriateness is required instead of a Fence and Wall Permit.

Once a Fence and Wall Permit application is submitted to the City's Planning Division, the proposed fence or wall will be reviewed for consistency with the fence and wall design standards and guidelines, and all applicable height, material, design, and location requirements contained in the Zoning Ordinance. Fence and Wall permit applications are available at the City's website at [www.ci.pomona.ca.us/city\\_departments/community\\_development/planning/](http://www.ci.pomona.ca.us/city_departments/community_development/planning/) or at the Planning Division counter in City Hall (505 S. Garey Ave.). There is no fee for a Fence and Wall Permit from the Planning Division. (Contact the Building and Safety Division for building permit fees for fences and walls.)

## 2. Definitions

**Decorative masonry wall:** Wall constructed of masonry material other than plain concrete block that has a decorative surface treatment such as patterned block, river rock or split face.

**Hedge:** A plant or series of plants, shrubs or other landscape material arranged to form a physical barrier or enclosure.

**Open fence:** A fence that is constructed so that not less than 50 percent of the vertical surface is open to permit transmission of light, air and vision.

**Retaining wall:** A properly engineered wall built or designed to retain soil on the uphill side from slumping, sliding or failing.

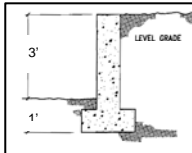
**Solid fence:** A fence constructed so that more than 50 percent of the vertical surface is closed to prevent passage of light, air

and vision and that is constructed of solid materials such as wood, chain-link with screening inserts, vinyl or composite material.

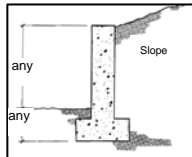
## 3. Building Permits

Building permits are only required for fences that exceed six feet in height and for walls that exceed three feet in height as measured from grade to the top of the wall. A building permit is required for retaining walls that meet any of the following:

- Retaining walls with level backfill that are over three feet in height as measured from the ground on the lower side to top of wall or over four feet in height as measured from the bottom of footing to top of wall;



- Retaining walls of any height that support a slope on one side or surcharge from such things as parked vehicles and structures.



For more information on when a building permit is required for fences or walls, other building permit requirements and fees, contact

the Building and Safety Division at 909.620.2371.

## 4. Prohibited Materials

The following types of materials are prohibited when used for construction of fences and walls in residential zones and residential districts within specific plans:

- Chain-link, metal slat, and wire fencing within front yard setbacks and street-facing side and rear yard setbacks, except temporary fencing associated with construction activity with an active building permit on file and vacant lots in accordance with Sec. .600 A.9 and C.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Debris, junk, tarps or other types of fabric (except for mesh fabric specifically designed for tennis courts), rolled plastic, sheet metal, plywood, or waste materials;



- Glass shards, spikes (other than decorative spikes that are part of an ornamental metal fence), nails, or other sharp materials installed on top of a fence or wall.
- Security fencing (i.e. barbed wire, coiled barbed wire, razor wire, concertina wire, and/or similar products).
- Garage doors.
- Wood fencing for perimeter walls for residential subdivisions

## 5. Height Requirements

The following height restrictions apply to all residential zones properties and residential districts of Specific Plans:

- Maximum height of 6 feet for all fences and walls within rear and side property lines and to the rear of front yard setback;
- Maximum height of 4 feet for open fences and retaining walls as measured from the outside of the wall and maximum height of 3 feet for all solid fences, walls and hedges in any required front yard.
- Maximum height of 12 feet for fences around tennis, badminton, basketball or volleyball courts or similar play areas provided they are located in the rear half of the lot and all parts of the fence over six feet in height are open mesh style fencing. Sport court fences to be located on a property line or within 10 feet of a property line require approval of a conditional use permit.

## 6. Design Standards

Design standards are intended to ensure that a proposed fence or wall will be consistent with the character of a neighborhood and compatible with buildings on the site, and that fences and walls visible from a public street meet high standards of design quality. Fences and walls will be reviewed for consistency with the following design standards:

- Walls constructed in front yard setbacks and along street facing side and rear setbacks must be decorative masonry and have a decorative cap;
- Wood fencing installed in front yards and street facing side and rear yards must be painted, stained or water sealed and have the front side facing out;
- Materials and finish must be continuous and uniform within a given fence or wall along the same property line.
- See Fences & Walls in Historic Districts handout for additional design standards and guidelines for properties located in historic districts.

## 7. Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are intended to provide general direction to the property owner and developer in the design of fences and walls. Exceptions to the design guidelines may be allowed by the Planning Commission or other applicable review body, if it is determined that the exception is beneficial to overall appropriateness of a fence or wall. The following guidelines apply to residentially zoned property and residential districts in the Downtown Pomona Specific Plan where a fence or wall is proposed to be located within a front yard setback area or a street-facing side or rear yard setback area:

- Avoid fences and walls in front yards where open yards predominate, unless needed for specific screening or safety purposes. Where needed for safety or security, the fence and wall should be kept as open as possible.
- The fence or wall should complement the architectural style of the home in terms of color, material and appearance.
- Walls and fences along street facing side and rear yard areas, except for through lots, should be setback at least 3 feet from the property line (if there is a landscaped parkway

at least 3 feet in width, the parkway shall serve as the setback) and planted with low shrubs in combination with vines and other accent plants on the street side and provided with automatic sprinklers.

## 8. Arbors



The City of Pomona's Zoning Ordinance defines an arbor as a structure that is freestanding or connected to a fence that has a roof and walls that are substantially open. Arbors do not require approval of a Fence and Wall Permit; however, they must meet the following standards:

- Maximum height is 9 feet as measured from grade to top of the structure;
- Maximum width is 5 feet as measured from the inside of the inside edges of the posts;
- Maximum roof area is 25 square feet;
- The sides and roof must be substantially open

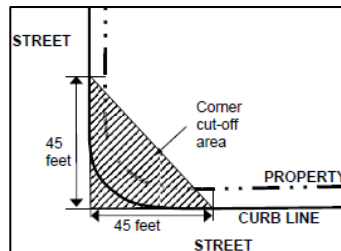


## 9. Maintenance & Repair

All fences and walls must be maintained in good repair and in a safe condition. Any deteriorated, missing, decayed, or broken structural and decorative elements, missing fasteners, bent elements, damaged pieces, split wood, rusted metal, loose fasteners, insecure posts, etc. must be promptly replaced or repaired. All fences and walls are required to receive regular maintenance to prevent and address sagging and weathering of surfaces visible from the public right-of-way.

## 10. Visibility triangle

The corner cutoff area for streets with curbs is measured 45 back from the intersection of the curblines. All fences, walls, hedges and plants within the corner cutoff triangle shall not exceed a maximum height of 3 feet as measured from the flow line of the adjacent gutter.



### Additional Information

For additional information and questions regarding fences and walls on residential properties, please contact Planning Division staff.

#### City of Pomona Planning Division

City Hall, 505 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, CA

Phone: (909) 620-2191

Web site: [www.ci.pomona.ca.us/city\\_departments/community\\_development/planning/](http://www.ci.pomona.ca.us/city_departments/community_development/planning/)