



County of Ventura Planning Division

FENCE, WALL, GATE, AND HEDGE GUIDELINES

Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance



Last Updated: January 2026

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to assist in the implementation of the fence, wall, gate and hedge standards of [Section 8106-8.1](#) of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO) for private fences, walls, gates, and hedges (collectively, “fencing” or “fence¹”). Fencing is an important element of the overall character of a neighborhood. Fencing:

- Identifies boundaries, provides privacy and security
- Is often a major element of a streetscape – separating public from private property
- Is often related to a building’s design
- Is often specific to a neighborhood, especially in Historic Districts

The County of Ventura Planning Division regulates the placement and height of fencing on private property to help protect the health and safety of the residents and visitors and create a consistent community aesthetic. Questions about these guidelines and any fencing standards of the NCZO should be directed to the County of Ventura Planning Division at: (805) 654-2488 or by email at: plan.counter@venturacounty.gov.

Disclaimer

These guidelines are not meant to replace or contradict any of the fencing standards of the NCZO or applicable area plan. The information in this document is general and describes only the basic fencing regulations of the NCZO. It is necessary to fully review the NCZO for the official [fencing regulations](#). If your property is located within an area plan, there may be specific fencing regulations that supersede the regulations of the NCZO. To determine if you are within a specific area plan and whether there are separate fencing regulations, click [here](#) or contact the County Planning Division. Contact the County of Ventura Planning Division and Building and Safety Division for permit and regulatory guidance before installing any fencing on a property.

Other County Agency Requirements

Ventura County Public Works Agency – The Ventura County Public Works Agency handles encroachment permits for work within the County’s right-of-way, including fencing. Fencing in the County’s right-of-way falls within the jurisdiction of the Public Works Agency. Questions about fencing within a public right-of-way should be directed to the Public Works Agency at: (805) 654-2055 or by email at: pwa.transpermits@ventura.org. For more information, please visit the website at: <https://publicworks.venturacounty.gov/rt/encroachment/>.

County of Ventura Building and Safety Division – The County of Ventura Building and Safety Division handles building permits for fencing that is not exempt from the Ventura County Building Code. For a list of building permit exemptions, please refer to the [Ventura County Building Code](#)

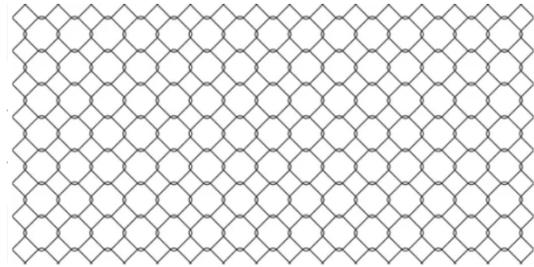
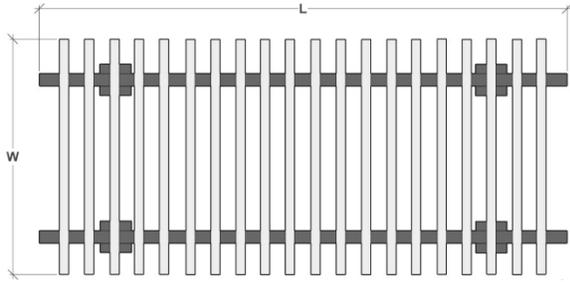
¹ Fence: An unroofed vertical structure that serves as a visual screen or as a physical enclosure around a property, building, or yard area for security, containment or privacy, or to indicate a boundary. This definition includes hedges, thick growths of shrubs, and walls used as screens, but does not include windbreaks for the protection of orchards or crops, or County-approved enclosures for the containment of animals. (NCZO, Article 2, Definitions)

section 105.2 (Exempted Work). Questions about building permits for fencing should be directed to the County of Ventura Building and Safety Division at: (805) 654-2771 (Ventura Office) or (805) 582-8064 (East County Office) or by email at: building@venturacounty.gov.

