

## STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-7-04

April 1, 2004

The following is offered in response to your March 17, 2004 letter to me in which you seek a formal interpretation of Section 505 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code.

**Question 1:** When calculating the allowable area of a mezzanine, does one include the area of enclosed spaces on the floor below the mezzanine?

**Answer 1:** No. Section 505.2 of the referenced code specifically states "The enclosed portions of rooms shall not be included in a determination of the size of the room in which the mezzanine is located." A simple way to view this is to calculate 1/3 of the area of the room below with which the mezzanine shares a common atmosphere. Thus, any spaces on the floor below that are enclosed cannot be used in the allowable mezzanine area computation.

**Question 2:** When calculating the actual area of the mezzanine does one deduct spaces on the mezzanine that are enclosed?

**Answer 2:** No. All of the area of the mezzanine, including any enclosed spaces (only allowed under the exceptions to Section 505.4), is utilized in determining the 1/3 allowable area. If the area of the mezzanine exceeds 1/3 of the area of the room onto which it opens, it ceases to be a mezzanine and becomes a story above grade.