



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS MANOR ALTERATIONS

LEGEND

Authorization of Agent Form for New Alterations/Resales – Paperwork needed to authorize tenant/occupant or Seller’s agent to pull Mutual Consent on the homeowner’s behalf

CSLB – California State License Board

City Permit – The City’s approval to begin the work

MA – Manor Alterations

MC – Mutual Consent, HOA approval for alterations

Member – Manor member, member or shareholder

ACSC – Architectural Control and Standards Committee

1. What is an Alteration?

Any structural, functional or aesthetic change to the interior of a Unit, its electrical, plumbing or mechanical systems or the structural integrity of the building; or any physical, structural or aesthetic change to the exterior of a Unit.

2. What is the difference between a Mutual Consent and a City Permit?

A Mutual Consent (MC) is the HOA’s approval that your proposed alteration meets your Mutual’s requirements, and can be taken to the City of Laguna Woods to obtain permits prior to beginning work, or to begin work where no City permit is required. The City Permit is the City’s authorization to begin the work per City codes. The City will not provide their Permit without the approved MC application.

3. Who is authorized to pull a Mutual Consent (MC) application?

Only the property owner is authorized to pull the Mutual Consent. This includes the Non-member owner, Power of Attorney, or Trustee. However, they will need to be listed in our system as an authorized party. To get put into the system as an authorized party, please to contact **Craig Shelley** at Estate Services at **(949) 597-4225**.

4. I have a tenant who I wish to allow to do alterations on my behalf. What paperwork do I need to authorize them?

A. New Alterations: Should you wish to authorize your tenant or another party to act as your agent and perform alterations on your manor, you will need to submit an Authorization of Agent Form for New Alterations along with a copy of your state ID or Driver’s License. Should the job be estimated at over \$1,000.00, the form will need to be notarized. Please see [Authorization of Agent Form for New Alterations](#).

B. Resales: If the property owner, POA, or Trustee is unable to fill out and submit the Mutual Consent, they can have someone such as their seller’s agent act upon their behalf to pull a Mutual Consent (After the Fact or New Alterations). Please see [Authorization of Agent Form for Resale](#).



5. Do you have a list of authorized vendors? Can you provide recommendations or referrals?

No, neither United or Third Mutual provide a vendors list. As the property owner, you are solely responsible for researching and selecting your contractor. Please see the [California State License Board \(CSLB\)](#) to check your contractor's license and make sure they are properly bonded and are in good standing. You can also reach out to your Real Estate agent, as some do maintain lists of contractors who have done work in the Village before.

6. May I perform an "Owner-Builder"/be my own contractor?

A. In United Mutual: Owner-Builder is not allowed by the United Mutual Board. You will need to hire a licensed contractor to perform work, even if the alteration is less than \$500.00. United Mutual requires all work to be performed by a licensed contractor.

B. In Third Mutual: While you can obtain an MC as "Owner-Builder," the labor and materials will need to be valued under \$500.00 if you are to perform the work yourself. If the work is over \$500.00 or requires a City Permit, you will need to provide a list of licensed subcontractors and their Certificates of Liability (COLI).

7. What is an Owner-Builder?

It is a person who owns the property and acts as their own general contractor on the job, either performing the work themselves or has employees or subcontractors working on the project. The work site must be their principal place of residence that they have occupied for 12 months prior to the completion of the work.

8. Does an Owner-Builder require a license?

A license is not required if the owner meets the following criteria:

A. The owner-builder does the work himself or herself or through his or her own employees with wages as their sole compensation and the structure(s) is/are not intended for sale.

B. The owner-builder contracts with properly licensed subcontractor(s). (This exemption applies to the construction of a single-family residential structure and limits the number of structures intended or offered for sale to four or fewer in a calendar year.)

