

Skamania County Community Development

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Shoreline Variance Application Packet

This packet provides the information necessary to apply for a Shoreline Variance (SVAR). The attached checklist will help you identify any application requirements.

About Shoreline Variances

The purpose of an SVAR is strictly limited to granting relief to specific bulk, dimensional, or performance standards in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) where there are extraordinary or unique circumstances. Your project must meet the variance criteria in order to qualify for an SVAR.

A project that requires an SVAR will also require a shoreline substantial development permit or a shoreline exemption. Your project may also require critical areas review or an archaeological evaluation. You can read more about the different types of shoreline permits and reviews in the [SMP](#) and [Property Owner's Handbook](#).

SMP References:

+ **SVAR criteria:** [Section 2.7](#)

Questions?

Contact Skamania County
Community Development

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Review Process

- 1) **Submittal:** Application materials submitted by the property owner or applicant.
- 2) **Completeness review:** Staff reviews the application to ensure all required information is included. The completeness determination takes up to 28 days.
- 3) **Public notice:** Applications are noticed within 14 days of completeness. The comment period lasts 30 days.
- 4) **Staff report:** Staff issues a staff report based on application materials, applicable standards of the SMP, and public comments. This typically happens approximately 10 days before the public hearing.
- 5) **Public hearing:** The hearing examiner conducts a public hearing and issues a recommendation within 120 days of application being determined technically complete, and staff forwards the local recommendation to the Department of Ecology.
- 6) **Ecology review:** Ecology conducts a 30-day review and issues a final decision.
- 7) **Appeal:** The appeal period is 21 days after Ecology's notice of final decision; construction cannot occur during the appeal period

Fees

Applicants are responsible for paying the application fees at the time of submittal to cover all application review costs.

- Shoreline Permit - \$1,050
- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Review (if applicable) - \$400

Application Checklist

Please complete the following checklist for a Shoreline Variance. Applications will not be processed until all of the required information is submitted.

Applicant	Staff	Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required fees
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shoreline master application form
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed copy of this checklist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-application conference summary
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) Form <i>A JARPA form is only required if in-water work is proposed; select n/a if no in-water work is proposed.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist <i>Certain projects, like single-family homes, are exempt from SEPA review – Select n/a if your project is exempt. See WAC 197-11-800 for exemptions.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Written narrative describing the project and how it complies with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SVAR criteria (SMP Section 2.7) – see following page • General provisions (SMP Chapter 3) • Shoreline environment designation provisions (SMP Chapter 4) • Shoreline specific use regulations (SMP Chapter 5) • Shoreline modification provisions (SMP Chapter 6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Plan showing OHWM, vegetation character, dimensions and location of existing and proposed structures and improvements, and critical areas • Grading Plan • Project and construction details <p>All site plans and civil drawings must be drawn to an engineering or architectural scale (e.g. 1" = 20' or 1/4" = 1').</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Technical assessments/Mitigation plans <i>Check all that apply (if none, select n/a)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetlands (SMP Section 3.4.6)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Critical aquifer recharge areas (SMP Section 3.4.7)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (SMP Section 3.4.8)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frequently flooded areas and channel migration zones (SMP Section 3.4.9)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geotechnical report (SMP Section 3.4.10)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Archaeological site inspection/evaluation/cultural resources management plan (SMP Section 3.3)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vegetation management plan (SMP Section 3.7)

Shoreline Variance Criteria

In order for the County and Ecology to approve an SVAR, your application must demonstrate compliance with the following review criteria as listed in [WAC 173-27-170](#) and [SMP Section 2.7](#). As noted in the checklist, your written narrative must address these criteria.

- a. That the strict application of the bulk, dimensional, or performance standards set forth in the SMP precludes, or significantly interferes with, reasonable use of the property.
- b. That the hardship described in (a) above is specifically related to the property, and is the result of unique conditions such as irregular lot shape, size, or natural features and the application of the SMP and not, for example, from deed restrictions or the applicant's own actions.
- c. That the design of the project is compatible with other authorized uses within the area and with uses planned for the area under the Comprehensive Plan and SMP and will not cause adverse impacts to the shoreline environment.
- d. That the variance will not constitute a grant of special privilege not enjoyed by the other properties in the area.
- e. That the variance requested is the minimum necessary to afford relief.
- f. That the public interest will suffer no substantial detrimental effect.

Variance permits for development and/or uses that will be located waterward of the ordinary high water mark, as defined in RCW 90.58.030 (2)(b), or within any wetland, may be authorized provided the applicant can demonstrate all of the following:

- a. That the strict application of the bulk, dimensional, or performance standards set forth in the applicable master program precludes all reasonable use of the property;
- b. That the proposal is consistent with the criteria established under subsection (2)(b) through (f) of this section; and
- c. That the public rights of navigation and use of the shorelines will not be adversely affected.