

# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION for Certificate of Occupancy

**Erasing, crossing out, or otherwise altering any entered information will void this application.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) is to ensure that the use of building, structure or land in the District of Columbia conforms to the Zoning Regulations, DCMR Title 11, and to the provisions of the DC Building Code, DCMR Title 12A. In most cases, no person is permitted to use a building, structure or land in the District of Columbia for any purpose, other than a single family dwelling, until a valid C of O for that use has been issued by DCRA.

To apply for a C of O, please complete the C of O application form located at <http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Certificate+of+Occupancy+Application+and+Instructions> and follow the directions listed below. If you propose to operate an eating establishment, please also submit the [Eating Establishment Questionnaire](#) with your Certificate of Occupancy application.

Applications must be submitted in person at DCRA's Permit Center located at 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Second Floor.

**The application fee is non-refundable.** The issuance fee is based on square footage of the premises for which the C of O is being requested.

**DCRA does not accept applications and payments that are mailed. Such submittals will be returned.**

For applications other than ownership change, please allow 30 calendar days for the review of your application and possible issuance of your certificate of occupancy.

For more information about the C of O process and a checklist of submission items, please visit:

<http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Certificates+of+Occupancy+and+Zoning/Get+a+Certificate+of+Occupancy>.

A C of O does not take the place of any license that may be required to permit you to conduct your business at the premises for which the C of O is requested. For information concerning license requirements, contact the License Center, 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W., Second Floor, or by phone at (202) 442-4311 or via email [dcra@dc.gov](mailto:dcra@dc.gov).

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Lines 1 to 21 Lines 1 thru 21 ask for information about the proposed business/occupancy. Please be very detailed in the information you provide. Indicate N/A (non-applicable) for items that do not apply. Please make sure that the signatures, dates, telephone numbers and all information are legible.
- Lines 1 - 5 This section asks for basic information about the building/property where the premises is located. Do not use abbreviations for street names. Be sure that you indicate the correct quadrant and include the zip code. Provide the building/property owner's name, phone number and email address.
- Line 5 Information regarding the zone district and overlay district, if applicable, which can be obtained from the D.C. Office of Zoning at (202) 727-6311 or by visiting <http://dcoz.dc.gov>.
- Lines 6 - 9 This section asks for basic information about the applicant applying for the C of O. If you are applying as a corporation or other type of business entity, please use the corporate or other business entity name as the applicant's name.

Lines 10-21

This section asks for basic information about the premises and the proposed occupancy for which the C of O application is being made. Complete each question to the best of your ability. In identifying the proposed use of the building or premises, please be as detailed as possible about the premises and the type of operation, special equipment used, age of children and number of staff in any facility, etc.

Line 10

Select the type of C of O being request from the following categories:

**Ownership Change:** Check this box if you recently obtained control of the premises for which a C of O was previously issued and you will be conducting the same business in the premises. Typically no zoning or other inspections will be required for this type of issuance.

A zoning inspection may be required if the use to be continued is a nonconforming use, a C of O is being requested for an apartment or rental units in the R-2, R-3, R-4, and R-5A zoning districts, or a C of O is being requested for an eating establishment. Call (202) 442-9557 and use code #745 to schedule a zoning inspection. It normally takes 24-48 hours before the inspection results are entered into the Department's computer system.

Once the results of the zoning inspection have been successfully completed, and results entered into DCRA's computer system, the C of O certificate will be ready for issuance.

**Use Change:** Check this box if you are proposing a change from the previous use of the premises. Please note that an applicant who is seeking to change the use must have proof that 1) construction or renovation work has been approved by producing an issued building permit and 2) all building permit related inspections have been conducted, approvals obtained and the results entered into the Department's computer system. If you need assistance in obtaining a copy of the issued building permit, you may call the Records Management Branch Room at (202) 442-4480 to obtain a copy of an issued permit.

If you have not sought a building permit to make renovations, you should speak with staff from the Permitting Operations division to determine if a building permit is required before a C of O for a change in use can be issued. If the Permitting Operations division determines that a building permit is required, you will be required to obtain a building permit and have inspections conducted, with the results entered into the Department's computer system, before a C of O can be issued.

**Load Change:** Check this box if you propose to undertake changes such as changing the number of occupants in a rooming house, community residential facility, boarding house, the number of units in an apartment, hotel or motel, number of classrooms, students, seating capacity in a restaurant, and other similar changes.

