

Guide To Change of Occupancy Permits

Purpose

When a business wishes to locate in Westerville, or relocate into an existing building or space a change of occupancy permit is required prior to taking occupancy. The purpose of a change of occupancy permit is to ensure the business/proposed use is permitted at the proposed location. The zoning department will ensure the business is permitted at the site and if the parking requirements can be met. The building department will ensure the business/proposed use can operate safely within the proposed building or space.

Limitations

A change of occupancy permit is limited to a business that wishes to move into an existing building or space “as is”. The business can perform cosmetic changes such as painting or new floor finishes, however there can be no alterations or additions of any type to the interior or exterior of the building. If an alteration or addition is planned by the business they must seek a registered architect and apply for a building permit.

A change of occupancy permit is limited to a business that wishes to move into an existing building or space that was previously occupied by a similar use. For example a mercantile business may occupy a building or space that was designed and previously used for a mercantile business. If a restaurant wishes to occupy a building or space that was designed and previously used for a mercantile business they must seek a registered architect and apply for a building permit to convert the space to meet the needs of a restaurant. Residential houses cannot be converted to commercial business spaces unless the business seeks a registered architect and applies for a building permit to convert the house and to meet the applicable building and zoning codes.

If a business wishes to change existing signage or install a new sign, a sign permit will have to be obtained in addition to the change of occupancy permit.

Application Requirements

- Completion of an application form furnished by the building department.
- Three (3) sets of plans of sufficient clarity to indicate how the proposed business intends on utilizing the building or space. (see plan requirements)

- Three (3) copies of a site plan showing the exact location of the space to be occupied as well as the parking and common areas. The site plan submission requirement may be waived under certain circumstances. Please contact the zoning staff listed below for more information.

Action on the Application

- The building and zoning departments will examine the application and plans of the proposed change of occupancy within two weeks or ten working days.
- If the application and plans of the proposed change of occupancy conform to the building and zoning codes, the applicant is notified and a change of occupancy permit is issued. The applicant shall pick up one set of the approved plans and pay the permit fees.
- If the application and plans of the proposed change of occupancy do not conform to the building and zoning codes, the applicant is notified and the reasons for the disapproval will be given in writing.

Change of Occupancy Fees

- **\$125.00** Change of Occupancy and Plan Review Fee
- **\$15.00** Zoning Fee
- **\$3.75** State of Ohio Assessment Fee

*These fees are collected once a permit has been issued and are not required at the time of the application.

Sign Permit Fees

- **\$50.00 to \$150.00** Building Fee (for each sign)
- **\$100.00** Plan Review Fee (per hour)
- **\$40.00** Zoning Fee (for each sign)
- **3%** State of Ohio Assessment Fee (Based on Building Fee & Plan Review Fee)

*These fees are collected once a permit has been issued and are not required at the time of the application.

Inspections

After a change of occupancy permit has been approved and issued. The business/applicant shall call 614.901.6650 to schedule an inspection of the building or space. This inspection shall occur prior to the opening of the business.

Have Questions or Need Help?

- If you have questions regarding building issues call 614.901.6894 and speak with Gregg Taylor.
- If you have questions regarding zoning issues call Bassem Bitar at 614.901.6658 or Jeff Buehler at 614.901.6659.

Plan Requirements

Three Sets of Floor Plans – The floor plan shall be drawn to a scale and show all relevant information such as rooms and their designated use, doors, windows, display fixtures, counters, or cabinetry. Rooms, spaces, and aisles or exit passageways shall be dimensioned. (Please see the attached sample floor plan)