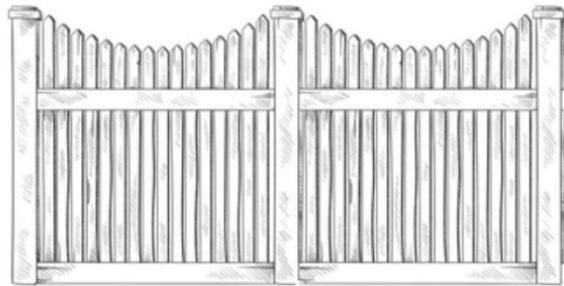
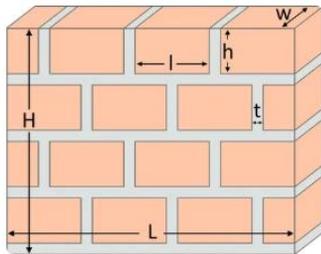
GUIDELINES

Types of Fencing

See-Through Fencing (at least 50% open)²



Solid Fencing³



Solid Fencing with See-Through Components and Pedestrian Gate



Vehicle Access Gate



Horizontal Feature



Gate with Horizontal Feature



² Fence, See-through: A chain link fence or any other type of fence that permits at least 50 percent open visibility throughout the fence. (NCZO, Article 2, Definitions)

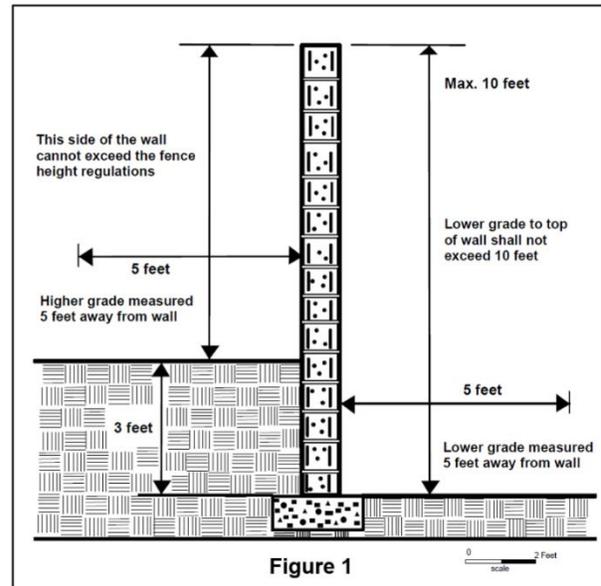
³ Also see definition of “Wildlife Impermeable Fencing” in NCZO, Article 2, which such fencing is regulated under NCZO sections 8109-4.8 and 8109-4.9.

Measuring Height of Fences

The height of a fence shall be measured from grade to the highest point of the fence. For purposes of the NCZO, “grade” is defined as the lowest level parallel to and 5 feet from the fence ([NCZO section 8106-8.1.4](#)). See Figure 1.

Measuring Height of Fences With Different Grades

Where there is a difference in grade levels on the two sides of a fence, the height of the fence is measured from the higher grade to the top of the fence, provided that the distance from the lower grade to the top of the fence does not exceed 10 feet. If the fence is located in a required setback adjacent to a street, the fence height is measured from adjacent grade of the street side of the fence. See Figure 1.



Prohibited Fencing⁴

- **NO** barbed wire, razor-edge wire, electrified security fencing, or similar security fencing (unless specifically allowed by sections [8106-8.1.2](#) and [8106-8.1.3](#)) is allowed in urban residential zones (R1, R2, RPD, RHD, RES, R/MU) or on properties in industrial zones that are adjacent to or across the street from urban residential zones ([NCZO section 8106-8.1.3](#)). See illustrated examples below of prohibited fencing.