Please note that a building permit may also be required before the C of O can be issued. Speak with staff in the Permitting Operations division to determine whether a building permit will be required to permit a C of O for a load change.

If the Permitting Operations division determines that a building permit is required, you will be required to obtain a building permit and have inspections conducted, with the results entered into the Department's computer system, before a C of O can be issued.

**Revision:** Check this box if a typographical error was made in a previously issued C of O. Note: no substantive changes to the use or occupancy are permitted as a revision to an issued C of O.

**New Building:** Check this box if you obtained a building permit, have recently completed construction of a new building or other structure, and now wish to recognize core and shell completion of the building or other structure, or wish to seek the right to use the premises in that building or other structure. Prior to issuance of any C of O in this category, all necessary inspections must be completed, all work approved and the results entered into the Department's computer system before any C of O in this category can be issued. Four subsets of a new building C of O are as follows:

**Temporary Occupancy:** If you would like to use the building for temporary purposes, a temporary C of O may be sought. Conditions on the issuance of the C of O may also be imposed as necessary, and will include an expiration date.

**Partial Occupancy:** Upon request from the holder of a building permit, a temporary certificate of occupancy may be issued for part of the building before completion of the entire work covered by the permit, provided such part can be occupied without endangering life, public safety or welfare. If you desire to occupy a portion of the premises under construction, you may seek a partial occupancy C of O.

**Completion of Core and Shell:** Upon request, a conditional C of O can be issued by DCRA to recognize that the core and shell of a building or other structure has been substantially and materially completed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Construction Codes of the District of Columbia. The issuance of this type of C of O does not permit or authorize use and occupancy of the building or other structure for any purpose.

**Establishment of a New Occupancy:** Where an occupancy is to be established in a new building or other structure that has not previously been occupied, upon request a C of O can be issued by DCRA to recognize the approved use and occupancy of the premises in the new building or other structure. The issuance of this type of C of O permits use and occupancy of a new building or other structure for the specified uses listed on the C of O. Issuance of the C of O may require inspection and approval of the entire new building or other structure for core and shell completion, if a conditional C of O for core and shell has not been previously requested and obtained.

- Line 11 Be as detailed as possible about the proposed used of the premises, referring to the permitted uses under the Zoning Regulations of the District of Columbia and the use classifications of the Construction Codes of the District of Columbia.
- Line 12 Be as detailed as possible about the prior use of the premises. A copy of an existing C of O is required unless no previous C of O was issued by DCRA. If you need assistance in obtaining a copy of the issued certificate of occupancy, you may call the Records Management Branch Room at (202) 442-4480 to obtain a copy.
- Line 13 For proposed occupant load:
- For assembly uses (such as restaurants, public halls, churches, etc.), enter the maximum number of persons allowed under Section 1004 of the Construction Codes of the District of Columbia.
  - For multi-family dwelling uses such as apartment buildings, enter the number of dwelling units.
  - For rooming and boarding houses, enter the number of roomers or boarders.
  - For a community based residential facility (CBRF), enter the number of residents.
  - For hotels and motels, enter the number of rooms, and identify assembly spaces.
  - For schools and child development centers, enter the number of children attending and number of staff.
- Line 14 For the calculation of the square footage of the premises to be occupied by the proposed use, please be advised of the following definition of gross floor area:

**Gross floor area** - the sum of the gross horizontal areas of the several floors of all buildings on the lot, measured from the exterior faces of exterior walls and from the center line of walls separating two (2) buildings.

The term "gross floor area" shall include basements, elevator shafts, and stairwells at each story; floor space used for mechanical equipment (with structural headroom of six feet, six inches (6 ft., 6 in.), or more); penthouses; attic space (whether or not a floor has actually been laid, providing structural headroom of six feet, six inches (6 ft., 6 in.), or more); interior balconies; and mezzanines.

The term "gross floor area" shall not include cellars and outside balconies that do not exceed a projection of six feet (6 ft.) beyond the exterior walls of the building.

Lines 16-17 For certain types of businesses, such as eating establishments, auto dealers, and sexually oriented business establishments as defined in 11 DCMR 199, please submit the appropriate supplemental form. These forms may be found on-line at <http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Certificates+of+Occupancy+and+Zoning/Zoning> or in the Permit Center.

Line 18 If the use was approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) or Zoning Commission (ZC), please check this box, indicate the B.Z.A. or Z.C. case number, (and provide a stamped copy of the BZA or Z.C. order). To obtain a copy of any order, please visit [http://dcoz.dc.gov/search/search\\_orders.asp](http://dcoz.dc.gov/search/search_orders.asp).