C. The owner-builder contracts with a General Building ("B") contractor. (The number of structures is then unlimited.)

9. May "mud over" or scrape my popcorn ceiling?

Yes, you may mud or scrape your popcorn ceiling with proper MC approval. However, the manors were built in the 1960s-1970s and used ACM (asbestos containing materials) so testing would be required. Please contact the City Building Department to get information regarding State and County guidelines.



10. Do ceiling fans need an MC approval?

Yes. All hard-wired electrical components require a Mutual Consent. Any holes cut into the ceilings or walls require a Mutual Consent. Further; all original ceilings in Laguna Woods Village have electrical heating elements running throughout the entire ceiling. Caution should be taken each time a screw penetrates the ceiling. If a screw comes in contact with the heating elements the entire heating system for that room is compromised. A separate heat source will be required for that room to meet building code requirements. The ceiling fan housing also requires being supported from a structural member above the ceiling surface.

11. Do I need an MC approval to install electrical outlets?

Yes. Prior to beginning work your contractor/electrician must contact the City of Laguna Woods Building Permits office to obtain all necessary permits for the work to begin.

12. For microwave installation, is there a separate electrical permit for a designated circuit?

Members can change out any appliance if they replace the existing appliance with one that is similar to the ampere rating of the original and no other change in electrical is required. If a new dedicated circuit is needed, then both a mutual consent and city permit for code compliance are required.

13. Do I need an MC approval to replace a toilet? What about sinks, faucets, and shower heads?

Any item that requires a city permit will require a mutual consent to be issued first, as evidence that the Mutual has provided approval to make alterations to your manor. Please check with the City of Laguna Woods Building Permits Office prior to making any changes to your interior components.

14. Do I need mutual consent for a video doorbell or security camera?

- A. Doorbells with cameras:** No MA approval needed. These devices are similar to “Ring” door bell and cameras that are battery operated devices temporarily mounted on to exterior so members are allowed to see the caller at or approaching the doorway entrance to the member manor only.

The device is still considered an Alteration, and it is your responsibility to its maintenance, wall damage, and removal for mutual building work.

- B. Security Cameras:** These devices similar to CCTV will require both a MC and Board approved Variance. This is due to the need for a higher understanding of the impact to adjacent neighbors, and effect on mutual property.



15. May I paint the interior of my unit?

Yes. No MA approvals are required to paint the inside of your manor.

16. May I install a screen door on my front door without mutual consent?

Yes, screen door installation is allowed without a mutual consent, including security screen doors. The new screen door will now be considered an alteration.

17. Do I need a mutual consent for a mail slot in my front or garage door?

No, but this change will make these doors alteration doors no longer maintained by the HOA. Add a note advising to contact the post office for specific requirements.

18. Do I need mutual consent to install a peep hole in my front door?

No. A peep hole can be installed in a front door without a mutual consent. However, this would be considered an alteration and the HOA would no longer maintain the door.

19. Do I need a MC approval to replace my front door?

Yes, a Mutual Consent is required to replace the front door. Please see: United Alteration Standards 11 – Doors (Exterior); Third Alteration Standard 10 – Exterior Doors.

20. Do I need an MC approval to paint my front door?

Yes. This will require a Mutual Consent Application. Please see standards for approved colors: United Alteration Standard 11 – Doors (Exterior); Third Alteration Standards 10 – Exterior Doors.

21. Do I need a MC approval to install large appliances such as a dishwasher, microwave, garbage disposal from Manor Alterations?

A. In United: A like-for-like alteration/permitless alteration is available (replacement only—not new installation). Visit lagunawoodsvillage.com/residents/resident-services#manor-alterations for more information.

B. In Third: No mutual consent is required for replacement(s) of appliances, as there is no major electrical or plumbing involved. It is simply a slide in, slide out.

C.

22. Do I need a MC approval to replace kitchen and bathroom cupboards, vanities, and countertops?

A. In United: A like-for-like alteration/permitless alteration is available (replacement only—not new installation). Visit lagunawoodsvillage.com/residents/resident-services#manor-alterations for more information.

