FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Citizen Self-Service ("CSS") Portal

For Residential, OSSF/"Septic" and Health permit questions, contact Collin County Development Services at 972-548-5585 or DevelopmentServices@collincountytx.gov

For Commercial permit questions, contact the Collin County Fire Marshal's Office at 972-548-5576 or FMadmin@collincountytx.gov

For Plan/Plat questions, contact Collin County Engineering at 972-548-3727 or Engineering@collincountytx.gov

For culvert/right-of-way questions, contact Collin County Public Works at 972-548-3700 or PubWorks@collincountytx.gov

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. **What is CSS?**

   CSS stands for Citizen Self Service. Starting **November 1, 2023**, all **NEW** permit and **NEW** plan applications will need to be processed through this online CSS Portal. Customers will use the CSS Portal to submit plans online, apply for permits, schedule inspections, receive comments on submitted plans & permits, and pay fees. Customers will also be able to track the real time progress of their plan and permit applications.

   Citizen Self-Service Portal

2. **How do I register in CSS?**

   Registration is simple! Once you are in the Citizen Self-Service Portal, click on **Login or Register** and you will be walked through the steps. For more detailed instructions, open our How to Register for a CSS Account document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

3. **Can I use any web browser with CSS?**

   Chrome is the recommended web browser for the Citizen Self Service Portal; however, the portal works with Edge as well.

4. **I have previously submitted permit and plan applications to the county. Will I have to register in the new CSS Portal?**

   Yes. In order to be able to start any **NEW** application, you will need to register.

5. **Can I still drop off documents and/or a USB flash drive to start an application?**

   No. As of **November 1, 2023**, all **NEW** permit and **NEW** plan applications must be processed through the online CSS Portal.

6. **CSS says my account has been locked out because I entered the wrong password. What do I do?**

   Wait three minutes and try again. As long as you remember your password and are entering it correctly, the system will let you in after it resets. If you need to reset your password, click the **Forgot Password** link, and you will receive an email to reset your password.

7. **If I don't have a computer or tablet, how do I use the CSS Portal?**

   For registration and general inquiries related to your applications and inspections, a smart phone is sufficient.

   For more complex activities that require attaching documents, a computer set-up will be available in the lobby of Development Services. Local libraries usually allow members the use of their computers for free as well.

8. **What are your hours of operation, and where are you located?**

   Business hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 4pm, excluding county holidays. We are located at 4690 Community Avenue, Suite 200, McKinney, TX 75071.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

9. **What if I have an existing active permit or plan application?**

   If you have an existing active permit or plan application in the review process as of **November 1, 2023**, it will not be available on the CSS Portal.

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   For Plan/Plat questions, contact Collin County Engineering at 972-548-3727 or Engineering@collincountytx.gov.

   For culvert/right-of-way questions, contact Collin County Public Works at 972-548-3700 or PubWorks@collincountytx.gov.

10. **Will I be able to see previous permits and plan applications in the new CSS Portal?**

    The most basic historical permit information will be available on **November 2, 2023**, with additional documentation being added in the future. The most basic historical plan information can be obtained by contacting the Engineering department.

11. **How do I apply for a permit?**

    For instructions on how to apply for a permit, use our How to Apply for a Permit document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

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12. **How do I apply for a plan?**

For instructions on how to apply for a plan, use our How to Apply for a Plan document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

13. **Why can't I find my address when I search for it?**

Only enter the street number and street name when searching for the address. Do not include the suffix when searching for your address (i.e. exclude Drive, Parkway, Road, etc.). Also, click the magnifying glass or press **Enter** on your keyboard to conduct the search.

14. **Why can't I add the owner/co-applicant/etc… as another contact in CSS?**

If the person has already registered in the CSS Portal, you can search for them when adding contacts.

If the person has not already registered in the CSS Portal, you can still add them as a contact in your application by manually entering their information.

NOTE: The email address will need to match the one they register with, if they choose to register in the future. Otherwise, they will not have access to this permit or plan application record.

15. **How will I know if my address/parcel is within the city limits, the ETJ or in the unincorporated area?**

To make this determination use the Interactive Map.

