

PURPOSE OF GUIDE

Any business occupying commercial space in the City of Centennial is required to obtain a permit from the Building Division prior to starting business operations in the new space. This is required by the 2009 IBC Section 105.1 and pertains to all businesses regardless of whether or not improvements are being made to the space.

The purpose of this guide is to highlight the difference between a straightforward change of occupancy and changes that may require the full building permit process to be followed. The change of occupancy permitting process does not replace any processes or requirements set forth by the Planning, Zoning, Engineering Divisions and/or the Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

Change of Occupancy: Any user occupying space for which a previous user had conducted a similar business practice within the same use (as defined by the table below) is a “change of occupancy.”

Simple Example: If a tax consultant is occupying space previously utilized by an insurance broker and no interior modifications are being made, the new user would be eligible to pursue the change of occupancy permit process.

Change of Use: Any user occupying space that has not previously been used for a similar type use (as defined by the table below) is required to obtain a building permit and tenant finish the space to be in compliance with the requirements associated with the new use classification.

Simple Example: If a tax consultant is occupying space previously utilized by a sandwich shop, this classifies as a “change of use” and requires the new user to obtain a building permit.

USE CLASSIFICATIONS (IBC SECTION 302)

Classification	Groups	Examples
Assembly	A-1 thru, A-5	Restaurant, gymnasium, church
Business	B	Offices, dentist office, beauty shop
Educational	E	Charter school, day care
Factory	F-1, F-2	Bakery, wood shop
High Hazard	H-1 thru H-5	Fire works factory
Institutional	I-1 thru I-4	Jail, hospital
Mercantile	M	Drug store, boutique, sales room
Residential	R-1 thru R-4	Single family home, apartment house
Storage	S-1, S-2	Stock room, warehouse
Utility	U	Barn, fence, shed

Note: The change of occupancy process is only available to users that are 1) not changing use (see table above) and 2) not making improvements that require a building permit. Limited improvements such as interior painting and carpet replacement may be allowed without a permit; however any mechanical, structural, electrical, plumbing or egress is required to obtain a building permit regardless of changes in occupancy or use.

Commercial Change of Occupancy

MORE CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY & CHANGE OF USE EXAMPLES

Example 1: You are looking at a tenant space that was originally occupied by an accounting firm. The accounting firm changes locations and the space is now vacant. You want to rent the space and use it as a nail salon. You will not be adding or removing any walls, electrical fixtures, or plumbing fixtures, and are ready to move right in. Both businesses are classified as B occupancies. **This project qualifies for the change of occupancy process.**

Example 2: You are looking to lease a space that was originally used as a souvenir shop. The shop closes and the space is now vacant. You want to rent the space to sell lawn mowers and other maintenance related tools. You will need to add a small office in the back of the space and an area to assemble the mowers. Both of these uses would be considered an M occupancy. **While this project qualifies as a change of occupancy, the office addition requires you to proceed through the traditional building permit process and submit plans prepared by a State-licensed design professional.**

Example 3: You want to open a new business selling golf apparel in a space that was previously used as a warehouse. You will need to add some new walls, a second restroom, an employee break room, and a private office. Your business is classified as an M occupancy, however the prior use was an S occupancy. **This project is both a change in occupancy and a change in use, therefore you are required to proceed through the traditional building permit process and submit plans prepared by a State-licensed design professional.**

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY

1. Submit a change of occupancy application
2. Submit a floor plan showing overall dimensions, all interior walls and partitions, locations of restrooms, plumbing fixtures, and doors and windows. The plan does not need to be drawn by a licensed design professional.
3. You may be required to submit additional information depending on the exact uses, such as ventilation.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A CHANGE OF USE AND/OR A CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY INVOLVING TENANT IMPROVEMENT FINISHES

1. Submit a permit application
2. Submit a complete set of plans prepared by an architect or engineer. Plans will need to include a Code Analysis, demo plans, floor plans, exiting study, accessibility compliance, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical plans.

Below are some links to the City's web site and the Building Divisions page to help you in this process.

City: <http://www.centennialcolorado.com/>

Building Division: <http://www.centennialcolorado.com/index.aspx?NID=118>