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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN  
MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HUMAN SETTLEMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENT  
THIMPHU : BHUTAN



"Construction Industry: Solution through innovation and improved technology"

MoWHS/Sec/36/2022-2023 / 293

July 11, 2022

## NOTIFICATION

### On Implementation of Fire Escape Routes and Exits

In order to ensure the safety of residents and facilitate timely evacuation and exit during disaster due to fire in buildings, the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement issues the following directives for immediate implementation and compliance. This notification has reference to the 45<sup>th</sup> Policy and Coordination convened on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 and is as per the fire safety provisions of the Bhutan Building Regulations, 2018 and the Building Code of Bhutan, 2018.

1. The construction of all types of buildings with the exception of two storied residential buildings must have separate provisions of fire safety exits. Henceforth, approval for construction should only be granted where the drawings have incorporated the provisions for fire safety routes, exits or staircases.
2. All existing institutional buildings, must rectify and incorporate fire safety routes, exits or staircases as per the existing regulations and standards within one year from the date of issuance of this notification.
3. Fire safety routes, exits and staircases are also encouraged to be constructed for existing commercial and public buildings.

Issued for strict compliance with immediate effect.

Chencho Dorji  
SECRETARY

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Minister, MoWHS, for kind information.
2. Dasho Secretaries, 10 Ministries for kind information.
3. Dasho Dzongdas, 20 Dzongkhags for kind information and necessary actions.
4. Dasho Thrompons, 4 Thromdes for kind information and necessary actions.
5. Director, DHS & DES, MoWHS for necessary action and follow up.
6. File



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"Construction Industry: Solution through innovation and improved technology"

MoWHS/DHS/CDRD/Adm/2020-2021/2466

Date: October 28,2020

## CIRCULAR

### Subject: Construction of Basements in Areas with Spatial Plans

The Ministry of Works and Human Settlement vide its 28th Policy and Planning Coordination Meeting held on October 07,2020 has made the following decisions regarding the construction of basements in areas with spatial plans such as Valley Development Plan, Structure Plan, Local Area Plan and Action Area Plan:

1. The basement shall be completely below the lowest natural ground level irrespective of the topographical conditions of the site.
2. The maximum number of the basement floor is two for commercial buildings and one for residential buildings provided the technical requirements are fulfilled and assessment of risks to the adjacent plots and structures are carried out. However, restrictions as reflected in the Spatial Plan and its Development Control Regulations (DCR) will continue to be imposed.
3. The basement shall be within the building footprint.
4. The height of basement shall be determined by its functions.
5. The use of the basement shall be determined by the function of the building and permissible uses in the Spatial Plan and its DCR. However, it shall not be permitted for residential/dwelling units".

Issued for strict compliance with immediate effect.

  
Dorji Tshering  
(Zhabtog Lyonpo)

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Secretaries, 10 Ministries for kind information.
2. Dasho Dzongdas, 20 Dzongkhags for kind information and necessary actions.
3. Dasho Thrompons, 4 Thromdes for kind information and necessary actions.
4. Director, DHS & DES, MoWHS for necessary actions.

Telephone No:- 322620/335799/323441/329946/326451/325206/330335/332686/322920

Post Box No. 791



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"Construction Industry: Solution through innovation and improved technology"

MoWHS/DHS/CDRD/Adm/2020-2021/ 2466

Date: October 28,2020

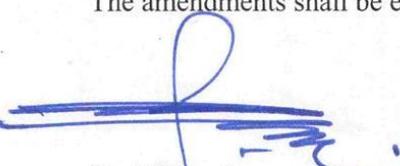
### NOTIFICATION

**Subject: Amendment of Section 12, 163 and 177 of Bhutan Building Regulations 2018 (BBR 2018)**

The Ministry of Works and Human Settlement vide its 28th Policy and Planning Coordination Meeting held on October 07,2020 has amended following sections in the BBR 2018:

