INDIANA PLANNING

Indiana homeowner project and lookup guide

Find the right local office, check the relevant records, and arrive with a clear project question.

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Start with the project address and governing office

Indiana homeowners need two kinds of information: who regulates the proposed work and what the contractor is authorized to do. Begin with the property address and parcel reference, then ask the city or county building department to confirm jurisdiction. A mailing-city name is not enough to settle that question.

Indiana’s business guidance describes local contractor licensing, while the Professional Licensing Agency provides searches for state-regulated professions. Use the relevant local authority for general-contractor requirements and the appropriate state professional record when applicable, such as plumbing. A business registration and a professional or contractor license answer different questions.

- Describe whether the work changes the structure, use, utilities or site.
- Ask which drawings, permits and inspections apply to that scope.
- Write down the office, staff response, date and official link.

An Indianapolis example with real boundaries

Indianapolis BNS states that its construction-licensing jurisdiction excludes Lawrence, Beech Grove, Speedway and Southport. Confirm the governing office before using Indianapolis instructions for one of those cities. The city’s Accela resources provide a starting point for permit history and contractor-related records.

Carmel has its own residential-permit page, online application path and building-safety contact. Treat that as a separate municipal workflow. These examples show how to locate the correct process; they do not establish one statewide permit checklist.

Use official records as a starting point

Ask the contractor for the exact legal business name and relevant license number. Match those details to the appropriate official record and note the status and date checked. If a name, category or geographic scope does not match the proposed job, ask the issuing office for clarification. Keep insurance evidence and written scope alongside the lookup.

For permit history, search the actual property and read the case type and status. An old permit does not explain every later alteration. Ask the local office about gaps that affect your current project, and ask who will submit the application and keep inspection records.

Task	Official starting point
State professional record	Indiana PLA Free Search & Verify
Indianapolis project or case research	BNS guidance and Accela portal
Carmel residential project	Carmel Building Safety / Residential Permits
Another Indiana location	The governing city or county building office

Prepare a useful first call

A focused question gets a more useful answer than “Do I need a permit?” State the address, existing use, proposed change and affected systems. Ask what additional information the office needs to decide. If a contractor will handle the application, agree on which permit and inspection records you will receive at completion.

Worksheet: the project record

Property address / parcel: _____

Proposed work and what remains: _____

Office and contractor checks

Check	Record / reference	Date
Governing city or county		
Building / zoning office		
Relevant permit question		
Contractor legal business name		
License category / record link		
Insurance document received		
Application / permit reference		
Inspection and closeout contact		

Questions to resolve before work starts

- Which office governs this exact address and scope?
- Who prepares the drawings and submits each required application?
- Who schedules inspections and supplies closeout records?
- What change in the work would require another review?

Follow-up log

Question / official source	Reply / next step

Sources and edition

Primary references checked 2026-11-28. Worksheet prompts and examples are original editorial resources. Recheck live official records and quoted prices for your project.

Indiana: business owner's guide
https://www.in.gov/core/business_guide.html

Indiana PLA: free license search
https://www.in.gov/pla/license/free-search-and-verify/

Indianapolis: contractor jurisdiction
https://www.indy.gov/activity/general-contractor-orientation

Indianapolis: permit application portal
https://www.indy.gov/activity/apply-for-permits-online

Indianapolis: official permit and contractor records
https://aca-prod.accela.com/INDY/Default.aspx

Carmel: residential permits
https://www.carmel.in.gov/292/Residential-Permits