Construction Expectations

In an effort to help your project run as smoothly as possible, this document Aarow Building’s practices and what to expect during the construction process. Hopefully, we have anticipated and answered questions you may have. If not, please do not hesitate to contact Aarow Building with questions. Throughout the remaining body of this document Aarow Building will be referred to as ‘the builder’.

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# Communication

Communication is key to ensure each project is completed on time; and, for our clients to always know what is happening on their project. For the quickest response, and most up-to-date information, please direct all calls, texts, and emails directly to your designated project manager. The builder and project manager both keep their mobile phones “on” and are ready to communicate promptly via phone call, text, or emails.

The only reason a client would not receive an immediate response during business hours would be because the builder is currently in a meeting, on a phone call, or in the middle of a hands-on situation that cannot be interrupted. Please be assured a prompt response is our first priority once available.

# Availability

The builder wants to be as responsive as possible, while trying to maintain a healthy balance between work and their families. As such, we try to be disciplined about keeping to the following schedule:

## Monday through Friday 7:30AM – 4:30PM

During these hours, the builder is 100% here and available for you. Clients should never hesitate to contact any builder in the case of an emergency.

## Emails/Texts

Every client can expect a response from the builder confirming a message has been received if sent during the working hours listed above; and, if the subject cannot be addressed or answered right away, then an estimated time will be given for when the client can expect an accurate response. A conformation message should always be received within hours, and every subject fully addressed within twenty-four hours, unless specified differently.

## Phone Calls

Direct conversation can be very helpful to better describe a particular circumstance or issue. A client will receive a follow up email or printed document summarizing phone conversations regarding changes to scope of work, plans, and issues or concerns from the client or the builder.

## Vacations and Sick days

The client will receive notice of any company observed holidays that fall during the project prior to commencement. The client will also be notified in advance if any of the builders involved with the project will be on a scheduled vacation, along with clear details regarding who will oversee that team member’s responsibilities. The client will be notified ASAP of the builder taking a sick day, along with clear details regarding who will oversee that team member’s responsibilities.

# Construction Document Review

## Design Review

This is the process of transferring the in-depth details and knowledge of a client’s project from the sales and estimating team to the project manager. This process helps give the project manager a thorough understanding of all the construction requirements and design elements. This review may result in the need for additional clarification on certain elements and may generate additional suggestions for design improvements.

# Site Visits

## Encouraged Visits

There are three (3) visits we would strongly encourage every client to be on-site during the construction process:

* Site layout – The builders would like the client to approve the final location of the project before starting excavation.
* Rough ins:
  + Electrical – The builder would like the client to approve the location of light fixtures, can lights, fans, audio/video equipment, receptacles, and switches.
  + Plumbing – The builder would like the client to approve valve locations for showers, faucets, and any gas fixtures.
  + HVAC – The builder would like the client to approve floor and ceiling register locations. Please help us take into account your furniture layout, window treatments, and any other possible items that could obstruct potential airflow.
  + Recessed niches – The builder would like the client to approve any framed recessed niches (built-ins, artwork, TV’s. shower shelving, etc.)

## Walkthroughs

* Home Orientation – upon substantial completion of the project and after the builder has completed the company walkthroughs, the client will walk through with the project manager to receive an orientation of the completed project. This meeting will also consist of a detailed inspection of the entire project by the homeowner, as well as project manager, to determine any areas that need further attention in order for the project to be fully completed.
* Final Walkthrough – the client’s last walkthrough with the project manager to examine the completion of any areas that required further attention from the previous home orientation walkthrough.

## Optional Visits

During construction, the builder encourages the client to visit the project as much as the client would like. However, there are a few requests the builder would ask each client to:

* Be Careful - While the builder takes every precaution possible to ensure the safety of anyone on one of our job sites, remember that construction sites can still be dangerous. Please pay attention to all signage and safety barriers.
* Time – If possible, try to come after 3:30PM. This will allow time for most debris and tools to be cleaned up – helping create a safer environment to walk around and see your project.
* Trade Partners – We are very proud of the quality of work, as well as integrity each of our partners provide on our job sites. While all questions or concerns regarding the project should be directed to the project manager, please feel free to get to know this outstanding group of craftspeople.
* Quality Control – Please feel comfortable bringing any areas of concern immediately to the project manager. It may be rectified immediately, or the project manager may decide to handle a particular item at a later date. In order to maintain the project’s schedule, sometimes it is easier to address a number of areas at once, instead of at separate times.