Section No.	Original Section	Amendment
12	A basement may be permitted based on the site conditions but shall not be for any purpose other than parking and services. The basement shall cover same size as the building above and the height shall be maximum of 2.5 meters.	The basement may be permitted subject to the following conditions: a) The basement shall be completely below the lowest natural ground level irrespective of the topographical conditions of the site. b) The maximum number of the basement floor is two for commercial buildings and one for residential buildings provided the technical requirements are fulfilled and assessment of risks to the adjacent plots and structures are carried out. c) The basement shall be within the building footprint. d) The height of basement floor shall be determined by its functions. e) The use of basement shall be determined by the function of the building but it shall not be permitted for residential/dwelling purposes.
163 Offences Schedule II (12)	Use a basement for a purpose other than parking and services.	Use of a basement as habitable or dwelling units.
177 Definitions	Basement means "the floor below the ground level".	Basement means "floor below the lowest natural ground level irrespective of the topographical conditions of the site".

The amendments shall be effective from the date of issuance of this notification.

  
Dorji Tshering  
(Zhabtog Lyonpo)

Telephone No:- 322620/335799/323441/329946/326451/325206/330335/332686/322920

Post Box No. 791



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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN  
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"Construction Industry: Solution through innovation and improved technology"

MoWHS/DHS/CDRD/Adm/2021-2022/2538

August 20, 2021

**CIRCULAR**

**Subject: Construction of Jamthog and its Use.**

The Ministry of Works and Human Settlement vide its 37<sup>th</sup> Policy and Planning Coordination Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2021 has made the following decisions regarding the construction of Jamthog and its Use for uniform implementation throughout the country:

1. The use of the Jamthog space shall be determined by the functions of the building and its permissible use in both planned and un-planned areas.
2. The construction of Jamthog shall be approved and implemented based on the following technical requirements;
  - 2.1 The prop heights of peripheral columns to be maintained at maximum of 1500mm.
  - 2.2. Notwithstanding the above criteria 2.1, the maximum vertical distance between Phana Kheb and the edge of the main roof shall be maintained at 850mm.
  - 2.3. The maximum vertical distance between main roof and the Jamthog roof shall be maintained at 1000mm. The vertical distance shall be calculated from the edge of the Jamthog roof to the top of the main roof.
  - 2.4. The maximum permissible coverage area of the Jamthog roof shall be 2/3 of the main roof area.
  - 2.5 The technical requirements and standards for architectural proportions, structural safety and integrity, lighting and ventilation, room sizes and heights, fire safety, etc shall be as per the Bhutan Building Regulations 2018, Building Code of Bhutan 2018, Bhutanese Architectural Guidelines 2015 and other relevant rules and regulations.

Issued for strict compliance with immediate effect.

  
**Dorji Tshering,**  
**(Zhabtog Lyonpo)**

Copy to:

1. Dasho Secretaries, 10 Ministries for kind information.
2. Dasho Dzongdas, 20 Dzongkhags for kind information and necessary actions.
- 3: Dasho Thrompons, 4 Thromdes for kind information and necessary actions.
4. Director, DHS & DES, MoWHS for necessary actions.

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MoWHS/DHS/C&DRD-35/ADM/2021-2022/2593

Date: 09/06/2022

To,  
Dasho Dzongdag, 20 Dzongkhags  
Executive Secretaries, 4 Thromdes (List attached)

**Subject: Clarification on the Jamthog Circular**

Dasho(s)/Sir(s)/Madam(s)

This is in continuation to the earlier circular on the Jamthog provision wide letter No. MoWHS/DHS/CDRD/Adm/2021-2022/2538 dated August 20, 2021. While the respective Local Government Agencies are effectively implementing the circular issued, it has come to the notice of the Department that the criteria stated under 2.4 in the circular is found to be grossly interpreted differently by the respective Implementing Agencies. This has led ambiguities while according the approval for Jamthog construction. Henceforth, the following sub-requirements for the Jamthog proportion under criteria 2.4 shall be fulfilled during the implementation of the circular.

