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NY Rising Housing Program

What is a General Contractor?

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NY Rising Housing Program (applies to all Programs)

The General Contractor (the "GC") is the firm you'll hire to facilitate and manage your entire repair or reconstruction project, along with a design professional if plans are required. The GC is responsible for tasks that include purchasing materials, performing the repairs, and coordination with subcontractors. It is the GC's responsibility to oversee the project and ensure that it adheres to the standards and expectations outlined in your contract. The GC is also responsible for ensuring that the project adheres to the relevant local government regulations, as well as federal and state environmental laws.

A GC's previous experience provides them with the knowledge of building codes, appropriate materials, construction methods, and safety procedures that is necessary to the successful completion of a project. Additionally, licensed GCs typically possess general liability and workers' compensation insurance as a protection against loss, and will have their larger projects backed by payment or performance bonds to ensure you are compensated if the contract is violated.

However, the NY Rising Housing Recovery Program (the "Program") does not require that a registered/licensed GC be the prime contractor for your project. A licensed specialty trade contractor can subcontract and act as the GC for the intent of this program and subcontract out those portions of the work as necessary.

Additionally, you may elect to be your own GC so long as your project ultimately meets all the requirements for Program closeout. It is up to you to determine which option is best for the unique circumstances associated with your project.

Here are some questions you may want to ask before signing a contract for your project:

- Does the GC have experience working on projects of a similar scale?
- Does the GC demonstrate interest in the type of work you need performed?
- Can the GC provide you with a list of references?
- Does the GC have the capacity to manage the number of projects they are undertaking?
- Have you established a good rapport with the GC and staff?

A saying about DIY: "One of the most important skills for any do-it-yourselfer is to know when not to!"