Lines 19-21 If there is a building permit associated with this application, provide:  
1) the building permit number;  
2) the use listed on the building permit; and  
3) all inspections were conducted and approved.

Line 22 Indicate whether off-street parking (i.e. not public, on-street parking) is provided on the property and the number of parking spaces.

If an agent is submitting an application on behalf of owner, the application must be supported with a completed Owner Authorization Form signed by the Business Owner and notarized by a licensed Notary Public. Authorization Forms can be obtained on-line at [dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Certificate+of+Occupancy+Authorization+Form](http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA/Permits/Certificate+of+Occupancy+Authorization+Form) or at the Permit Center located at 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W., Suite E240 Washington, D.C. 20024.

# Application for Certificate of Occupancy

Application Date: \_\_\_\_\_

C of O Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE  
CERTIFICATE FEE IS BASED ON SQUARE FOOTAGE**

**Erasing, Crossing Out, Whiting Out, or Otherwise Altering Any Entered Information Will Void This Application**

## INFORMATION ON THE BUILDING/PROPERTY

1. Property Address \_\_\_\_\_
2. Building/Property Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Property Square \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix \_\_\_\_\_ Lot \_\_\_\_\_
4. Number of Floors \_\_\_\_\_
5. Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Overlay (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

6. Applicant's Name (see instructions ): \_\_\_\_\_
7. Trade name of business (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Applicant's Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_
9. Applicant's Day Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## INFORMATION ON PREMISES/OCCUPANCY

10.  Ownership Change  Use Change  Load Change  Revision  New Bldg
11. Proposed use of Premises \_\_\_\_\_
12. Prior use of Premises \_\_\_\_\_ C of O # \_\_\_\_\_
13. Proposed Occupancy Load \_\_\_\_\_
14. Area Occupied by Proposed Use \_\_\_\_\_ sq. ft.
15. List Floors of a building to be Occupied by Proposed Use \_\_\_\_\_
16. Does your business sell or rent any goods or provide any services that could be described as sexually-oriented?  
 Yes  No If yes, please fill out the supplemental form.
17. Is your business a Medical Marijuana Dispensary or Production Facility?  Yes  No
18. Was this use approved by an order of the BZA or ZC?  Yes  No If yes, provide order # and date of approval:  
\_\_\_\_\_
19. Is there a building permit associated with this application?  Yes  No If yes, provide building permit number  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. What use was listed on the building permit? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Were all inspections conducted and approved?  Yes  No
22. Is off-street parking on the property provided for this use?  Yes  No If yes, number of spaces: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTESTATION AND SIGNATURE

I certify that all of the statements on this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the District of Columbia.

Applicant or Agent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*If you are applying as an **Agent** on behalf of the Applicant, attach completed **Authorization Form**

**Making a false statement on this application can result in the denial or revocation of your certificate of occupancy and criminal penalties, under D.C. Official Code § 22-2405, of a fine up to \$1000 and/or imprisonment up to 180 days.**

For more information about C of Os, please visit [dcra.dc.gov](http://dcra.dc.gov) and click on [Permits/Zoning](#)

**OFFICIAL DCRA USE ONLY**

C of O # \_\_\_\_\_

Premises Address \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMIT REVIEW COORDINATOR**

Checked items #1-9 for completeness \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ZONING INFORMATION**

BZA or ZC # (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Prior C of O # (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Use on above C of O \_\_\_\_\_

**ZONING REVIEWER**

Continuation of Prior Use?  Yes  No

Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Use Allowed?  Yes  No Provide Zoning Code Use \_\_\_\_\_

Cite Zoning Section # \_\_\_\_\_

Off-street Parking Required?  Yes  No If yes, number of spaces required \_\_\_\_\_. If no, was a waiver granted?

Parking credit? BZA relief obtained? Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Is Zoning Inspection Required?  Yes  No If Yes, describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ENGINEERING REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Prior Bldg Permit Applicable?  Yes  No Bldg. Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

New Bldg Permit Required?  Yes  No

Construction Code Inspections for the Proposed Use:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bldg  
(715)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elec  
(720)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Plumb/Mech  
(730/725)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fire  
(750)

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**INSPECTIONS**

Zoning Inspection (745) Approved?  Yes  No N/A

All Construction Code Inspections Approved?  Yes  No N/A

Stormwater Inspection Verification? Yes No N/A DDOE Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL**

Issuance: By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_