



THIRD PARTY INSPECTION PROGRAM POLICY AND FORMS JUNE 2025

I. Purpose

The purpose of the City of Goose Creek Building Inspections Division (**BID**), Third Party Inspection Program (**TPIP**) is to establish:

- When third party inspections (**TPI**) can be utilized.
- The minimum criteria to become a pre-qualified third-party inspector.
- The minimum criteria to maintain pre-qualification as a third-party inspector.
- The processes of conducting **TPI** including obtaining approval for a specific inspection, scheduling and reviewing previous inspection.
- The process of submitting **TPI** reports.
- Disciplinary and revocation procedures.
- **TPI** Acknowledgement Form.

II. Basis for Third Party Inspections

TPI are not allowed by right. **TPI** are intended to augment inspections mandated by South Carolina Building Code (SCBC) §104.4, §110.3 and §110.4 or South Carolina Residential Code (**SCRC**) §104.4 performed by the Building Official or designee. IBC §104.4 authorizes the Building Official to accept reports by preapproved inspection agencies.

The Building Official recognizes the use of **TPI** to augment the demand on daily City inspection services as a means to maintain services delivery and reduces potential construction projects delays, such as the need for inspection services outside of normal City working hours and City holidays.

SCBC 104.4 Inspections. *The building official shall make the required inspections, or the building official shall have the authority to accept reports of inspection by approved agencies or individuals. Reports of such inspections shall be in writing and be certified by a responsible officer of such approved agency or by the responsible individual. The building official is authorized to engage such expert opinion as deemed necessary to report upon unusual technical issues that arise, subject to the approval of the appointing authority.*

SCBC §110.3 Required Inspections. *The building official, upon notification, shall make the inspections set forth in §110.3.1 through §110.3.12.*

SCBC §110.4 Inspection Agencies. *The building official is authorized to accept reports of approved inspection agencies, provided such agencies satisfy the requirements as to qualifications and reliability.*

SCRC §104.4 Inspections. *The building official shall make the required inspections, or the building official shall have the authority to accept reports of inspection by approved agencies or individuals. Reports of such inspections shall be in writing and be certified by a responsible officer of such approved agency or by the responsible individual. The building official is authorized to engage such expert opinion as deemed necessary to report on unusual technical issues that arise, subject to the approval of the appointing authority.*

III. Use of Third-Party Inspections

In all instances, **TPI's** shall be by an agency or individual that has met the City's minimum qualifications, experience and preapproved by the building official in advance of the inspection request(s). Prior to commencement of work, the permit holder shall request, in writing to the City of Goose Creek Building Official, to use **TPI's** for the project. The primary beneficiary of **TPI's** are the permit holder and owner who can minimize delays waiting for public inspections. Therefore, the risk of errors and omission by the third-party inspectors shall be on the **permit holder and owner** and not the City. While the City will only accept third-party inspectors who appear to be properly qualified based on information submitted, the duty is ultimately on the permit holder to ensure the **TPI** has the requisite qualifications, experience, and insurance. The City shall not be liable to the permit holder, owner, or any other person or entity for acts or omission of the third-party inspector. Nor shall the City be liable for approving or failing to revoke the certification of an unqualified third-party inspector.

IV. Third Party Inspector Revocation Third Party Inspection Limitations

TPI will not routinely replace City inspections conducted during the normal course of a business day. **TPI may be utilized only as authorized and approved by the Building Official.** Due to the many special requirements found in various City of Goose Creek ordinances/procedures and as a final measure of quality assurance, **TPI** will only be authorized as listed below. These requirements are solely at the discretion of the Building Official and subject to cancelation or modification without notice.

<u>Inspection Type</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Temporary Power Pole	TPI
Clearing, Grading & Sediment control	City & Berkely County Stormwater
Foundation - including applicable Electrical, Mechanical, Fuel-gas and Plumbing	TPI
Sheathing & Strapping	TPI
Trade Rough-in - Electrical, Mechanical, Fuel-gas and Plumbing	TPI
Framing	TPI
Quality Assurance Prior to Concealment	TPI
Insulation	TPI
Temporary Power - Fuel-gas or Electric	TPI
Final Trade - Electrical, Mechanical, Fuel-gas and Plumbing	TPI
TPI	
Temporary Power Pole	TPI
Final Building	TPI
Certificate of Construction Completion	Issued By the City
Certificate of Occupancy	Issued By the City

V. Third Party Inspector Qualifications

Third party inspectors (hereafter Inspector) must demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform inspections in their area of expertise. Not only must they demonstrate a technical knowledge of the code and trade they inspect, but they must also demonstrate that they have applicable knowledge of City ordinances and regulations. Third party inspectors must provide the following for evaluation and approval purposes to the building official. Approval of a third-party inspector shall be in writing from the building official.