# Scheduling

Prior to signing any contracts, the builder will provide the client with an estimated completion date. A large amount of time is invested into the scheduling of every project and the builder is confident with the time frames provided. The client will receive schedule updates during the weekly site meeting with the project manager.

## Source of Delays

The following are the only acceptable causes of delay on the builder’s project:

* Weather – There are many tasks that cannot be performed in wet weather due to safety concerns. At times, weather can have a rippling effect a project’s schedule.
* Inspections – Our local inspectors are generally very responsive within 24 hours, but sometimes due to shortages in inspector staffing, there can be a delay. This is unlikely but does happen on occasion.
* Client-initiated change orders – While the scheduled contemplation date of a project is a top priority, the builder is passionate about every project being exactly what the client had hoped for. If this requires the project stopping on order for the client to decide whether or not to adjust an aspect of the building plans – that’s fine! (See Change Order section for full details).
* Plans – Sometimes layouts make sense on paper but prove to have physical limitations out on the field. Many of these instances can be resolved with a phone call; however, some may require more evaluation and insight from an architect or engineer. The builder is not responsible for additional time required to address these issues from the plans not provided by them.
* Special Order Items – While the builder will make every effort to place all orders in a manner that will allow the schedule to not be affected sometimes it is out of the control of the builder when items arrive.

## Unforeseen Conditions

If during demolition of renovation projects any unforeseen obstructions are found the owner shall be notified immediately as to any additional expenses to relocate or remove such obstacles. The builder is very thorough during the design and pre-construction phase; however, even with this preparation, unforeseen difficulties are possible.

# Insurance

For your reference, Aarow Building carries two types of company insurance:

* General Liability – This covers the builder in the event of other personal injury claims. This insurance only covers the builder and does not cover anyone else, including the client.
* Worker’s Compensation – This covers uninsured trade partners and Aarow Building’s employees in the event of a jobsite related injury.

Additionally, the builder may purchase a Builder’s Risk policy which covers the house during construction against typical hazards such as fire and windstorm. Alternatively, the client may have opted to obtain this type of hazardous insurance independently.

Please note that when it comes to insurance, the builder strongly recommend that you speak with your insurance agent to discuss all of your options.

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# Construction Draws

## Draw Process

Draws are scheduled to be issues every two weeks. Each draw will then be paid within 5 business days. Each draw includes the dollar amount, copies of each receipt included in the draw, and any other necessary information regarding the draw.

# Customer Selections

The builders are passionate about making every project the client’s project. We never assume the right to make decisions on finishes or styles for any product. While the selection process may seem straight forward, it actually requires a significant amount of time and practice. Choosing the selections for a project can be overwhelming when trying to remember model numbers, colors, finishes, allowances, etc., so the builders are there every step of the way to help simplify it; making the selection process fun and exciting.

The client is never alone when selecting paint colors, tiles, appliances, fixtures, siding, decking, flooring, or any other products that will go into the project. The builders’ selection coordinator will be present at all meetings to help the client choose products that complement the project’s style and aesthetic while staying within the budgeted allowances. The selection coordinator is responsible for documenting all decisions made from meetings, as well as updating the selection list. Whenever a change or update is made to the selection list, the selection coordinator will send the updated list to the client for approval. All selections will have a model number and a sample or photo.

## Selection Schedule

The builders encourage the client to have all selections made prior the start of construction. This will allow for the proper accommodation of lead times for building products, as well as provide enough time for new selections to be made in the event of back ordered or discontinued products.

In the event that selections are not completed prior to construction, the builder will provide the client with a Customer Selection Schedule document. This document will list the selections remaining to be chosen, along with due dates for each item. The selection coordinator is responsible for updating the Customer Selection Schedule document and sending it to the client for approval after each revision.

## Vendor Selection

The builders have an extensive list of vendors enabling us to purchase almost any product form one of our own trusted and recommended suppliers. However, in the rare circumstance one of our vendors cannot supply a particular product, or the client requests certain products to be supplied by a different vendor, some caveats may apply:

* If an item is not available locally, the builder can have it shipped. The cost of shipping is then added to the cost of the item.
* If an item is not part of an allowance and the client chooses to pick out a product of vendor that is not recommended, this could result in a price increase.
* If a client chooses a product or vendor that is not from the builder’s recommended list, we reserve the right not to warranty that item. This is especially true with suppliers that also act as a trade partner, such as cabinet makers or countertop installers.

