CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY

This document is intended to give general information and requirements for changing the occupancy classification of a structure and is not intended to address every situation or code requirement, as each building is unique. Every structure is designed for a specific occupancy, depending on what the building is made of, how large it is, what the occupancy classification(s) is, and other code factors such as sprinklers. Buildings are designed to withstand several years of use, and most buildings do not contain the same occupants over the duration of its lifespan. Therefore, the code allows for a building to be analyzed for other occupancies to prolong the building’s lifespan and usefulness. See chapter 3 of the International Building Code (IBC) for allowable occupancy classifications for structures.

There are several code paths to proving a structure may change its occupancy classification, and it all starts in the International Existing Building Code (IEBC). Prescriptive compliance provisions will require that most changes occur using the requirements of the IBC as required for new construction. Work area compliance requires that the provision of the IEBC for the change of occupancy and referenced levels of work be utilized, with provisions of the IBC applied as directed. Performance compliance requires that the structure be run through a series of evaluations to determine the feasibility of changing the occupancy. Regardless of the method chosen, all structures undergoing a change of occupancy classification are required to meet the provisions of the code for the occupancy classification. This includes, but is not limited to: accessibility, sprinklers, fixture counts, rated construction, etc.

PLAN REQUIREMENTS

PRESENCE OF FIRE SPRINKLERS AND REASONS
Include all that apply:
• Allowable area
• Height increase
• Occupancy classification
• Basement only
• Required by other than IBC

REFLECTED CEILING PLANS
• Ceiling finish
• Fire resistance, if any
• Exit sign locations

EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS
• Include roofing material and slope
• Show finished grade

SITE DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY
• Minimum distance to lot lines (platted, assumed, or middle of ROW) for each side of building – measured at right angles from the face of the wall.

BASIC ALLOWABLE AREA
• Non-separated worst case condition
• Sum of ratios, if applicable
• Multi-story

SECtIONS
• Include fire-rated horizontal assemblies

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS
• Wall types, to include fire resistance rated assemblies where applicable
• Windows
• Stairs
• Restrooms dimensioned for accessibility standards

EGRESS REQUIREMENTS
• Occupant load calculations
• Exit width calculations
• Number of exits required (total for the building and for each area of consideration)
• Door hardware as required

DOOR SCHEDULES
• Door and frame rating as required
• Hardware schedule

ARCHITECTURAL
• Design criteria

LIFE SAFETY PLAN
when 2 or more exits are required

STURCTURAL
• Specifications & design criteria
• Structural plan for all levels of framing to be modified
• Structural sections and details

FLOOR PLANS
• Graphically indicate the scope of work
• Provide dimensions and scale
• Label proposed use of each space
• Proper exits
• Fire-rated vertical assemblies
• Indicate egress travel distance

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