

Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.)

What is a Certificate of Occupancy?

A certificate of occupancy is a document issued by a local government agency or building department certifying a building's compliance with applicable building codes and other laws, and indicating it to be in a condition suitable for occupancy. No building or structure shall be used or occupied, and no change in the existing occupancy classification of a building or structure or portion thereof shall be made, until the building official has issued a certificate of occupancy.

When is a C.O. required?

- ✓ When a new commercial building is constructed, a finish out of a lease space, or any commercial remodel.
 - When a building permit has been issued, the C.O. is included, a separate C.O. permit is not required
- ✓ When there is a tenant or occupant change
- ✓ When there is a tenant "name" or an ownership change
- ✓ If there is a change in use which would place the building or lease space in a different occupancy classification (group and/or division) as referenced in the International Building Code.

Why is a C.O. needed?

A Certificate of Occupancy not only identifies the number of people your business can safely house, but also helps the Fire Department to help identify potential hazards that may be encountered while responding to emergency calls. When the building is new, the C.O. verifies that it conforms to the most current life safety standards. If the building is existing, but has had an ownership change, tenant change, or change in building use, a new C.O. is required to determine if the building is still safe to occupy. Utilities will not be released in the new tenant's name, unless an application submittal for a C.O. has been received by our office. The certificate is also one of the last steps your business must complete before you can legally open the doors to customers.

How do I apply for a C.O. permit?

Apply online at www.mygovernmentonline.org . A current floor plan and a completed [Industrial Pretreatment Survey](#) must be uploaded as a PDF to the online application.

What happens during the C.O. review process?

- ✓ The Building Inspection Division receives the application, a permit number is assigned, and the application is routed to the Building, Planning, Industrial Pre-treatment, and Fire Marshal Departments for their review.
- ✓ The review process typically takes approximately one week. The reviewing departments check the information provided by the applicant, conduct verification of the zoning based on location and the business use, and confirm that no changes are being made that would require a building permit.
- ✓ Once the application is approved, the applicant is sent a notification via email and the permit fee of \$70.00 is due before the permit is issued.

What is next after my C.O. permit is issued?

- ✓ A site inspection is required by Building Inspections (scheduled online), Fire Marshal's Office (call **512-401-5200** to schedule), and Industrial Pretreatment (call **512-401-5581** to schedule).
- ✓ If an inspection fails, a re-inspection fee of \$25.00 will be assessed.
- ✓ Upon successful completion of the building and fire final inspections, the Building Official will issue the C.O.

Do I have to display the C.O.?

The C.O. is required to be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises and shall not be removed except by the Building Official.