



A Quick Guide to a Certificate of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) verifies that the use of a building, structure, or land in the District complies with the legal and safety standards in the **Zoning Regulations (DCMR Title II)**, **DC Construction Codes**, and the **Green Building Act**.

C of O applications are submitted through the online platform **Certifi**. Following is an overview of application types.



Ownership Change

Ownership or tenant changes, but the use stays the same.

Examples include:

- A new owner/tenant takes over an existing business.
- Permit details are corrected.
- A trade name changes.
- A property owner has an updated address.



Use Change

The space is used for a different purpose.

- Example: business, store → office → child care facility.
- Building permits and final inspections are required.



Occupancy Load Change

The number of people allowed in the space changes.

- Example: Renovations increase or reduce capacity.
- Building permits are required for occupant load.

A Quick Guide to a Certificate of Occupancy, Continued



Temporary Certificate of Occupancy

Temporary approval to use a space.

- Examples: Pop-Up Shops → Seasonal Uses → Temporary Events → Fireworks Events → Farmers Market



New Building/New Construction C of O

1. **Core & Shell: Structure complete**
 - Basic structure, exterior walls, and utility systems are finished, but interior spaces and tenant improvements are not yet finalized.
 - Does not authorize occupancy of the building.
2. **Conditional: Mostly complete**
 - Property meets many, but not all, C of O requirements and a C of O is issued on a conditional basis to allow the owner time to complete the outstanding items.
3. **Permanent: Fully complete and approved**
 - Permanent C of O is granted when a building is finished according to building codes and zoning regulations.

For More Information:

- Visit [DOB Certificate of Occupancy website](#)

Contact Us!

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