



**Residential Patio Covers  
2017 ORSC  
3/20/19**

The following is to assist determining when a patio cover requires a permit.

Enclosed or unenclosed patio covers, as defined in the 2017 ORSC AH102, and porch covers meeting **all** of the following conditions are exempt from a building permit:

- Not over 200 square feet;
- The floor or deck is not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade measured at any point within 3 feet horizontally of the floor or deck;
- The covered portion of the porch or patio does not come closer than 3 feet to property lines; **and**
- Supported by an exterior building wall.

If a proposed deck or patio cover meets some, but not all, of the above conditions, a permit **is** required. If a proposed deck or patio cover meets all of the above conditions a permit is not required. Covered decks and patios not requiring a building permit may still require mechanical, plumbing and electrical (through Clackamas County) permits.

**Additional provisions:**

- Patio covers are limited to one-story structures not exceeding 12 feet in height.
- An exempt patio cover shall be separated from the interior of the dwelling unit by the exterior envelope of the dwelling.
- Exterior openings required for light and ventilation are permitted to open into an unenclosed or enclosed patio cover complying with AH102.
- Exterior openings serving as emergency egress or rescue openings from sleeping rooms may open into a patio cover, provided it is unenclosed, and shall not open into an enclosed patio cover.
- Where exterior openings serve as an exit from the dwelling unit, the patio structure, unless unenclosed, shall be provided with exits conforming to the provisions of section R311.
- Structural changes to the exterior of a building, such as new or enlarged door or window openings, require a permit.
- Separate permits are required for any electrical, plumbing and mechanical work in an exempt patio cover, such as for mounted gas or electric heater units designed for outdoor use.
- Enclosure walls are permitted to be of any configuration, provided the open or glazed area of the longer wall and one additional wall is equal to at least 65 percent of the area below a minimum of 6 feet, 8 inches of each wall, measured from the floor.
- Patio covers shall be designed and constructed to sustain, within the stress limits of the code, all dead loads **plus** a vertical live load of not less than 10 pounds per square foot, **except** that snow loads shall be used where such snow loads exceed this minimum.

**Excerpts from the 2017 Oregon Residential Specialty Code reprinted below**

9. Patio covers, as defined in AH102, and porch covers not over 200 square feet (11 m<sup>2</sup>) and supported by an exterior building wall.
  
15. Porches and decks, where the floor or deck is not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above adjacent grade measured at any point within 3 feet (914 mm) horizontally of the floor or deck, and where in the case of a covered porch, the covered portion of the porch does not come closer than 3 feet (914 mm) to property lines.

**AH101.2 Permitted uses.** Patio covers shall be permitted to be detached from or attached to *dwelling units*. Patio covers shall be used only for recreational, outdoor living purposes, and not as carports, garages, storage rooms or habitable rooms.

**PATIO COVER.** A structure with open or glazed walls that is used for recreational, outdoor living purposes associated with a dwelling unit.

**AH 103.1 Enclosure walls.** Enclosure walls shall be permitted to be of any configuration, provided the open or glazed area of the longer wall and one additional wall is equal to at least 65 percent of the area below a minimum of 6 feet, 8 inches (2032 mm) of each wall, measured from the floor. Openings shall be permitted to be enclosed with any of the following:

1. Insect screening.
2. Approved translucent or transparent plastic not more than 0.125 inch (3.2 mm) in thickness.
3. Glass conforming to the provisions of Section R308.
4. Any combination of the foregoing.

**AH103.2 Light, ventilation and emergency egress.** Exterior openings required for light and ventilation shall be permitted to open into a patio structure conforming to Section AH101, provided that the patio structure shall be unenclosed if such openings are serving as emergency egress or rescue openings from sleeping rooms. Where such exterior openings serve as an exit from the *dwelling unit*, the patio structure, unless unenclosed, shall be provided with exits conforming to the provisions of Section R311 of this code.

**AH105.1 Design loads.** Patio covers shall be designed and constructed to sustain, within the stress limits of this code, all dead loads plus a vertical live load of not less than 10 pounds per square foot (0.48 kN/m<sup>2</sup>), except that snow loads shall be used where such snow loads exceed this minimum. Such covers shall be designed to resist the minimum wind loads set forth in Section R301.2.1.