Fence Height Limits⁵

- A **maximum 7-foot-tall solid or see-through fence** may be located on a property except in the required setbacks described below.
- A **maximum 8-foot-tall solid or see-through fence** may be located anywhere on a vacant or developed lot in the Open Space (OS), Agricultural Exclusive (AE) or Rural Agricultural

⁴ “Wildlife impermeable fencing” may not be allowed in some areas within the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor (HCWC) Overlay Zone and the Critical Wildlife Passage Areas (CWPA) Overlay Zone. All fencing within these overlay zones must be installed in compliance with the standards of NCZO sections [8109-4.8](#) and [8109-4.9](#).

⁵ Unless otherwise specified in an [area plan](#).

(RA) Zones, or on any property that is vacant or developed in any commercial and industrial zones, except within a clear sight triangle or within a required setback adjacent to a street.

Required Setbacks

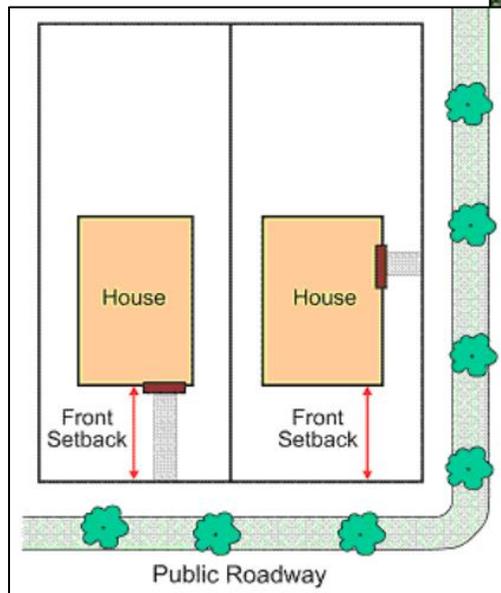
Setback regulations are intended to prevent overcrowding of land, provide for privacy, preclude narrow, unusable spaces between buildings and provide clear areas for fire safety purposes, both to retard the spread of fire and to enable emergency personnel to reach side and rear areas of buildings.

To determine the required front, side and rear setbacks of your property, you must first determine the zoning designation of your property. You may determine your zoning designation by accessing [What's My Zoning](#) on the County Planning Division website. Once you know the zoning designation of your property, refer to NCZO sections [8106-1.1](#) and [8106-1.2](#) to determine the required setbacks of the property. Setbacks are measured from the edge of the property lines or edge of an easement.

Front Setbacks

In residential zones, solid fencing is limited to 3 feet in height and [see-through fencing](#) is limited to 5 feet in height within the front setback. A combination of solid and see-through fencing is allowed as long as the solid fencing portion is no taller than 3 feet and the overall fence height is no taller than 5 feet. For corner lots, the narrower street frontage is the [front lot line](#), unless specified otherwise.

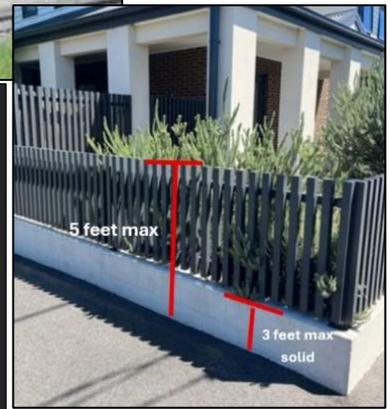
Measurements shown below are not to scale.



For corner lots, the narrower street frontage is the front lot line, unless specified otherwise.



EXCEPTION
A 7-foot tall see-through fence may be installed anywhere on a property that is 20,000 square feet or greater in size.



Pilasters, Columns, Support Structures, and Decorative Elements

Pilasters, columns, support *structures*, and the decorative elements thereon associated with a *fence* or pedestrian gate located within required setbacks may exceed the height limit if they meet the following criteria:

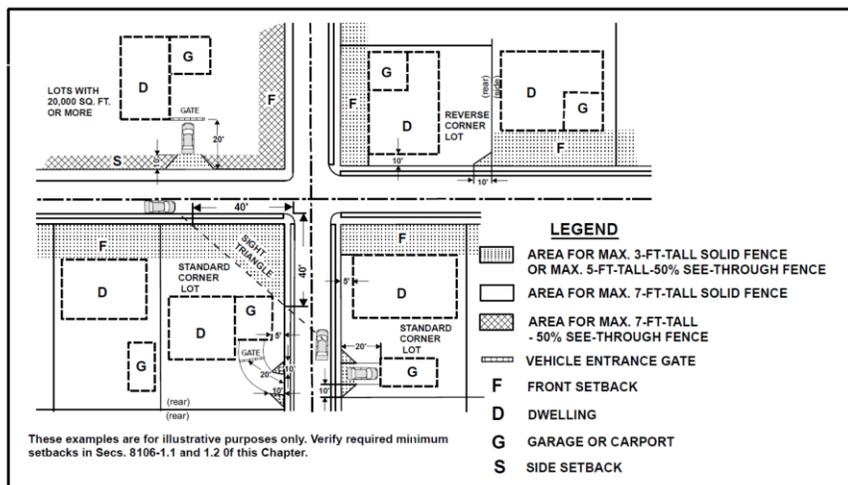
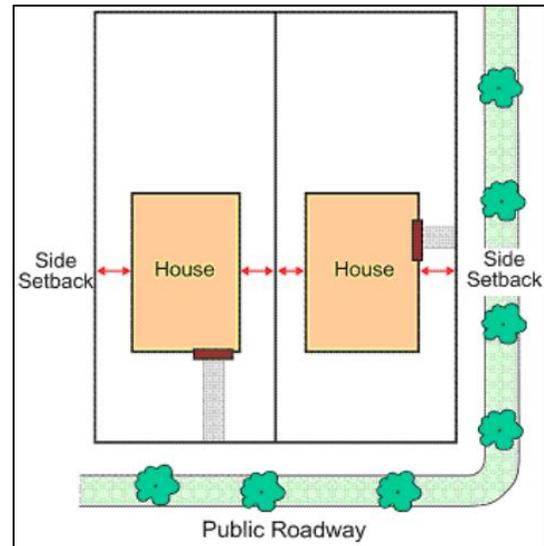
- (1) They do not exceed 8 feet in height;
- (2) They are not located closer than 16 feet on center, except when such elements are for pedestrian gates the support structures may be located closer;
- (3) The fencing materials do not cumulatively exceed the see-through fence standard, and
- (4) They do not interfere with the clear sight triangle associated with any driveway or intersections with no traffic controls.

Side Setbacks

There are two types of side setbacks: interior side setbacks and side setbacks adjacent to a street.

In residential zones, solid fencing is limited to 7 feet in height:

- (1) within an interior side setback;
- (2) within a side setback adjacent to a street of a corner lot;
- (3) within a side setback adjacent to a street on a [reverse corner lot](#), provided that at the street-side setback at the rear corner of the lot, within a 10-foot by 10-foot – 45 degree triangle, a maximum 3 feet tall solid fence is allowed or a 5 feet tall see-through fence; (See illustration below.)



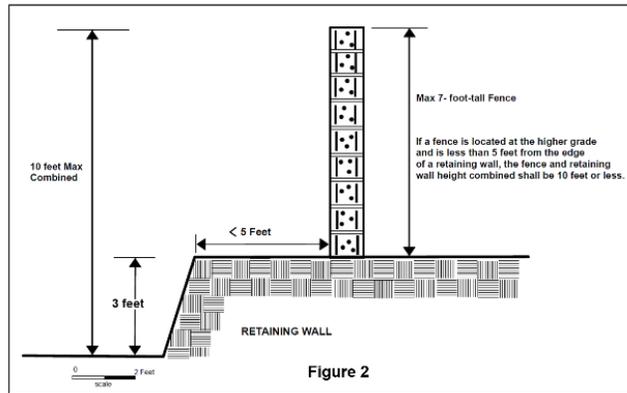
Rear Setbacks

In residential zones, solid fencing is limited to 7 feet in height:

- (1) within an interior rear setback;
- (2) within a rear setback adjacent to a street on a [through lot](#) (see NCZO section 8106-4.4);
- (3) within a rear setback, when a lot is bounded on three sides by a street, one of which is the rear lot line;
- (4) within a rear setback adjacent to a street, where the lot is a [flag lot](#) or irregularly shaped lot that has no street frontage along the front lot line.

