

Certificate of Occupancy

INFORMATION BULLETIN

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This Information Bulletin describes the process of issuing a Certificate of Occupancy. Pursuant to San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) [§129.0114 PDF](#), no structure or portion of a structure shall be used or occupied, and no change in the existing use or occupancy classification of a structure or portion of a structure shall be made until the Building Official has issued a Certificate of Occupancy approving that use or occupancy.

I. When is a Certificate of Occupancy Issued?

A Certificate of Occupancy is issued upon final approval of all inspections for work authorized under a building permit and associated permits. A Certificate of Occupancy will be issued within two business days from the date of final inspection approval. The permit holder may elect to have a copy of their Certificate of Occupancy delivered via mail or email.

A. The City of San Diego issues Certificates of Occupancy for the following:

1. New non-residential buildings.
2. New multiple dwelling unit buildings.
3. Tenant improvements (TIs) to occupy a shell building or involving a change of occupancy classification.
4. Additions and alterations to an existing non-residential or MDU, resulting in a change of occupancy classification or occupant load.

B. The City of San Diego does **not** issue Certificates of Occupancy for the following:

- Single dwelling unit, duplex, or townhome.
- Private garages and sheds.
- Shell buildings.
- TIs or remodels of existing structures when there is no change in occupancy classification or occupant load.
- Agricultural buildings.
- Change of ownership or tenancy.
- Other reasons such as leasing satellite installation rights or financial institution conditions.

II. Temporary Certificate of Occupancy

On a case-by-case basis, a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy may be issued for a limited period of time when the Building Official finds that a structure or a portion of a structure can be occupied safely and no substantial hazard will result from occupancy of any structure or portion of a structure before all work is completed ([SDMC §129.0115 PDF](#)).

A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy may be issued once the following items are installed and approved:

- A. Life safety elements.
- B. Means of egress system.
- C. Emergency responder radio coverage report.
- D. Fire protection and fire alarm systems.
- E. Fire access and fire hydrants.
- F. Accessibility requirements.
- G. Mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.
- H. Public improvements.
- I. Special inspection reports.
- J. Payment of all fees.
- K. Additional regulations, as applicable to the specific building.

To request a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, submit a [Request for Temporary Occupancy \(Form DS-6004\)](#).

A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy request invoice will be emailed back to you. See fees at the bottom of this bulletin. In addition, projects that request to occupy a portion of a building shall submit a phased occupancy plan for City review at the time of permitting to demonstrate that each portion of the building will fully comply with all applicable regulations.

An inspection will be performed to confirm that the portion to be occupied meets all applicable regulations. A final inspection approval is required upon completion of the remainder of the work prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

III. Certificate of Occupancy for Existing Buildings

To request a copy of a Certificate of Occupancy for an existing building, email the Development Services Department Records Division at DSDRCD@sanidiego.gov. Provide as much information as possible to assist our Records staff in finding a Certificate of Occupancy, including the project address, project number, permit/approval number, and approximate date of project completion.

If a copy of the original Certificate of Occupancy is not available in the Records Division, complete a [Request for Certificate of Occupancy for an Existing Building, Form DS-6003](#). Research fees may be assessed. The request shall include all supporting documentation, a copy of the Inspection Record Card, permit/approval and project numbers, and any other related information for City review.

The Inspection Services Office will process the request within three weeks of the date the request is received. If documentation is not found to demonstrate that a final inspection approval was issued, a new building permit may be required.

IV. Suspension or Revocation of Certificate of Occupancy

Pursuant to Section 129.0118 of the San Diego Municipal Code, the Building Official may suspend or revoke a Certificate of Occupancy if the certificate was issued in error, or on the basis of incorrect information, or if the Building Official determines that the structure or portion of the structure is in violation of any ordinance, regulation, or provision of the [San Diego Municipal Code §129.0101 PDF](#).

V. Fees

The following non-refundable processing fees will be assessed:

Temporary Certificate of Occupancy \$293.80
Re-issuing Certificate of Occupancy \$293.80
Additional Hourly Fees \$146.80/hr.
(May be assessed if additional research and review time is required.)

VI. Previous Versions of this Information Bulletin

- [2024-12-31 | IB-585 PDF](#)



San Diego Mayor
TODD GLORIA



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