



WASHOE COUNTY

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Planning and Building

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Change of Occupancy Handout

If your proposed use of a building, structure or space is different from its previously permitted *occupancy use*, it will trigger a “change in occupancy” which requires your space to be upgraded to the currently adopted codes (not limited to the I-codes, but all applicable Washoe County adopted codes across all departments/districts). For example: A retail business (a *Mercantile* occupancy group) moves into a space that was previously offices (a *Business* occupancy group) triggers compliance to current codes which typically involve, but are not limited to Parking, Accessibility, Energy, Mechanical, Lighting, Envelope, Plumbing (including fixture count per new occupancy), Electrical, Life Safety and fire sprinkler and/or fire alarm code compliance.

Listed below are some of the most common items that may need to be upgraded into compliance if the occupancy use is changed:

- Zoning: verify your proposed use is allowed in your location per Planning Codes
- Parking (number and size of spaces) per Washoe County Planning
- Per IFC, NEC, IBC- Fire alarms and Fire sprinklers
- Accessible parking per IBC and ANSI A117.1
- Accessible route from the parking area to the entrance of the building
- At least one (1) accessible route from an accessible building entrance to the primary function/service areas within the space
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Lighting, HVAC, Electrical systems and Envelope (wall, fenestration, roof, floor elements)

This list is informational only and does not include requirements from all applicable Washoe County adopted codes across all departments and districts (Health and Fire) and is not intended to be comprehensive. Please speak with your design team and request a Pre-Development meeting via the Community Services Department online at: <https://www.washoecounty.us/csd/index.php>

Building changes/improvements require a building permit and may require additional permits from other departments/districts. A licensed professional can assist you in determining code requirements and all construction must be done by a NV licensed contractor. Please feel free to call the Building Division for further questions.



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