



Frequently Asked Questions for Property Owners

Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Ordinance

July 2019



▶ <Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program>

▶ **510-238-3344**

▶ **MandatorySoftStoryRetrofit@Oaklandca.gov**

Featured Resources

Municipal Code - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

Technical Bulletins - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

Frequently Asked Questions - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

[Related Resources »](#)

Documents

Ordinance Document - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

List of Potential Soft Story Buildings

Official Notice to Property Owners - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

[Related Documents »](#)

Question No. 9

- ▶ **9. How do I find and hire a qualified architect, engineer, or retrofit contractor?**
Since the Cities of Berkeley and San Francisco have also implemented mandatory retrofit programs, Bay Area design professionals and contractors are familiar with these buildings and the necessary retrofit scope. The City cannot recommend specific architects, engineers or contractors. However, the following resources are available for guidance.

SEAONC Structural Engineer Referral List - <https://www.seaonc.org/page/referrallist>

AIA SF Search - <https://www.aia-sf.org/page/FindanArchitect>

Contractors State License Board - <http://www.cslb.ca.gov>

Question No. 2

▶ **2. How do I know if my building is a Soft Story building?**

- ▶ If you received a notice from the City, it means that City and County records suggest your building is probably a Soft Story building subject to the program. You can also consider the three criteria (age, number of units, vulnerable lower story; see “What is a Soft Story building?”), consult with experts or with City staff.



Documents

Ordinance Document - Mandatory
Soft Story Retrofit

List of Potential Soft Story
Buildings

Official Notice to Property Owners -
Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

[Related Documents »](#)

Topics

Building Permits

Building Inspections

Rent Adjustment Program

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Question No. 3

- ▶ **3. What should I do if I received a notice from the City but I think my building is exempt from the program?**



If you have documentation from Oakland's screening program of 2009-2012 showing an exemption approved by the City, you might not need to hire a design professional. Send or bring a copy of your documentation to the Bureau of Building, and Bureau staff will review it for you. Documentation from 2009-2010 does not guarantee exemption from the current program because the criteria of the two programs are different.

- ▶ **Deadline to submit your petition form : February 21, 2020**

Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program

The City of Oakland's Soft Story Retrofit Program works to save lives by strengthening buildings with large ground-floor openings that are particularly prone to collapse during an earthquake. Effective January 22, 2019, municipal ordinance No. 13516 now requires residential property owners to strengthen these vulnerable buildings with seismic retrofits. This page provides information and resources on the ordinance, the schedule for compliance, and the process for completing the mandatory retrofit.

Featured Services

[Apply for Change of Compliance Tier - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit](#)

[Apply for Exemption - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit](#)

[Read the Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Ordinance](#)

[More Services »](#)

Apply for Exemption - Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit

Exemption from Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program.

PETITION FOR EXEMPTION FORM

[Download](#)

PETITION FOR EXEMPTION INSTRUCTIONS

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If you believe that your building is *not* subject to the Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program, you may submit an Petition for Exemption Form. The deadline is February 21, 2020.

Email the form to: MandatorySoftStoryRetrofit@oaklandca.gov

Or mail/ bring in the form to:

Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza Suite 2340
Oakland, CA 94612

Contact Us

- ▶ For Questions regarding compliance with the Mandatory Ordinance Requirements:

City of Oakland

Building Department **Mandatory Soft Story Retrofit Program**

250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza 2nd Floor Suite 2314 Oakland, CA 94612

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Phone: (510) 238-3344
Email: MandatorySoftStoryRetrofit@Oaklandca.gov
Website: <http://oaklandca.gov/topics/ssretrofit>