

Elevator Inspection FAQs

What is a Certificate of Operation for an Elevator/Elevating Device?

The Certificate of Operation is a license required by the City of Cincinnati (Municipal Code - Cincinnati Building Code – Chapter 1107) that allows operation of your device. It is issued on an annual basis after your device passes an annual safety test inspection, and two routine safety inspections with any violation(s) corrected, and all outstanding fees have been paid. The elevator owner/representative is responsible to obtain the certificate of operation, renew it annually, and post it in a conspicuous place inside, on or immediately adjacent to, the elevator.

Which elevating devices require a Certificate of Operation?

All commercial elevators, wheelchair/stairway lifts, escalators, moving walks, dumbwaiters and limited use, limited access devices (LULA) in the City of Cincinnati require a Certificate of Operation.

What is the difference between an Elevator Certificate of Operation and an Elevator Permit?

An Elevator Permit is required to install a new elevating device or for repairs and/or changes to an existing device. Only a licensed elevator contractor can apply for a permit. The construction permit holder is responsible for all tests of new and altered equipment until the elevator has been inspected and approved.

A Certificate of Operation is a license to operate the device. The elevator owner is responsible for the safe operation, proper maintenance, inspection, and correction of code deficiencies of the elevator after a new, altered or existing elevator has passed inspection.

When Does the Certificate of Operation expire?

Failure to pay the annual renewal will result in an expired certificate and may require additional late fees. The elevator owner should not wait until inspection to pay renewal fees. An expired Certificate of Operation may not mean that an elevating device has been found to be unsafe, but may mean that the owner failed to pay the annual renewal fees. Renewal notifications will be sent by email sixty (60) days – prior to expiration.

What if the Certificate of Operation has expired?

This is a violation. Contact the elevator owner/representative immediately and let them know. They are responsible by (Elevator Code) to ensure a current Certificate of Operation is obtained from the City of Cincinnati and it is posted in a conspicuous place inside, on, or immediately adjacent to, the elevator. Failure to do so may result in fines by the City of Cincinnati. The Certificate of Operation will be Sealed out of Service if fees are due, annual inspection is overdue or we have not been notified by the elevator owners that violations on a current inspection have been corrected.

How do I (elevator owner/representative) schedule a Safety Test elevator inspection?

Elevator owners/representative will be notified 30 days prior to the due date of the next elevator safety test. You must contact your licensed elevator maintenance company to schedule your elevating device required inspection for safety compliance tests. These tests may include the annual, three-year, or five-year (full load) safety test. The tests are performed by qualified elevator maintenance personnel and records of these tests are submitted to the Elevator Inspection section via on-line process. Safety tests must be performed on a timely basis or the units may be sealed out of service until they are completed.

What happens if the Safety Test is not performed?

Failure to have your device inspected may subject you to penalties and fines and, if necessary, it may be Sealed out of Service (SOS).

What is a Routine Safety Inspection?

Safety Inspections are performed on all commercial lifting devices, including escalators. The inspections are performed at approximate six-month intervals and are scheduled by the inspector staff.

What if Violations are found?

During the routine inspections, violations may be found. Safety violations can be categorized into two groups:

- **Serious Violations:** Problems that the inspectors determine to be hazardous to the riding public. These issues could cause loss of life or injury. Units that meet these criteria are immediately placed out of service until the violations are corrected. The unit is reinspected by the inspection personal and then placed back into service.
- **Non-Serious Violations:** Problems that will not affect the riding public's safety, but are issues that the ASME A17.1 Code recognizes as being in need of correction. These issues are to be corrected within 30 days and are normally performed when the unit undergoes its maintenance routine. If these issues are not corrected in a reasonable time period, the elevators may be sealed out of service until the corrections are made. (Examples of non-serious violations may include gongs/bells not working, missing Braille tactile plates, or water/debris in the elevator pit.)

All violations are noted on the inspection report. We will email a copy of the inspection report(s). It is the elevator owner's/representative's responsibility to ensure all information in our system has the current building mailing and email address (es) for responsible persons. View the last annual inspection violation(s) for your device(s) and review the current listed addresses as well as fees due.

How soon must the violations be corrected?

For Serious Violations: The elevator owner(s) must correct all violations cited on an inspection report and notify us within 30 days of the inspection. A follow-up re-inspection will be scheduled (30 days) and a re-inspection fee will be applied. You must correct all violations and pay the re-inspection fee, before a current Certificate of Operation is issued.

For Non-Serious Violations

The elevator owner(s) will receive the inspection report with notice of violations along with a self-certification letter that must be signed and e-mailed back to the Elevator Section within 30 days. Failure to comply will result in a follow-up re-inspection and a re-inspection fee will be assessed.

Who is responsible for correcting the violations?

The elevator owner/representative is responsible for overseeing the corrections of all violations; however, your elevator maintenance contract may cover repair of some or all violations. You should contact your elevator maintenance company to determine who is responsible: you, the elevator maintenance company or both.

What if the violations are not corrected within 30 days or at all?

Failure to comply within 30-days may subject you to the device being Sealed out of Service (SOS). Safety violations can be categorized into two groups:

- Sealed out of Service for Safety Reasons – Once sealed out of service, the license holder must initiate the inspection to remove the elevator from a sealed state. After the 4th year, a notification will go out 6 months before the license expiration date. After the 5th year if status is still Sealed out of Service, the removal process will begin.
- Sealed out of Service for Fees Due – Failure to pay the annual license fee or any accessed SOS re-inspection fees will result in Sealed out of Service. Once fees are paid elevator is returned to service.

Can an elevator be Temporary Sealed out of Service?

Usually when an elevator is undergoing maintenance, the elevator is Temporary Sealed out of Service. Once temporarily out of service, the certificate holder must initiate the inspection to remove the elevator from a temporarily Sealed out of Service status. An inspection is rescheduled and a re-inspection fee is applied to the elevator record. An invoice is emailed to the customer.

When is an elevator removed from service?

After 5 years of being sealed out of service, the removal process begins.

What is a No Access status?

Inspector is not able to process elevator due to being locked, no one on site. The building owner is responsible to make sure City inspectors have access to the building for the inspection. A re-inspection fee will be assessed.