

Creating Your Applicant FAQs

When launching your ViewPoint Cloud Permitting site, it's safe to assume that some of your applicants will have questions about the site and the process. Below are some tips for helping your applicants, along with some guidance for creating FAQs for your ViewPoint Cloud site.

Tips for helping your applicants.

Get familiar with the website.

Spend some time using the website with staff members. Apply for permits, go through a workflow, and really learn what the experience will be like for the applicants. That will help you speak much more confidently about the site when speaking to someone applying for the first time.

Know your audience.

Be ready for questions! If you're converting from paper to online, anticipate questions about the new system and why you've made this switch. For most communities, the reason is to help streamline processes, for security, and to keep all of the information and data organized and accessible. Be ready to articulate those goals!

Be ready to help!

Counter staff and city employees should be ready and available to help answer questions and speak confidently about the new website and process.

Create FAQs

Put together a brief set of FAQs for your applicants to explain some of the basics. We recommend including these FAQs on your city's website (for example, on the Building Department page if you're offering Building permits), at the city offices that are using the website, and even on your ViewPoint storefront. Use the suggested questions and answers to get started!

How long is this going to take?

It's best to address the "time factor" right away. With anything new, people are worried about how long it's going to take to learn what to do. Luckily, it only takes a few minutes to register and applying online is easy!

Our suggested answer:

Only a few minutes! The first application may take a few additional steps because of registering and learning the new process. But after that, it'll be even quicker!

How do I get started?

In order to apply, the citizen/contractor/etc. must register. It doesn't take long or very much information to complete.

Our suggested answer:

1. Go to {your ViewPoint Cloud site = yourcitystate.viewpointcloud.com}
2. Click Explore next to the category/department name
3. Click Select next to the type of permit.
4. Click Start next to the application you'd like to complete.
5. At that time, you'll be prompted to log in:
 - ★ *If you're logging in for the first time:*
 - Select Sign Up.
 - Enter in your email address.
 - Enter in what you'd like your password to be.
Please note: Passwords must have at least 8 characters and include 1 upper case letter, 1 lower case letter, and 1 digit.

★ *If you've previously registered on a ViewPoint Cloud site (here or in another town):*

- Enter in your email address and password.

Please note: If you do not remember your credentials, click on "Don't remember your password?" to reset your information

6. Once you're logged in, follow the steps on each page to complete the application.

Don't forget to log out when you're done!

★ **Tip:** Applicants will only have to register once. After that, if they need to apply for any more permits or licenses, they'll be able to log in with the same email address and password.

How do I apply for a permit/license/etc.?

Provide the basics steps here (see above for logging in and navigating). If your forms are a little more involved, you may want to include some specifics about those forms in particular. Otherwise, you can just explain how to navigate the site to complete an application.

When and how do I pay my permit fee?

This depends on the steps in your workflows. For example, if a staff member needs to review the application first, explain that once the application is submitted, the inspector/clerk/etc. will review the application, and then they (the applicant) will be notified via email when payment is due.

Can I pay with a check? This also depends on your settings. While our recommendation is to have everyone pay with a credit card, we do give you the option to allow for check or cash payments.

What happens next?

Depending on the number of record types and workflows, you may want to keep this general and explain that since it's all online, they can monitor the status of their application online and they'll also receive notifications via email as their application is reviewed and process. But, you should give a general outline of what to expect. Also, if you've enabled this option, it's worth mentioning that if a permit or license is being issued that it can be printed from home.

You can also explain that the applicant can log in and view their Inbox to view any tasks that are due and to view active records (their current applications).

Sample Applicant FAQ

These FAQs were developed for a city that wanted to offer online permitting initially at their Building Department office. They set up computer stations for applicants to use and had counter staff available to help.

How long is this going to take?

Only a few minutes. The first application may take a few additional steps because of registering and activating your account, and then learning the new process. But after that, it'll be even quicker!

How do I register?

Before you begin: When you register for the first time, you'll need to access your email account in order to activate your ViewPoint account. Make sure you have your email log in information handy in order to sign in from the computer. If you receive your email on your mobile device, you can activate your account from there too.

1. Go to {your ViewPoint Cloud site: yourcitystate.viewpointcloud.com} (the computer stations should be bookmarked to this site)
2. Scroll down to Building Department and click Explore.
3. Choose the type of permit by clicking Select.
4. Click Start next to the application you'd like to complete.
5. You'll be prompted to log in.
 - ★ *If you're logging in for the first time:*
 - Select Sign Up.
 - Enter in your email address.
 - Enter in what you'd like your password to be.
Please note: Passwords must have at least 8 characters and include 1 upper case letter, 1 lower case letter, and 1 digit.
 - ★ *If you've previously registered on a ViewPoint Cloud site (here or in another town):*
 - Enter in your email address and password.
Please note: If you do not remember your credentials, click on "Don't remember your password?" to reset your information
6. Once you're logged in, follow the steps on each page to complete the application.

When you're all done, don't forget to log out!!

When do I pay my permit fee?

The fee will be due *after* the form is reviewed by the inspector.

You will get notice via email once your application has been approved by an inspector. At that time, you have the option of paying online (by credit card) or in person. Paying online will save you a trip back to our office. Please note that if you chose to pay by credit card, there is an additional processing fee (this fee will already be included in the estimated fee amount).

I want to pay now (right after the application is submitted). Can I give you a check now?

You can leave a check for the permit fee that's listed on the Timeline section, however that is only an estimate and may change after the application is reviewed. We recommend you wait for the email notification and pay then.

I received a notification about paying my permit fee. How do I pay it?

1. Click on the link in the email.
2. If you're not already, log in with your email address and password.
3. Follow the steps on the page to enter your credit card information and pay.

What if I don't want to pay with a credit card?

That's ok. Once you're notified that payment is due, you can come to the office and pay with a check. We would prefer it you pay online though: it's easy and automatic, plus all of your information is secure!

What happens next?

After you pay your fee, you'll be notified again when the permit is available. The permit can be printed from home (or from any computer with access to a printer). You don't need to come back to pick up your permit!

Remember

- You can monitor the status of the application from home and see if any other action is needed online! Just log in to the site and click on Inbox (on the left) to see any current tasks that need your attention and your active records (current applications).
- Now that you have an account, you can use the same email address and password to apply for all of your future permits.