Retaining Walls

Structural retaining walls to stabilize a bank or to protect a cut below grade do not have a height limit, unless the retaining walls are located within a 10-foot by 10-foot right triangle on each side of a driveway adjacent to a street, in which case the retaining wall cannot exceed 3 feet in height. See Figure 2



Retaining walls required for structural stabilization are not subject to the setback regulations.

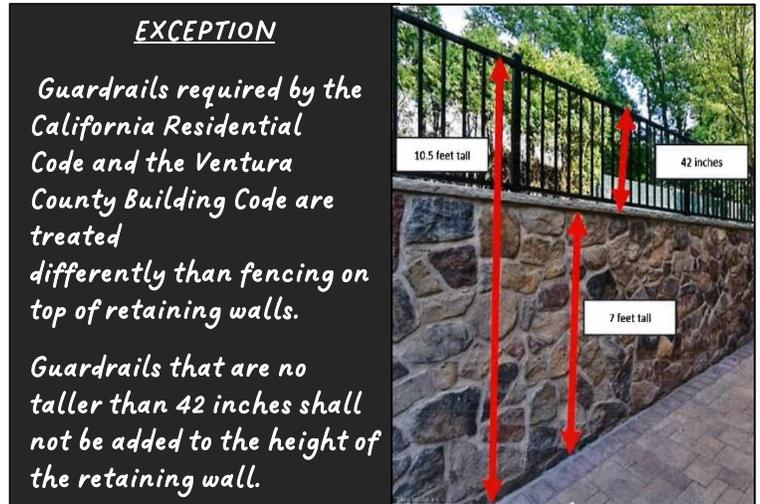
Fences on top of Retaining Walls

Where fences are located on top of retaining walls that are not 5 feet or more away from the edge of such retaining wall, the total combined height of the retaining wall and the fence shall not exceed 10 feet tall as measured from the side of the fence with the lower grade to the top of the fence. See illustrated examples below and Figure 2 above.



Guardrails on top of Retaining Walls

Guardrails required by the California Residential Code and the Ventura County Building Code are treated differently than fencing on top of retaining walls. The combined height of a retaining wall and a guardrail that is located directly on top of the retaining wall may exceed 10 feet provided that the guardrail is: (1) required by the County Building and Safety Division; (2) see-through; and, (3) no taller than 42 inches. See illustration on the right.



Vehicle Access Gates

[Vehicle access gates](#) (whether automatic or manual) shall be located a minimum of 20 feet from the front or street side setback to minimize blockage and interference with traffic flow. Vehicle access gates may be of swing or sliding type. Swing gates shall not swing within the required 20-foot setback. See Figure 3 below.

All access gates must be at least 15 feet wide.



Figure 3
Vehicle Access Gate Without Horizontal Beam



Figure 4
Vehicle Access Gate With Horizontal Beam

Vehicle Access Gates with Horizontal Beams

Vehicle access gates with horizontal beams or archways are also referred to as “ranch-style” entryways. These types of entryways mark the entrance to a rural property, which may be difficult to find on large open lots. Ranch-style gates are *only* allowed in the Open Space (OS) and Agricultural Exclusive (AE) Zones. See Figure 4 above.

The horizontal beam or archway of a ranch-style entryway shall have an unobstructed vertical clearance of 13 feet 6 inches along the entire driveway width. The maximum height of the

horizontal beam or archway is 20 feet, as measured from grade to the top of the beam or archway.

