



Shoreline variance, information and instructions

The following is a summary of the Shoreline Variance application process. The information for a Shoreline Variance application is necessary to evaluate the merits of the proposal with applicable County and State regulations. If required to be submitted, a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) environmental checklist will be the basis for evaluating the environmental impact of the project prior to any approval of a shoreline variance.

An application will be evaluated on the basis of the information provided by the applicant, the King County Shoreline Master Program, the State Shoreline Management Act, the King County Comprehensive Plan, pertinent provisions of the King County Code (KCC), site inspection, and comments submitted by citizens and interested tribes and public agencies. If the subject property is located within an identified landslide, erosion, steep slope, seismic, avalanche or coal mine hazard or wetland or aquatic area, the applicant may be required to submit a special study produced by a qualified professional to address the identified critical area features on the subject property.

Questions related to Shoreline Variances may be answered by calling customer service at 206-296-6600, emailing DPERwebinquiries@kingcounty.gov.

Pre-Application Conference

A pre-application conference with Permitting staff is required prior to filing a Shoreline Variance application. [Pre-application request forms and instructions](#) for filing a pre-application conference request are available online or at the Permit Center. A filing fee is required at the time a request is made; the amount to be determined at the time of filing and based on the latest adopted fee ordinance. Staff will schedule the pre-application conference within thirty (30) days from the date of the request.

Application Review

Once your application is accepted for review, Permitting staff have twenty-eight (28) days from the date of filing to determine whether or not the application is complete. An application that fails to meet the submittal requirements will be deemed incomplete and additional information will be requested.

Notice of Application

Public Comment Period: After Permitting staff determines that the application is complete, a Notice of Application is issued as specified below. The minimum public comment period for a Shoreline Variance is 30 days, although public comments may be submitted and considered until the time of the decision.

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1. Permitting sends out a notice of the application to property owners within a 500-foot radius of the subject property, or farther out to reach at least 20 different property owners.
2. A notice of the application will be published by Permitting staff in the official county newspaper and another newspaper of general circulation.
3. The Notice of Application and related documents are posted on the Permitting web site under [Public Notices](#).
4. The applicant is required to install a [notice board](#) that must be placed in a conspicuous place on the property throughout the permit process so that it is visible to people passing by the property. Additional notice boards may be required as determined by Permitting.

The cost of the board is the applicant's responsibility. Permitting staff will send the applicant written instructions regarding the specific requirements for the notice board.

5. Notice of the application is also provided to anyone who writes, calls or emails Permitting requesting information regarding the SVAR request.

Method for Processing

The decision on a Shoreline Variance is an administrative recommendation made by Permitting staff, subject to review and final approval by the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). This process generally takes six months to one year provided no appeals are filed or substantial additional information is required. If the proposal is subject to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the Permitting Division will issue the SEPA threshold determination prior to issuance of the variance decision.

Upon conclusion of the review of the Shoreline Variance, Permitting staff will issue a written permit recommendation based on the written record. A copy of the recommendation is mailed to the applicant and to all parties who have written, called or emailed to Permitting. Permitting also sends the recommendation to DOE for review and final approval.

Appeals of the Shoreline Variance decision must be made to the State Shorelines Hearings Board. Requests for review by the Hearings Board must be received by the Shoreline Hearings Board within twenty-one (21) days of the "date of filing." For an approval, the "date of filing" for the purposes of an appeal is the date that the final DOE decision is transmitted to the Permitting Division and the applicant. For a denial, the "date of filing" for the purposes of an appeal is the date that DOE receives Permitting's recommendation.

In those cases where a proposed action for a Shoreline Variance also requires other County permits, the following procedures shall apply:

1. When other related permits require a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner, the review of the Shoreline Variance shall be combined with the other permits(s). When the Hearing

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Examiner makes a recommendation, then the Shoreline Variance will be mailed to the Department of Ecology for their review and decision.

2. When other permits are administratively approved, review of the Shoreline Variance application may be combined with other permits dependent on the granting of the variance.
3. In all cases of combined review, the most informative provisions for notification and processing shall govern the review of Shoreline Variance requests.

Criteria for Approval of a Shoreline Variance

Washington Administrative Code 173-27-170 and KCC 21A.44.090 establish criteria to be used by the County when reviewing an applicant's request for a SVAR. An applicant for a SVAR must demonstrate how the application is consistent with the appropriate criteria in the SVAR application.

References

King County

[King County Code](#)

Shoreline Master Program, see [KCC 21A.25 SHORELINES](#)

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

Shoreline Master Program, see Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 6

Department of Local Services, [Permitting Division](#)

[Shoreline packet](#)

[Fees](#)

[On-line Permit Status, Invoice
Payment and Inspection Scheduling](#)

[IVR Inspection Scheduling, phone number and codes](#)



Washington State

[Shorelines Hearings Board](#)

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) [Chapter 173-27, Shoreline Management](#)

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) [Chapter 90.58, Shoreline Management Act of 1971](#)