**Existing Criteria 2.4:** *The maximum permissible coverage area of the Jamthog roof shall be 2/3 of the main roof area.*

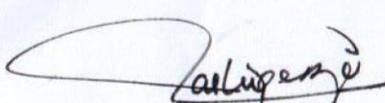
**Sub-requirements:** *Notwithstanding the above criteria, maximum length and breadth of the Jamthog plinth shall be 2/3 of the main building plinth respectively. Concurrently, the maximum permissible area of the Jamthog plinth shall be 45% of the main building plinth area.*

**In addition to above, the provision of Roof Cut-Out for any building shall not be allowed to maintain the proportion of the building with respect to its roof area.**

Therefore, the Department requests the Local Governments to strictly follow the above conditions while issuing the construction approval for any building.

Thank you for your continued support and looking forward for the same.

Yours sincerely,

  
Director, DHS.

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Zhabtog Lyonpo for kind information, please.
2. Dasho Secretary for kind information, please.
3. Director, DES, MoWHS for information and necessary actions.



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SAMTSE MUNICIPALITY  
"Towards Quality Infrastructure"



SD/MUN-08/2019-2020/ 731

13/07/2020

**Minor errors in the drawings/during implementation, for which the revised drawings need not be resubmitted:**

Sl. No.	Minor errors
1	Subtraction of design elements which does not change the structure of the building.
2	Subtraction of balconies or projections.
3	Subtraction of partition walls which does not affect the plumbing/electrical works.
4	Ground floor changed to commercial floor during implementation stage - application addressed to Municipal In charge shall be submitted explaining the changes.

**Major errors in the drawings/ during implementation for which, the revised drawings need to be resubmitted:**

Sl. No.	Major errors
1	Setback and other requirements if it is not maintained as per DCR.
2	If the façade/roof does not comply with the Architecture guidelines.
3	If the unattended levels due to site conditions affect the floor plans/usage of the building.
4	If the change in plan affects the façade or the structure of the building.
5	If there is change in Ground coverage or the built-up.
6	If there is change in use of the building. (Example: residential to commercial and vice versa).
7	Any other non-compliance as prescribed in Bhutanese Architecture Guidelines, LAP DCR's, BBR and any other regulation in place.

  
(Municipal In-charge)



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DZONGKHAG ADMINISTRATION, SAMTSE

"A prosperous community living in harmony with diverse culture and safe environment"



SD/Mun-08/2020-2021/

26/04/2021

To,  
Dasho Dungpas/Gups/Dungkhag Engineers,  
Samtse.

**Subject: Refinement of the Building approval process.**

Dashos/sirs/madams,

This is to notify on the building approval process and minimal requirements for the construction of houses/buildings for rural areas (both private and institutions/Government properties).

The preliminary DT meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021, streamlined the construction approval process. The review and revision in the building approval process is based on the following objectives:

1. To streamline construction practices in line with the national standards.
2. To ensure quality of construction and living spaces.
3. To avoid haphazard growth of settlements.
4. To ensure that Traditional Bhutanese Architecture is maintained.
5. To ensure strict compliance to Bhutan Building Rules and Regulations.

The Dzongkhag Human Settlement Sector/Municipality shall officially take over the construction approval both for private and major institutional constructions. It shall be taken note that these processes shall be specifically for house/building constructions.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Gewog Administration in consultation with Land Record Section:

Approval of temporary sheds – cowsheds, piggeries, poultry sheds, labor camps and similar (*Drawings may not be required for these*).

Single storey load bearing house (or when local materials are used) – sample drawings shall be provided (less than 100sqm Plinth area). However, the list of approvals given shall be submitted to Dzongkhag for every construction for monitoring and inspection by the Dzongkhag Team.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Dzongkhag Administration: Approval of any RCC building (Single, double and three storied houses) shall be provided by Dzongkhag Administration subject to fulfillment of all the documentary requirements.

*Whole set of Drawings list as available in Samtse website shall be required for these.*

The constructions shall be carried out only as per the approved set of drawings and unauthorized deviation from which shall be liable for penalties.