## Purchasing

When it comes to buying the products the client has selected, there are a few additional pieces of information that might be found helpful:

* Who buys? The builder is fully responsible for the purchasing of all products selected for the client’s home.
* Price increases. Depending on how much time has passed since finalizing a client’s selections and the signing of the contract, certain markets may have experienced a price increase. No selections will be ordered until a contract is signed and a deposit has been received. The builder is not responsible for the additional costs incurred from a price increase.

# Change Orders

Once the Construction Documents (the Scope of Work, Construction Plans, and Construction Contract) are finalized any change made is considered a change order.

## Requesting a Change

All change requests should be made in writing (email is fine). Occasionally, a change will be requested verbally (often during walk throughs). In either case, the builder will evaluate the feasibility of the change, calculate the cost of the change, and provide the client with a written change order for approval.

Change Order Documentation

Since there can be a number of changes made over the course of a project, the builder creates individual change orders for each item. The change order form will reference the description and cost of the change, the original contract total amount, plus the total cost of previously approved change orders. This helps the client always be aware of the current total cost of the project before signing a new change order.

## Change Order Fees

A research and production fee will be applied to each change, regardless of their complexity.

## Change Order Definition

To avoid confusion, it is important to try to define what constitutes a Change Order:

* Single item, multiple trade-partners – if we get a request to change or add a single item and it involves multiple trade-partners, it is still only one charge. For instance, a request to add a wet bar involves electricians, plumbers, cabinet makers, countertop makers, and trim carpenters; however, it is still only one charge.
* Single request, multiple items – Conversely, if a single request involves distinct separate items, each separate item is its own charge. For instance, the client requests to change the flooring in a bedroom from carpet to wood, and at the same time, also requests to change the door to a pocket door – that is two separate and distinct changes despite the fact that they were requested at the same time.
* Corrections – If we are fixing something that was not done in accordance with the original Construction Documents, this does not constitute a change.
* Large changes – Significant changes, requiring design work or revisions to building plans, will be charged an appropriate design fee according to size and scope of the change requested.

## Timing of Change Order Payment

Most often, payment for a change order is due upon receipt unless the changes will not take place until quite some time in the future. If the payment will be in the future, either a specific date or triggering event (such as the completion of some specific item) will be specified. When that date or triggering event is reached, payment will then be due.

# Allowances

To help expedite the completions of a proposal, the builder will set allowances is to help the client have an accurate understanding of what the costs will be for a particular project without having to figure out every detail. Generally, allowance do not include labor or installation costs. If labor is part of an allowance it will be clearly specified. Taxes and delivery fees are included in the allowances.

## Variance Documentation

Variances to allowances (both positive and negative) automatically become change orders. The change will be documented. Allowance variances do not result in a change order fee.

## Allowances Categories

* Exterior trim – Includes material costs only (decking per square foot, cost per single column, railings per linear foot).
* Cabinetry – Includes construction and installation costs as well as knobs/handles (unless specified separately) and other hardware such as hinges, lazy susans, drawer glides, etc. It also includes any specialty glass door fronts or shelving.
* Countertops – Includes the countertop fabrication, backsplashes (if matching backsplashes were specified), installation, and all cutouts for cooktops, sinks, and faucet holes.
* Plumbing fixtures – Includes all physical components that make up each fixture (trim kit, valve, handles, etc.). In your proposal, the builder specifies an allowance for each plumbing fixture in the project.
* Electrical fixtures – Includes the actual fixture cost. In your proposal, the builder specifies an allowance for each electrical fixture in the project. All receptacles, switches, recessed can lights, and wiring are not included in allowance totals unless specified otherwise.
* Flooring – Flooring (carpet, hardwood, and tile) allowances are the material costs only. Labor and other related supplies are not included. If alternative installation products are required, they will be noted and priced separately.
* Tile – Allowance is for material cost only. Does not include related installation products or labor.
* Appliances – Includes the specified appliances given to the builder from the client. If the client did not supply a list, the builder will provide an allowance for each appliance in the project. Appliance installation is part of the appliance allowance but is broken out separately for the client.
* Door hardware – Includes all interior and exterior door hardware. In your proposal, the builder will provide an allowance for each hardware location.
* Bath accessories – Includes all towel bars and rings, tissue paper holders, mirrors, and shower enclosures. In your proposal, the builder specifies an allowance for each bath accessory in the project.
* Landscaping – Includes all necessary materials and labor to complete landscaping per provided site plan. If site plan is not detailed, the builder will provide an allowance after receiving feedback from the client.

# Occupancy

## Certificate of Occupancy

Once construction is complete, the builder will order the final inspection of the home from the local building department. After completing the final inspection, the building department will issue the Certificate of Occupancy (also called the CO), allowing the client to legally occupy the house.

