

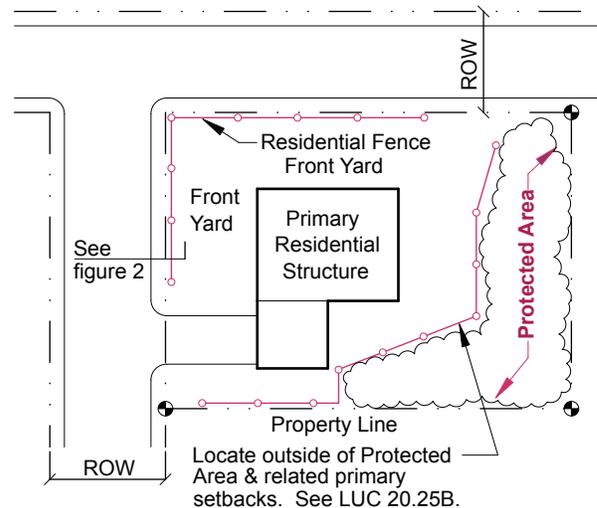
This handout provides basic information for building a fence on your property. It answers the most common questions about the city requirements and allowances for residential fences.

Where can my fence be located?

Generally, your fence may be located anywhere on your property, but its location will determine the allowable height. However, if your property contains a critical area—such as a wetland, stream, or steep slope—or is within the Shoreline Overlay District, limitations on fence location will apply (see figure 1). In such cases, refer to Handout L-28; Land Use Code (LUC) 20.25E; or LUC 20.25H or contact the Permit Center for assistance.

How tall can my fence be?

Fences in a required front-yard setback may not exceed 4'-6", except under certain circumstances discussed below. The required front-yard setback is 20' in all residential districts, except R-1 and R-1.8. The required front-yard setback in R-1 is 35' and in R-1.8 is 30'.



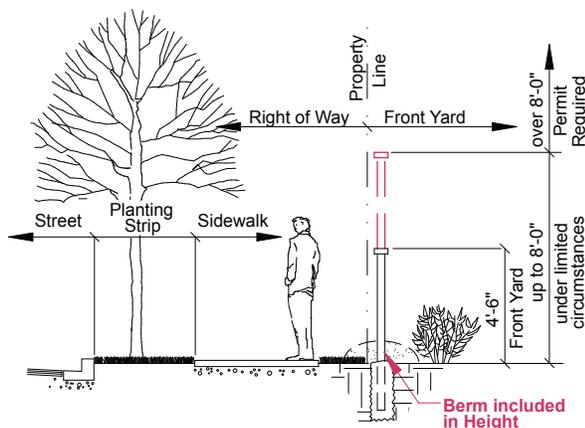
Residential Fence Locations

(figure 1)

A fence must not violate the sight-obstruction restrictions at street intersections or driveways. Those restrictions are found in Bellevue City Code (BCC) 14.60.240 and .241, and vary by type of intersection or the specific conditions of a driveway. If your fence will be located near a street intersection or driveway, contact the City of Bellevue Transportation Department for additional information on sight-obstruction restrictions.

The required front-yard setback is measured from the property line, not from the paved part of the right of way.

Note: In residential areas it is common for the right of way to extend beyond the paved street or sidewalk. This area is typically landscaped and maintained by the property owner and may appear to be part of the lot, but is actually within the right of way.



Residential Fence Height

(figure 2)

Residential fences may exceed 4'-6" if they are not located in a front-yard setback.

Fence Location Summary

Fence Height	Allowed Location ⁽¹⁾	Sight Obstruction Restrictions Apply?	Permit Required?
Up to 4'-6"	Anywhere on site	Yes	No
Over 4'-6" up to 8'	Anywhere except front-yard setback ⁽²⁾	Yes	No
Over 8'	Must meet primary structure setbacks	Yes	Yes

(1) Subject to requirements of LUC 20.25E (Shoreline Overlay District) and 20.25H (Sensitive Area Overlay District).

(2) Can be allowed in front-yard setback if exception criteria are satisfied.

What exceptions are there to fence height limits in a front yard?

Exceptions are allowed in the following situations—and only if the exception will allow for additional screening between adjacent lots or protection from the impacts of traffic on an arterial street, or will provide additional privacy for the back-yard portion of a corner lot.