B. In Third: A mutual consent is required if you disturb ACM drywall/joint compound during the demolition phase or if you are changing the layout of the



vanities/countertops, which may require city permit to bring the area into code compliance with electrical requirements.

23. Do I need a MC approval to replace a glass shower enclosure and door?

- A. In United:** Only the glass enclosure is considered here. No wall or floor tile is to be modified. In United, a like-for-like alteration/permitless alteration is available (replacement only—not new installation). Visit lagunawoodsvillage.com/residents/resident-services#manor-alterations for more information.
- B. In Third:** No MC is required.

24. Do I need a MC approval to re-tile my shower/bath area?

Yes. The bonding agent and the bonding material supporting the existing tile may contain asbestos. Removal of the existing tiles will expose these products, triggering a required asbestos inspection. The asbestos protocols are totally handled by the City of Laguna Woods Building Department. The mutual consent is required for Building Department permit processing and for Manor Alterations records.

Exceptions: If it can be verified that any previous tile modifications have no asbestos present, then any subsequent tile replacements would NOT require a Mutual Consent or City Inspection.

25. May I get my carport condensation panels repaired or replaced?

Carport condensation panels are no longer allowed as an addition; however, you may repair them if possible. As such, replacement panels are no longer permitted. Repairs may be done as a chargeable service through Resident Services at (949) 597-4600.

26. May I install tile on my patio or replace the tile that is already there?

Yes, you may install tiles on your patio or replace the tiles that are already there by applying for a Mutual Consent application. No City Permit is required. Please see: United Alteration Standard 15 – Floor Coverings Exterior (Balconies and Patios) and Third Alteration Standard 11 – Exclusive Use Common Area Floor Coverings.

27. May I paint or stain my garage floor/patio?

In United and Third Mutual, concrete staining and epoxy coatings are allowed with Mutual Consents for Garages, Patios, Atriums, and Courtyards. Painting of concrete is prohibited in both mutuals. Please see: United Alteration Standard 15 – Floor Coverings Exterior (Balconies and Patios) and Third Alteration Standard 11 – Exclusive Use Common Area Floor Coverings.

28. HVAC changeouts

A: Do I need a City Permit for a like-for-like Central HVAC system changeout?

Both an MC approval and a City Permit will be required for a like-for-like change out for a Central HVAC system changeout. This includes a Mini Split HVAC system.

B: May I remove my old packaged terminal air conditioner (PTAC)/In-wall Heat Pump unit?

- **In United:** For a like-for-like swap out of a plug-and-play PTAC units that only require detachment from the wall and sliding out of the existing sleeve, you can use a United Permitless Alteration form (United Mutual Only) for a previously permitted alteration that is currently installed).
- **In Third:** An MC approval is required.

29. My water heater is totally non-functional. May I replace it and get the permit afterward?

For emergency non-functioning water heaters, replacements can take place immediately; however, a Mutual Consent approval and City Permit will be required to be obtained within the next business day after the work has been performed.

A. In United: A mutual consent approval is required.

B. In Third: Completion of a Water Heater (Like-for-Equivalent) Replacement Form is needed. Please contact the Manor Alterations department (alterations@vmsinc.org) to obtain a copy of the form.

30. The member has already replaced the heat pump/AC/water heater because it was not working. Do they have to pay the \$300 penalty fee?

A. In United: A simple notification of the changeout is allowed without penalty for wall heaters/AC units, due to water heater replacements requiring the City Permit, a MC must be obtained the next business day or the penalty will be assessed.

B. In Third: A Mutual Consent form will be required within the next business day for a heat pump/AC changeout, as it more than likely requires a City Permit. A Water Heater change-out form should be submitted the next business day. Please contact Manor Alterations to obtain a copy of this form.

