



2018 SBC Code Interpretation

The following interpretation, policy or code alternate is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code alternate to specific projects may vary.

Code Issue:

SBC 706.5 addresses the intersection of fire walls and exterior walls, but the code assumes a single exterior wall plane on either side of the fire wall. This code solution clarifies SDCI's policy on how to apply required exterior wall protection when there are offsets at the exterior wall plane around the fire wall termination.

Notes:

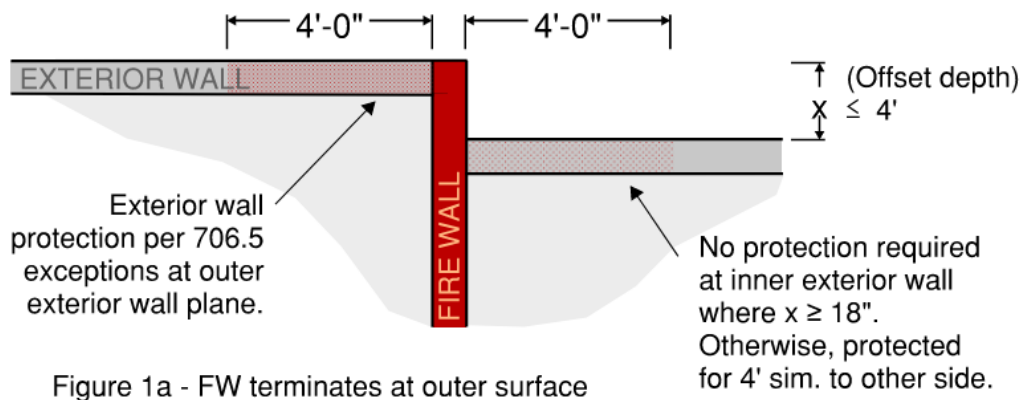
- For the purposes of this code interpretation, an offset is defined as a shift of the exterior wall(s) of 4 feet or less in depth. Offsets may be in plan, in section, or both.
- Refer to [Code Interpretation 706.5: Fire Wall Horizontal Continuity](#) for details on exterior wall protection requirements.
- Where an offset in plan exceeds 4', apply SBC 706.5.1.
- Where projections occur within 4' of the fire wall, apply SBC 706.5.2.

Interpretation:

Where an offset occurs within 4 feet from the fire wall, exterior wall protection per 706.5 exceptions is applied to each side of the fire wall based on the location of the fire wall termination relative to the exterior wall. See the following examples:

1. Firewall extends to outer exterior wall plane

- a. Apply 4-foot exterior wall protection on each side of the fire wall. Protection is not required at the inner exterior wall when the offset is greater than or equal to 18 inches. (See Figure 1a)



- b. Where a fire wall extends to the outer edge of an offset on a story above (story above complies with Figure 1a), required exterior wall protection may be applied to the recessed wall. The horizontal assembly above within 4' of the fire wall is required to have a minimum 1-hour rating. The use of the covered area is restricted to circulation and egress. Protection is not required at the exterior wall on the uncovered side when the offset is greater than or equal to 18 inches. (See Figure 1b)

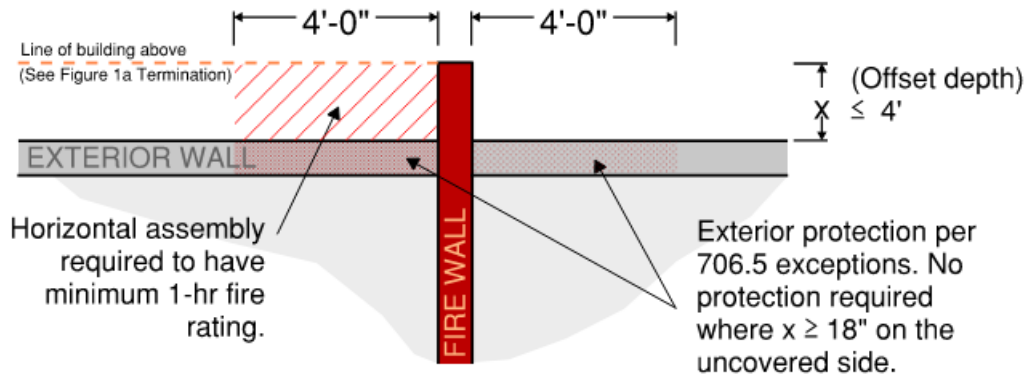


Figure 1b - FW terminates at outer surface above

- c. Where an offset creates a covered exterior area with building area located above, the required exterior wall protection may be applied to the recessed wall. The horizontal assembly above within 4' of the fire wall must have a minimum 1-hour rating. The use of the covered area is restricted to circulation and egress. (See Figure 1c).

