

Does the masonry code require rebar positioners and/or require reinforcement to be tied?

No, neither the TMS 402/602 nor the Michigan Building Code require rebar positioners.

The Michigan Building Code references the TMS 402/602. Neither the TMS 402 nor the TMS 602 require rebar positioners or tying of reinforcing bars.

The commentary to TMS 402 Section 6.1.3 states, “Reinforcing bar positioners are available to control bar position.” However, the corresponding *Code* section does not require use of such positioners. Figure SC-11 in TMS 602 illustrates typical reinforcing bar positioners, but Article 3.4.B.1 merely states, “Support reinforcement to prevent displacement caused by construction loads or by placement of grout or mortar, beyond the allowable tolerances” without requiring use of positioners. The TMS *Masonry Designers Guide (MDG)*, which is prepared to help users apply the provisions of TMS 402/602, confirms this. In Section 4.2.2.3 (Reinforcing Bars), *MDG* states, “However, TMS 602 does not require the use of positioners, nor does it specify a maximum spacing for them.”

Although reinforcing bars are not prohibited from being tied, neither the TMS 402 nor the TMS 602 require tying of reinforcement. In fact, both the TMS 402 and the TMS 602 specifically permit reinforcing bars to be lap spliced while not in contact. The MIA *Inspector’s Handbook*, which was developed as a guide for reinforced hollow unit concrete masonry construction, states in Section 5.7 (Lap Splices, Reinforcing Bars), “Physical tying, or contact, is not a requirement for transferring stresses, however, a designer may require tying of reinforcing bars in the project specifications.”

Resources:

Society, The Masonry (2016). *TMS 402/602 Building Code Requirements and Specification for Masonry Structures, 2016*. The Masonry Society.

Society, The Masonry (2013). *TMS 402/602 Building Code Requirements and Specification for Masonry Structures, 2013*. The Masonry Society.

International Code Council (2018). *International Building Code, 2018*. International Code Council.

International Code Council (2015). *International Building Code, 2015*. International Code Council.

Society, The Masonry. (2016). *The Masonry Society’s Masonry Designers’ Guide, 2016*. The Masonry Society.

Masonry Institute of America (2015). *Reinforced Concrete Masonry Construction Inspector’s Handbook, 9th Edition*. Masonry Institute of America.