A. Registration and Certification

The following shall serve as minimum qualifications for all inspectors:

- South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (LLR) registration as an inspector in the specific area(s) of inspections performed; and
- International Code Council (ICC) certification(s) as an inspector in the specific area(s) of inspections performed; or
- A South Carolina Registered Design Professional (RDP) practicing within their area of competency as related to the area of inspection; or
- Individuals or firms approved to perform special inspections as specified in 2021 IBC §110.3.11 within their area of qualification, competency and operating under the direction of a South Carolina RDP.

B. Experience

The Inspector shall demonstrate knowledge of the applicable codes, **South Carolina modifications, City ordinances and other applicable City regulations** by demonstrating the following minimum experience:

- A minimum of five years of experience conducting inspections within the specific area of expertise as regulated by SCRC, SCBC and LLR; or
- Applicants may also submit for consideration additional qualifications to substantiate equivalent experience. This may include engineers-in-training that include a college degree in subject area augmented with field inspection experience and supervision of a South Carolina RDP; or
- Applicants may substitute two years of field construction supervision experience for each one year of field inspection experience if it is relevant to the area of inspections being sought for approval. Field construction supervision experience may replace up to three of the five years of inspection experience. However, the building official reserves the right to require more than the above minimum requirements in specific situations, at his/her sole discretion.

C. Independence

Inspectors must be able to demonstrate and maintain independence from any person or firm responsible for construction of work they will inspect. The Inspector shall have no financial or

personal relationship with the property owners, designers, permit holders, contractors or sub-contractors being inspected. Inspectors shall not have:

- Accepted monies or any other item of value other than remuneration for third party inspection services; or



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- Performed services or other work, other than third party inspections, for the property owners, designers, permit holders, contractors or sub-contractors being inspected for a period of 2 years prior to performing such inspection.

The Inspector must always maintain a high degree professionalism, neutrality and autonomy necessary to secure the health, safety and welfare provisions of the SCRC/SCBC. Although paid by the permit holder, the Inspector is ultimately responsible to the City of Goose Creek Building Official. If the Inspector discovers any attempts by the responsible party to cover or conceal discrepancies or rejected work, the Inspector shall immediately contact the building official. The Inspector shall not perform any further **TPIs** on the project until approval is obtained from building official.

The Inspector is required to complete the attached “Affidavit of Independence” and submit it to the City of Goose Creek Building Official prior to approval as a **TPI**.

VI. Third Party Inspector Insurance Requirements

The Inspector or agency must submit proof of general liability insurance and professional errors and omissions insurance with a minimum \$1,000,000 limit for each occurrence. The insurance company must state that they will provide a thirty day advance written cancellation notice to the City. The Inspector or agency shall provide proof of insurance prior to approval as a **TPI**.

VII. Independent Contractor

The relationship of the **TPI** to the City, and its employees and agents, is that of an independent contractor and not an employee. **TPI** acknowledges that the true nature of its relationship is that of an independent contractor in that **TPI** may use any appropriate method of conducting its services based on its knowledge, skill, judgment, means and methods.

VIII. Indemnification

TPI shall be solely responsible for any-and-all of its actions, errors and/or omission. The **TPI** and project owner agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the City, its agents, and employees, against any-and-all claims for injury, liability, or damage, whether to person, property, or business, that may arise as a result of **TPI** actions. Under no circumstances shall the City, its agents and employees provide any indemnification to the **TPI**, project owner, contractor, subcontractor, or any other person. This program shall in no way modify or waive any protections afforded to the City by the South Carolina Tort Claims Act.

IX. Business License

The Inspector or agency performing **TPIs** shall provide documentation of an appropriate business and LLR license(s) as required by the City of Goose Creek. If a license is required, a copy of the license shall be provided before approval as a **TPI**.

X. Training & Meetings

Inspectors maintaining an approval status or who are providing continuous inspection services shall have at least one qualified company representative attend designated City **TPI** meetings as necessary. All qualified inspectors shall attend all the following training to maintain their approval:

- Any South Carolina Building Code Council (BCC) code update or mandated training; and
- Any required training to maintain a professional license or certification.

XI. Annual Renewal of Third-Party Inspector Qualification

To maintain approval to conduct third party inspections in The City of Goose Creek, the Inspector shall submit, one month before their approval anniversary date, all the following:

- Proof of attendance of any mandatory training to maintain LLR registration or professional qualifications.
- Proof of the required insurance.
- Proof of business license.

Failure to submit the above documentation will result in suspension status and suspension of inspection privileges. The Inspector or agency will be required to be re-approved before being authorized to perform inspections.

XII. Inspection Scheduling

Third Party Inspections (**TPI**) shall be scheduled by the established procedures below:

Inspection requests shall be scheduled directly by the general contractor or residential builder. The process will be reviewed, and a procedure approved at a mandatory **TPI** agency pre-permit meeting conducted by the city. Unless otherwise directed, inspections must be requested by using the automated scheduling system and documented as any other Building Inspection Division (**BID**) performed inspection. An inspection code shall be provided to the permit holder and/or the **TPI** so that the inspection request can be identified by the **BID**. It shall be the responsibility of the pre-qualified **TPI** to contact the **BID** before conducting an inspection as noted in this policy. If the agent performing the inspection is pre-qualified, the building official or designee may approve the **TPI**. The inspection shall not be authorized if the **BID** has not pre-approved the project and **TPI** agency. **No TPI shall be performed without pre-inspection approval.**

XIII. Inspection and Inspection Reports

TPI reports conducted by approved inspectors or agencies shall be in writing and shall indicate if compliance was achieved based on the applicable codes and City ordinances and regulations. The report shall be certified by the individual inspector or responsible agency representative. The Inspector or agency is **not authorized** to approve any construction field changes and must make sure that the **approved plans** are **strictly followed**.