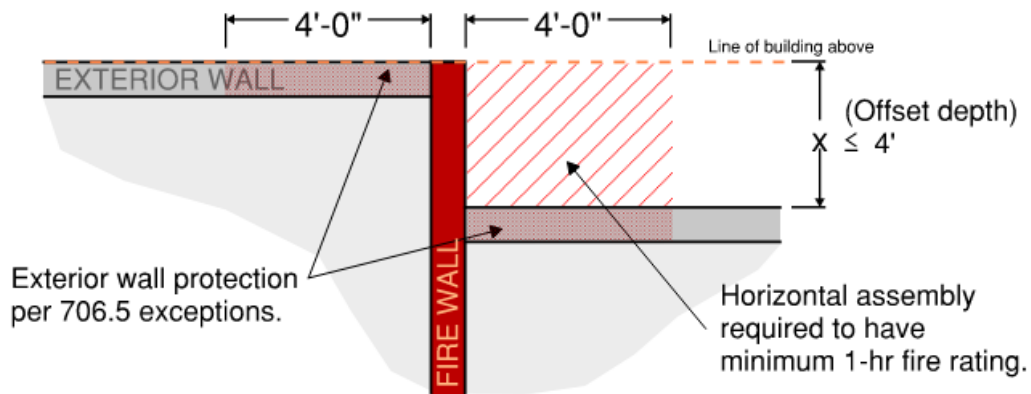


Figure 1c - FW terminates at outer surface adjacent to covered area

2. Firewall terminates at inner exterior wall plane

- a. Where a fire wall terminates at the inner exterior wall plane, apply 4-foot exterior wall protection starting from the inside corner. The 4-foot distance may be measured along the exterior wall plane around the outside corner. This measurement technique does not apply where there are projections within 4' of the inside corner. (See Figure 2a)

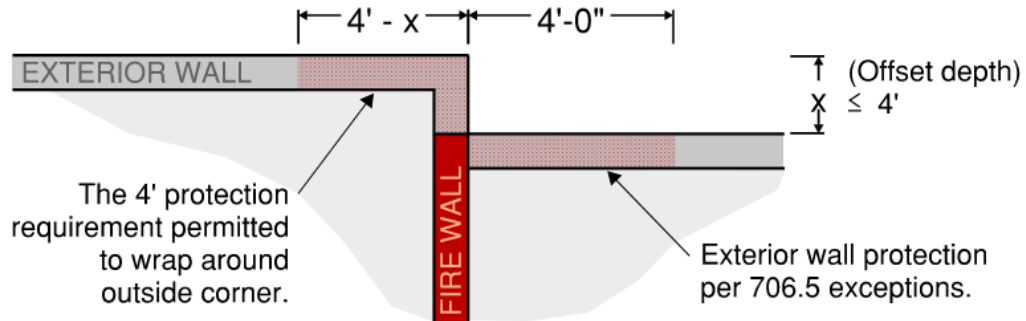


Figure 2a - FW terminates at inner surface

- b. Where a fire wall terminates at the inner exterior wall plane of an offset on the story above (story above complies with Figure 2a), apply soffit and exterior wall protection within 4 feet of the fire wall. The use of the covered area is restricted to circulation and egress. (See Figure 2b)

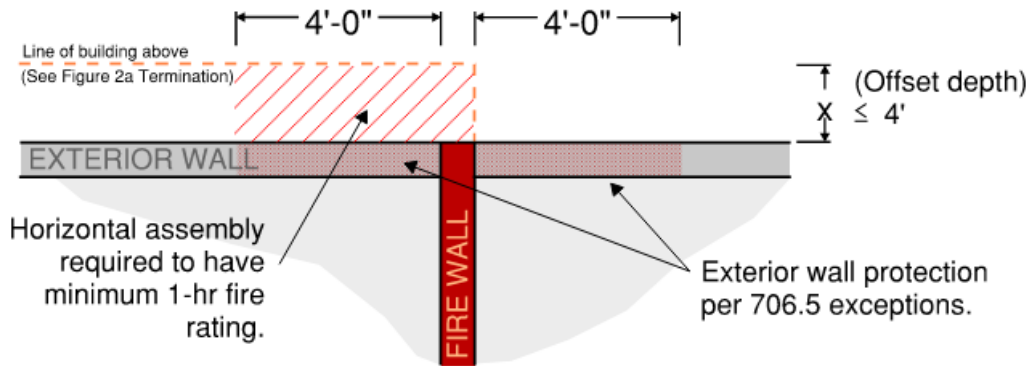


Figure 2b - FW terminates at inner surface above

For questions about whether this code solution applies to your project:

- If you have submitted a permit application, contact the Building Code plan reviewer assigned to your application.
- If you have not submitted an application, send us a question through the SDCI website.
www.seattle.gov/sdci/about-us/contact-us
- Visit the Applicant Service Center website for more information about hours and location.
www.seattle.gov/sdci/about-us/who-we-are/applicant-services-center