31. What qualifies a MC approval to be expedited?

In general, no MCs are expedited as they are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis in an effort to be fair to everyone in Laguna Woods Village. Some mutual consents require more extensive research and review, or may require a Variance therefore a longer review and process are needed. Some utilitarian-based applications such as a simple water heater replacement, or A/C replacement, may be issued within a day due to urgency as well as comfort, and health considerations.

32. Is a MC required to change out the flooring?

If you are removing existing flooring (i.e. carpet) without disturbing the original black mastic, and vinyl flooring beneath—including the tack strips and base boards—then no Mutual Consent is required. MA suggests you lift the carpet and see if it was placed on the vinyl tile or over black mastic. If the original black mastic and vinyl flooring are disturbed, then a Mutual Consent for Alterations will be required. For approval, you do not need to provide Asbestos Testing or abatement. Please contact the City Building Department to find out County and State guidelines.

33. If I have to get a MC approval to remove the carpet over the vinyl tiles, why do I need an alteration permit to install new flooring?

At present, no mutual consent is required to install new flooring. However, you will need to take in sound considerations. For more information, please see: United Mutual – Interior Flooring Policy, Resolution 01-18-115, and Third Mutual – Interior Hard Surface Flooring, Resolution 03-10-188. AS per policy, the Member may be held responsible to remove new flooring should it not meet noise level requirements.

34. Can the removal of Wall Mounted Cabinetry be done by a General Contractor or is a special asbestos abatement contractor required?

Yes. Wall-Mounted Cabinetry can be removed by a General Contractor, as long as proper precautions are taken to minimize enlargement of existing screw hole penetrations during the removal process. If however the removal process leaves large holes in the drywall or ripped drywall sections, then an Asbestos Inspection Protocol would be required from the City of Laguna Wood Building Department and may lead to the requirement of a city permit and MC for any asbestos handling abatement.

35. Does a dog door require a mutual consent?

No MC approval is required for installing a dog door in the front door; however, during Resales, if the buyer agrees to the alteration, they will take responsibility for the alteration. If a pet door requires cutting drywall and/or stucco, then a mutual consent will be required and the member must contact the City of Laguna Woods Permits office to determine what City requirements must be fulfilled.

36. Do I need a Mutual Consent application for installing stepping stones?

No Mutual Consent for stepping stones; however, you will need to speak with the Landscaping (Resident Services) to determine the requirements of your Mutual and complete their application form.

37. Do I need a Mutual Consent to install a chair lift?

Yes, due to being a non-standard alteration, a chairlift on the exterior of a manor will require a Variance. Please reach out directly to alterationvariances@vmsinc.org for information regarding the Variance process.



38. What is the difference between a Mutual Consent and a Variance?

A Mutual Consent is a form required for common types of alterations that the Board has pre-approved and is used to document the installation of the alteration, and that City requirements have been met via a city permit when applicable. A Variance is a request for a non-standard alteration, which must receive approval by the corresponding Mutual's Board prior to a Mutual Consent being able to be issued for the alteration(s).

39. How long does it take to receive approval for a Mutual Consent and/or Variance?

Processing times vary due to the scope of work involved, incomplete submissions and if the alterations being requested are standard or non-standard.

A. For a Mutual Consent: 7-10 business days for complete application.

B. For a Variance: With a complete application, it will take approximately 30-60 days from the date of submission. The Variance process is longer than the Mutual Consent Process due to the Architectural Control and Standards Committee (ACSC) and Board of Directors has to review each request individually and grant approval. Variance requests must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the next ACSC meeting.

40. Do I need a Mutual Consent to remove my patio cover?

No MC approval is required for the removal of a patio cover. You will only require a Mutual Consent if you are replacing the patio cover. Please see: United Alteration Standard 20 – Aluminum Patio Cover and Standard 34 – Awnings; Third Alteration Standard.

41. Do I need a Mutual Consent to install a charger for an Electric Vehicle?

This will require a Mutual Consent for the installation. However, they will need to run the powerline from your house directly to the carport. Please see: United Standard 41 – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations; Third Standard 44 – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.