Note: Photographs, videos or other sources of pertinent data or information may be considered as constituting such reports and tests.

A. TPI Reports That Are Submitted Outside the OpenGov Portal Shall Be Legible and Include:

- The Inspector's name, address, phone number and E-mail
- The name of the approved agent if different from above
- The applicable permit number(s)
- Project street address
- Inspection type
- Date and time of the inspection
- City approved permit plans were available on site for inspection
- The inspection results with deficiencies properly identified
- Verification that previous inspection discrepancies were known, reviewed, and approved or need correction where applicable
- A statement that reads, "This inspection report is subject to review and approval by the City of Goose Creek Building Inspections Division."

B. Recording TPI Reports

All inspection reports shall be submitted through the City's designated electronic permitting system, OpenGov, by close of business on the day the inspection was performed.

Any inspection deficiencies must be identified with sufficient detail and applicable code sections cited and provided, in writing, to the permit holder on the day the inspection was performed. The written notice shall



provide the reason for the rejection, any concerns raised through the inspection process and the terms to achieve compliance and remedy the rejection.

The City reserves the right to perform quality assurance (QA) inspections without prior notice to evaluate the performance of the Inspector or agency. The interval of QA inspections shall be determined by the Building Official on a case-by-case basis.

Code deficiencies subsequently found by the City, which may have been missed by the TPI or agency, shall be corrected prior to concealment.

It will be the responsibility of the TPI or agency to verify all required inspections have been completed and passed before sequential inspections may be performed.

XIV. Third Party Inspector Revocation

The building official may suspend or revoke inspection privileges of an approved inspector or agency for just cause. Any decision rendered by the Building Official may be appealed to the City of Goose Creek Board of Appeals. Failure to strictly comply with all the below terms may result in inspection reports being rejected and suspension or termination of approval to conduct **TPI**.

- Failure to maintain required certifications or licenses
- Failure to maintain the minimum required insurance
- Failure to adhere to the requirements for inspection scheduling or reporting
- Failure to perform proper inspections in accordance with the code and City ordinances, policies and the **TPI program**
- Failure to attend training or meetings that are required by **TPI program**
- Failure to follow the written City directives when unacceptable inspection practices or results are identified
- Evidence of misrepresentation of fact that led to approval by the City
- Failure to maintain independence from the individuals or firms responsible for the project construction being inspected
- Failure to have City approved inspectors performing inspections
- Falsification of any reports
- Any act or omission that is deemed by the city to violate the letter or intent of the **TPI program** or any laws or ordinances of the Federal Government, State of South Carolina or City of Goose Creek.

XV. Third Party Inspection Costs

The permit holder is responsible for all costs associated with **TPI**. In addition to paying the **TPI** services, the permit holder shall be responsible for all normal City permit fees.



**CREEK
COMPASS**
City of Goose Creek

City of Goose Creek, SC

Third Party Inspection Program Policy Owner- Acknowledgement Form

Please read the City of Goose Creek's Third-Party Inspection Program Policy carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this acknowledgement.

I have read and understand the City of Goose Creek's Third-Party Inspections Program Policy.

I have received a copy of the policy and agree to abide by the policy guidelines as a condition to use third party inspection for my permitted project.

Third Party Inspection Agency Name _____ Contact Person _____

TPI Agency Responsible Party and Contact Info:

Email: _____ Phone: _____ GCBL# _____

Project Address: _____

Master Building Permit(s): _____

Permit Holder's or Authorized Designee's Signature: _____

Permit Holder's or Authorized Designee's Printed Name: _____

Date: _____



**THIRD PARTY INSPECTOR
AFFIDAVIT OF INDEPENDENCE**

(Owner and All Inspectors Seeking Approval)

PERSONALLY, appeared before me the undersigned who, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

My name is _____. LLR License# _____

I currently am employed as a with _____.

1. I understand that as a Third-Party Inspector ("TPI") for the City of Goose Creek, I am required to demonstrate and maintain independence from any person or entity responsible in any way for the work I am inspecting.
2. I have no financial or personal relationship with the property owners, designers, permit holders or sub-contractors associated with the ["the Project"].
3. I understand that as the TPI, I cannot accept money or any other item of value other than remuneration for my third-party inspection services related to this Project.
4. I further understand that as the TPI, I cannot have performed services or other work other than third party inspections for the property owners, designers, permit holders, contractors or sub-contractors for the Project being inspected for a period of TWO (2) years prior to performing such inspections.

Signed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: _____