



Nevada State Board of Architecture, Interior Design and Residential Design

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NOTICE

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How to legally specify FF&E and provide space planning services in Nevada

The mission of the Nevada State Board of Architecture, Interior Design and Residential Design (NSBAIDRD) is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by assuring the quality of the built environment.

Depending on your role and responsibilities either (as a client of design services; designer; design professional; vendor of furniture, fixtures, equipment, and finishes), it is important that you know that Nevada law dictates who can provide space planning services and who can specify finishes and furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E). The intention of this notice is to clarify that and to provide a clear understanding of the practice of "registered interior design" versus that of "interior design/interior decorating" and "certified interior design."

- First, it is important to understand that the acronym "**FF&E**" stands for "**furniture, fixtures, and equipment.**" It does **not** include **finishes.**

When we refer to **FF&E**, we are speaking of things that are not attached to the structure of the building: the sofa, the throw pillows, the coffee table, the art on the wall, the lighting, the door hardware, the appliances, etc.

Finishes refer to materials used to cover floors, walls, and ceilings. They include (but are not limited to) carpet, tile, wood, paint, wallpaper, plaster, wall trim, blinds, drapes, curtains, decorative materials suspended from walls or ceilings (i.e. fabric, foam, plastic), and faux plants. In a commercial setting, permits and/or approval are required prior to installation of such items. Fabric covered partitions must meet specific flame spread and smoke development requirements of the "Interior Finishes" chapter of the applicable building code.

- Second, know that **space planning** on a commercial project requires compliance with applicable building and fire codes and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Space planning includes the type, amount, and placement of finishes and FF&E, as well as the ingress and egress that is created or changed by the placement of such items. **The placement of systems furniture is space planning as it heavily involves ingress and egress.** Only a registered design professional or appropriately licensed contractor may provide space planning services.
- Third, there are three types of interior design practiced in Nevada. The following is a summary of each type, including which services may be legally provided by each.
 - 1) **Registered Interior Designer** – These design professionals are allowed to provide services in both residential and commercial settings. They can specify FF&E and finishes for residential and commercial projects, including the preparation and stamping of plans for submittal to building departments within the scope of practice defined in [Nevada Revised Statute \(NRS\) 623.0225](#). The [requirements \(education, experience, and examination\) for becoming a registered interior designer](#) are extensive to ensure protection of the public. Registered interior designers are regulated by NSBAIDRD.

In order to provide these services lawfully you may become a registered interior designer; work under the responsible control of a design professional or become a licensed contractor under NRS 624. Recently, the Board has streamlined the process of obtaining registration for those who are unable to traditionally document the minimum educational requirement through their new Alternative Review Process (ARP) <https://www.cidq.org/alternative-review-program>.

- 2) **Certified Interior Designer** – In addition to being able to perform the services of an interior designer/interior decorator, these designers may also specify FF&E (**not finishes**) for commercial projects to the extent authorized by their certification. They may prepare drawings of the layout of such materials and furnishings and install them, but they are **not** allowed to provide space planning services. **The placement of systems furniture is space planning as it heavily involves ingress and egress.** Also, note that although certified interior designers can specify FF&E, they cannot legally specify moveable cases, counters, or partitions (including modular furniture) over 69 inches in height. The minimum education requirement for becoming a certified interior designer is completion of one class in building code and one class in fire code. There is no experience requirement. Certification is issued through the [Nevada State Fire Marshal Division](#).

- 3) **Interior Designer or Interior Decorator** – These designers are allowed to specify FF&E and finishes for **residential projects** that are not regulated by any building code or other law, ordinance, rule, or regulation governing the alteration or construction of a structure. They may also prepare drawings of the layout of such materials and furnishings and install them. They may not work in a commercial setting unless they are under the responsible control of an architect, engineer, or registered interior designer. They cannot work in a commercial setting under the responsible control of a contractor. Interior designers/interior decorators are not required to satisfy any education or experience requirements in order to practice.

Note that there are also limitations for registered interior designers, including acting as the lead design professional when there are more than two professional disciplines (engineers or architects) on a project. **In this instance, there must be an architect as the lead design professional on the project.** Other limitations on the scope of practice of a registered interior designer can be found in [Nevada Administrative Code \(NAC\) 623.850](#).

If you are unsure if the services you provide are regulated by NSBAIDRD or if you are not sure as to what type of designer you should be hiring to legally complete a project, please contact NSBAIDRD staff at (702) 486-7300 or nsbaidrd@nsbaidrd.nv.gov. We want to clarify any questions and/or concerns you may have about this matter to ensure that you and/or your business are in compliance with Nevada law.