A fence in a required front yard may exceed a height of 4'-6" if any of the following situations exists:

1. The fence is perpendicular to the right of way and is necessary for screening; or
2. The fence is located on an arterial; or
3. The fence is located on one side of a corner lot.

AND the fence must meet the following four criteria:

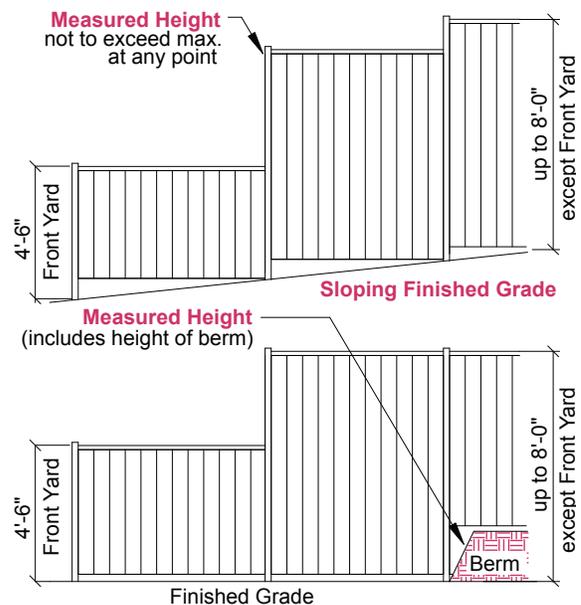
1. The fence will not exceed the minimum height necessary to afford privacy, security, screening, or noise attenuation; and
2. The fence will not cause or contribute to a hazardous traffic situation; and
3. The fence is necessary to afford reasonable privacy, security, or noise attenuation to the subject property; and
4. The design of the fence is in character with the development in the immediate neighborhood and the finished side of the proposed fence faces the right of way or the adjacent property.

Who determines whether my front-yard fence qualifies for increased height?

A land use planner in Development Services can determine if your property will qualify for an increased fence height in the front-yard setback.

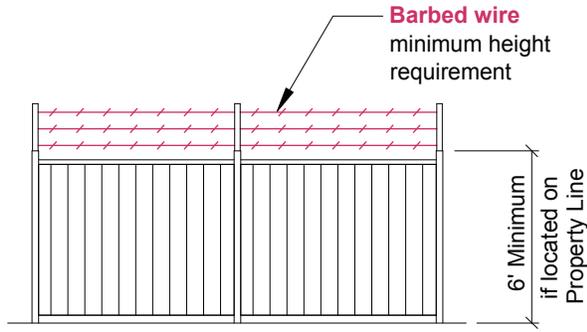
How is fence height measured?

Height is measured from the finished grade along the exterior side of the fence to the top of the fence. If a fence is built on top of a berm or wall, the combined height of the fence and berm or wall must not exceed the allowable fence height. On sloping ground the fence must follow the slope or step with the slope so as not to exceed the allowable height at any point along the fence (see figure 3).



Measuring Fence Height

(figure 3)



Barbed Wire used on Fences

(figure 4)

Is barbed wire fencing permitted?

Yes, but if used along a property boundary, it must be placed on top of a fence that is at least 6' high.

Do I need a permit?

You do not need a permit unless

- Your fence exceeds 8' in height. In that case, a building permit is required.
- The fence will be located within a critical area or critical area buffer.
- Your fence is to be constructed out of concrete blocks or similar material.

Where can I get additional information?

- Handout L-18, Electrical Fences
- LUC 20.20.400, Fences
- LUC 20.25E.080.Q, Residential Development Regulations in Shoreline Overlay District
- LUC 20.50.020, Definition of Fence
- BCC 14.60.240 and .241, Sight-obstruction Restrictions at Intersections

This document is intended to provide guidance in applying certain Land Use Code regulations and is for informational use only. It cannot be used as a substitute for the Land Use Code or for other city codes, such as the Construction Codes. Additional information is available from Development Services at Bellevue City Hall or on the city website at www.bellevuewa.gov.

For land use regulations that may apply to your project, contact the Land Use Information Desk in Development Services. Phone: 425-452-4188. E-mail: landusereview@bellevuewa.gov. Assistance for the hearing impaired: dial 711.

