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South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation



Board of Registration for
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GUIDELINES FOR SURVEY AND PLAT USES

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 40-22-270(7), surveyors licensed in the State of South Carolina are required to affix their personal signature and seal when filing or recording a map, plat, survey or other document within the definition of surveying with the clerk of court or the register of deeds for any county. The signature and seal constitutes a certification that the document was prepared by the licensee or under his or her direct supervision and serves to establish responsibility on such licensee that the document meets the requirements of the Standards of Practice Manual for Surveying in South Carolina ("the Manual") promulgated by the South Carolina Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors ("the Board"). S.C. Reg. 49-400 et seq. The purpose of the Manual is to promote uniform and accurate surveys in order that surveyed property "can be readily located, mapped and described in a definitive and easily understood manner." S.C. Reg. 49-400(A)(2). To that end, the Manual provides licensed surveyors with mandatory guidelines which are of value to property owners and "assists the Clerks of Courts in the various counties of South Carolina in receiving and accepting for recordation maps that are in compliance with appropriate standards and statutory requirements." S.C. Reg. 49-400(A)(2) and (B)(2).

The Board has recently experienced a surge in inquiries and concerns from its surveyor licensees that municipalities and other local governmental offices throughout South Carolina may be misinterpreting the purpose of a property survey and are requiring, prior to filing or recording the survey, the inclusion of information that is outside the survey's purpose and may contravene the Manual. It is the Board's intent, through these guidelines, to provide guidance for both its surveyor licensees and local governmental offices as to the appropriate information to be included on a survey.

According to Black's Law Dictionary, a survey is "the process by which a parcel of land is measured and its contents ascertained; also a statement of the result of such survey, with the courses and distances and the quantity of the land." This definition correctly describes what a property survey in the State of South Carolina is intended to represent. See S.C. Reg. 49-460(A) which sets forth the Manual's requirements for general property surveys.

Examples of items that should not be placed on a survey include but are not limited to:

- proposed improvements not yet constructed, installed, or erected
- engineering data
- interpretation of the uses of existing structures
- future conditions of the property
- developmental restrictions

The items listed above all represent information or conditions that are outside the scope of a survey as defined by Black's Law Dictionary and the Manual.

The Board also recognizes that there may be certain limited information that a municipality or governmental agency may desire to go on public record by means of a recorded plat that could be beneficial to the municipality or governmental agency. Examples of such information may include some of the items listed above including proposed improvements and developmental restrictions. The Board does not prohibit a surveyor from placing such information on a survey provided that all such information is in a separate section of the survey and is clearly noted in the following manner: "The following information has been provided by others and is not certified or verified in any way by the surveyor. This information is being provided for information only."

Approved by the Board on May 7, 2019