Clear Sight Triangle

The NCZO requires a “clear sight triangle” when there are no traffic controls (i.e., stop signs or traffic signals) on either street at an intersection. For purposes of the NCZO, a “clear sight triangle” is a triangular area on a corner lot, two of the sides of such triangle being formed by extending two imaginary lines from the corner of the lot adjacent to the street intersection at least 40 feet back to two points along the sides of the lot parallel to the two intersecting streets, the third side then being formed by the connection of such points. No obstructions, including structures or landscaping, over 3 feet in height shall be located or constructed within any required clear sight triangle pursuant to [Section 8106-8.4](#) of the NCZO. The clear sight triangle promotes safety and helps both pedestrians and drivers see vehicles entering the street. See Figure 5.

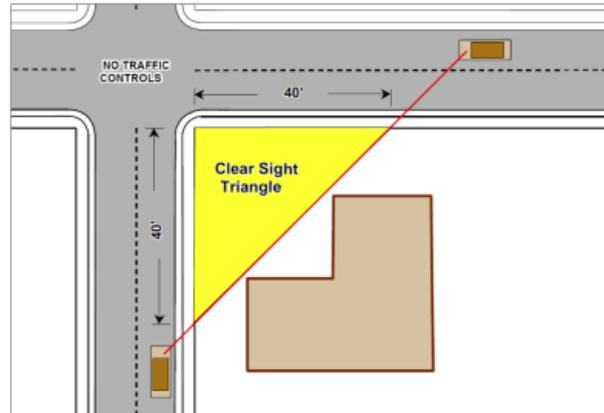


Figure 5
Clear Sight Triangle – No Traffic Controls

No obstructions, including structures or landscaping, over 3 feet in height shall be located or constructed within any required clear sight triangle pursuant to [Section 8106-8.4](#) of the NCZO. The clear sight triangle promotes safety and helps both pedestrians and drivers see vehicles entering the street. See Figure 5.

Required Permits

Before constructing a fence, ensure the proper permits are obtained from the Planning Division and the Building and Safety Division. Permits are required from the Planning Division for:

- (1) Fences that exceed 7 feet tall⁶.
- (2) Any fence that requires electricity.
- (3) Any retaining wall that is over 3 feet in height measured from grade on the lower side, to the top of the wall, and/or supporting a surcharge.

Contact the County of Ventura Planning Division at (805)654-2488 or by email at Plan.Counter@venturacounty.gov for more information on fencing regulations.

⁶ In limited circumstances, an 8-foot tall security/property line fence is allowed on a property, which would require a permit from the County Planning and the Building and Safety Divisions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I think my neighbor installed their fence on my property. What should I do?

Property line disputes are a civil matter and the County is unable to mediate between the property owners. You may obtain a property survey to confirm the property line and document the encroachment of the fence. You may need to seek legal advice to resolve the dispute.

How do I find where my property lines are located?

Sometimes property owners are able to find the survey monuments at the corners of their property and know the dimensions of their lot. In some cases, a land surveyor may be hired to locate the property corners to ensure the fence is not installed on a neighbor's property.

What if a fence falls in disrepair?

All fences must be maintained so as not to create a hazard, public nuisance, or blight pursuant [Section 8106-8.1.8](#) of the NCZO. Upon receiving a public complaint, the County may require a dilapidated fence to be repaired or removed.

Are there any fence types or styles that are not allowed?

Barbed wire, razor-edge wire, electric wire or similar type of fencing are not allowed except in certain limited circumstances. See [Section 8106-8.1.3](#) of the NCZO for a list of prohibited types of fencing and exemptions.

I live on a corner lot and want to install a fence around my property. Are there rules to maintain clear vision at corners?

Yes. In addition to the fencing regulations, the NCZO requires a “[clear sight triangle](#)” when there are no traffic controls (i.e., stop signs or traffic signals) on either street at an intersection. See Figure 5 in the Fence, Wall, Gate, and Hedge Guidelines. Where traffic is controlled on only one street of an intersection, clear sight triangles shall be measured according to the procedures outlined in the most recent edition of the Green Book, Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Contact the [County of Ventura Public Works Agency, Roads & Transportation Department](#) to obtain the required clear sight triangle measurements. The County Roads & Transportation Department can be reached at 805-654-2049 or by [email](#).