## Punch List Walkthrough

The Punch List Walkthrough takes place shortly after the Certificate of Occupancy is obtained. The builder will contact you to set up the appointment. The Punch List Walkthrough has two primary goals:

* Orient the customer to their new home. This is a chance for the builder to share important details about your new home including the operation, location, and recommended maintenance procedures for various components.
* The builder will provide an opportunity for the client to make a visual inspection of their new home.

## Punch List

Defects noted during the walkthrough get listed on the punch list. The builder will complete any repairs or other items noted as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the walkthrough. Ideally, the builder will be allowed to retain a key to the home during this period in order to facilitate the completion of the punch list.

## Visible Defects Rule

While the builder strives to make your house perfect, inevitably there will be small imperfections (paint touchup, small scratches, or similar touch up items). The rule of thumb we use for determining which of these items the builder will fix is whether or not they are observable in normal lighting conditions to the naked eye. This rule exceeds the Residential Construction Performance Guidelines document published by the National Association of Home Builders and helps establish a reasonable level of accountability for the builder with respect to visible defects. If a disagreement occurs over the visual appearance of an item the Residential Construction Performance Guidelines will be the governing document for resolving the matter.

## Cleanup

Prior to the client occupying the new space, the builder will do a final cleanup of the yard and the interior and exterior of the house.

## Final Draw

Contractually, the completion of construction is indicated by the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy and the subsequent delivery of the Certificate of Occupancy to the client. The client then has seven (7) business days to schedule and complete the Punch List Walkthrough. At the end of either that seven (7) business day period (if no walkthrough has been scheduled) or immediately after the walkthrough, the final draw becomes immediately due.

Additionally, if payment for any Change Orders or Charge Order fees are still outstanding at this time, the final draw amount includes payment of those outstanding amounts. Note that the final draw is neither a holdback nor a reserve and is not in any way dependent on the completion of any punch list items identified in the walkthrough.

## Possession

The Construction Agreement specifies that the client agrees not to occupy or allow others to occupy the home until all payments (the final draw and payment of all outstanding Change Orders and Change Order fees) have been made. Once those payments have been made, the client is free to move in and take possession at their convenience.

# Warranty

The builder’s warranty starts on the date the Certificate of Occupancy is issued. The builder conducts a 3-month and 12-month warranty walkthrough for all projects. The builder will send a formal letter to the client requesting a time for the builder to come out and inspect. More specifics regarding the builder’s warranty are thoroughly covered in the Warranty and all clients should read this document carefully.

## Guidelines

Most of the time, the decision as to whether or not an item is covered is fairly obvious. There are times when it is not so clear and, in those cases, we refer to a document published by the National Association of Home Builders called the Residential Construction Performance Guidelines.

This document protects both the client and the builder by setting forth a comprehensive list of construction guidelines to which the builder (by reference to this document in the Warranty) agrees to be held accountable. In addition to describing these expectations, it also elaborates on what the builder will do should any of these expectations not be met.

## Manufacturer’s Warranties

By contract, the builder assigns any manufacturer’s warranties directly to the client. Manufacturer’s warranties mostly cover things like appliances, HVAC equipment, water heaters, fans, etc. Any item that is covered under a manufacturer’s warranty is not covered by the builder; however, the builder will coordinate on your behalf. We will leave you all instruction manuals and documentation that came with any of these appliances. Usually a warranty registration card is included in this documentation and it is the client’s responsibility to fill these out in order to register their ownership of the various products.

## Requesting Warranty Service

In the event of an emergency situation, call us directly. Otherwise, all other warranty service requests should be in writing (mail, fax, or email – see the Contact page contact details), and ideally wait until your next scheduled warranty walkthrough.

# Miscellaneous

After construction is over, the builder enjoys maintaining continuing relationships with our clients. In addition to warranty support, we hope that you will allow us to use you and your home as references for our company.

## Website

With the client’s permission, we may want to display pictures of your new home on our website and social media pages. In some cases, we like to describe the home and include the client’s goals and how we went about fulfilling those goals. The client’s name and address are never revealed.

## Reviews and Referrals

Upon completion of the project, the builder would greatly appreciate each client completing an anonymous Client Survey. The builder would also love to have each client willing to be used as a reference if they are comfortable.

## Keys

At the end of the project, the builder will supply the client with two house keys, plus the copies the builder used for access during construction. The builder will also assist you in resetting the keypad on your garage door. When completed no one will have access to your home except you.