16. **Do contractors have to register with Collin County prior to being able to perform within the County's jurisdiction?**

No. Contractor registration is not required by the County in order to perform work within the County's jurisdiction.

17. **Does the general contractor/subcontractor have to obtain/apply for all permits?**

Anyone can obtain the appropriate permits.

18. **Can a homeowner apply for a permit or plan, or must a licensed contractor be hired?**

A homeowner can apply for the permit or plan.

19. **How do I to check the status of a review?**

On your CSS dashboard, navigate to "View my Permits" or "View my Plans". Choose the correct permit or plan, and you will see the status in the workflow.

20. **I applied for the wrong permit in CSS. What do I do?**

If the error relates to residential, OSSF/"Septic" or health, call Development Services at 972-548-5585 or email at developmentservices@collincountytx.gov.

If the error relates to a Commercial permit, contact the Collin County Fire Marshal's Office at 972-548-5576 or FMadmin@collincountytx.gov.

If the error relates to a Plan/Plat, contact Collin County Engineering at 972-548-3727 or Engineering@collincountytx.gov.

If the error relates to a culvert/right-of-way, contact Collin County Public Works at 972-548-3700 or PubWorks@collincountytx.gov.

County staff will delete the incorrect permit or plan, and then you can apply for the correct permit or plan.

PAYMENT QUESTIONS

21. **How do I know when I need to make a payment?**

If you are the applicant, an email will be sent to you when a fee is generated for payment. You must log-in to your CSS account to make the payment. For instructions on how to make a payment, use our "How to Make a Payment" document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

If you are another contact listed on the application, you will not receive the email, but if you have a CSS account matching the email address of your contact information in CSS, your Dashboard will show any invoices ready for payment. Please make sure you are checking often when you have an application or inspections in process.

22. **How do I pay my fees?**

For instructions on how to make a payment, use our How to Make a Payment document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

23. **What forms of payment do you accept?**

The CSS Portal accepts Visa, MasterCard or Discover credit cards. If you would like to pay in person with cash, check or credit card, go to the Fire Marshal's Office at 4690 Community Avenue, Suite 200, McKinney, TX 75071.

24. **Is there a merchant and/or processing fee charged for making payments with a credit card?**

Yes, the merchant fee for all credit card payments is 3.95% ($6.95 minimum). **These nonrefundable fees display as "Processing Fees" and are not collected by the County.**

25. **I'm the owner/co-applicant/etc…. Why can't I see any invoices for my submittals?**

The original applicant (whomever is logged in when applying) will automatically be assigned as the billing contact. If you need to change the billing contact, please let the original applicant or us know, and it can be changed for you.

PERMIT QUESTIONS

26. **How can I print my permit?**

Once the permit is approved and released for issuance, navigate to the permit on your CSS Dashboard. If the permit is set up to be printed, click the blue printer icon in the upper right corner of the screen. NOTE: Not all permits will be set up this way.

27. **How do I add additional contacts to my permit?**

Contacts can be added by clicking on the Contacts tab, and then clicking **Add Contact**. As long as your new contractor has an account in CSS, you can add them to your application at any time by searching existing contacts. If they don't have an account, you will need to manually add them.

28. **How do I remove contacts on my permit?**

Contacts can be removed by clicking on the Contacts tab, and then clicking on the **Remove** button on the contact.

INSPECTION QUESTIONS

29. **How do I schedule and/or cancel an inspection in CSS?**

If inspections are available to be scheduled in CSS, only the applicant can schedule and/or cancel an inspection. For instructions, use our How to Request an Inspection document at Citizen Self-Service Portal User Guides.

NOTE: Not all permit and plan types require field inspections and some are scheduled internally by the department through which you originally applied.

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30. **How to check the status of an inspection?**

On your CSS dashboard, navigate to the correct permit and click on **Failed Inspections** on the right, or click on the Inspections tab in the middle of the page.

Click on the Checklist tab, and the notes will display on the screen.

31. **How do I cancel an inspection in CSS?**

If the inspection was originally scheduled in CSS by the applicant, it can be canceled by the applicant. NOTE: Not all permit and plan types require field inspections and some are scheduled (and must be canceled) internally by the department through which you originally applied.

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