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**DZONGKHAG ADMINISTRATION, SAMTSE**

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The approval process, Turnaround Time (TaT) and revised construction forms are as follows:

**List of forms:**

1. Construction Application Form (Form 1)
2. Construction Agreement (Form 2a)
3. Construction Approval (Form 2b)
4. Application form for Occupancy Certificate (Form 3)
5. Completion certificate – Head Mason/thikadar (Form 4a)
6. Completion certificate – Electrician (Form 4a)

**For strict compliance.**

**Endorsed by:**

Nima Dukpa

**Thrizin (Dzongkhag Tshogdu)**



དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་གཞུང་།  
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DZONGKHAG ADMINISTRATION, SAMTSE

*"A prosperous community living in harmony with diverse culture and safe environment"*



SD/Mun-08/2020-2021/ 393

08/06/2021

To,  
Dasho Dungpas and Gups,  
Samtse Dzongkhag.

**Subject: Regulatory Review for building construction and maintenance.**

Dashos/sirs/madams,

With its proximity to the Indian States, Samtse is a sensitive Dzongkhag. The tangible aspects of the country's culture and tradition such as its Architecture remains an utmost factor to differentiate and create a unique identity of its place and the country.

In this context, the Dzongkhag Administration hereby instructs all the Dungkhags and Gewogs to comply with the following observations and recommendations:

1. All the houses without roofs shall have sloped roof constructed (at 11 to 15 degree slope).
2. Building Colour Code for new construction shall be as per the approved Colour Code for Samtse Dzongkhag and for old existing houses, approved Color code shall be applied during maintenance or repaint immediately.

In addition, following shall be the colour code to be practiced for roofing:

1. Private Houses (Any kind of residential/commercial structures): Green Roof.
2. Institutional/Corporations/Government offices: Red Roof.

Therefore, Drungkhags & Gewogs are hereby requested to inform the public accordingly & compliance strictly.

Yours sincerely,

Pasang Dorji  
Dzongdag

Copy to:

*Dzongkhag Engineer, DES for information & strict compliance  
DRO and BI's for information and strict compliance.  
Office copy*



དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་གཞུང་།  
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**DZONGKHAG ADMINISTRATION, SAMTSE**

*"A prosperous community living in harmony with diverse culture and safe environment"*

SD/ENGG-14/2022-2023/2995

Date: 07/09/2022

**For compliance and clarity on implementation of circulars and revised DCR.**

1. Rationalizing the implementation of inconsistencies and confusions created by circulars on jamthog via letters dated August 20, 2021 and 09/06/2022, the construction approving team have carried out following measures:
  - a) The jamthog approvals for Construction proposals that were given prior to July (fiscal year 2021-2022) were based on the circular MoWHS / DHS / C&DRD / Adm / 2021-2022 / 2538 dated August 20, 2021 which generally had the understanding of possibility to give 2/3 of main floor area as a jamthog floor area.
  - b) Jamthog approvals for Construction proposals received on and after July (fiscal year 2022-2023) were based on the revised circular and rectification made by the DHS, MoWHS via letter MoWHS/DHS/C&DRD/Adm/2021-2022/2593 dated 09/06/2022.
  
2. Additional clarification for the implementation of FAR calculation that was included in the revised DCR for samtse.
  - c) Calculation for the FAR shall be inclusive of the total built -up area from all the regular floors.
  - d) Basement and jamthog shall not be included in the FAR, however, there will be strict implementation of the requirements for jamthog and basement as per the circulars.
  
3. Fire exit staircases have been incorporated in the approvals with site plan that were issued after July 11 2022 (notification on implementation of fire exit routes).

Tika Ram Acharja  
Urban Planner

Krishna Kafley  
Architect

Ramesh Kumar Ghalley  
Dev. Regulatory Officer

Endorsed by:

Kinley Dorji  
Chief Dzongkhag Engineer

Pasang Dorji  
Dzongdag

Copy to:

1. Office copy and dzongkhag website.