



Change of Use or Occupancy

BD-37 v1 25/07

Description: Change of use or occupancy where no work or construction is taking place but use or occupant load has changed; OR interior alteration (commercial) for existing spaces with construction work taking place as per Florida Building Code, Chapter 1, Scope & Administration. Even if no work is contemplated, a permit and final inspection(s) are required and a Certificate of Occupancy issued.

Permit Type: BD Interior Alteration (Comm) (Primary)
BD Change of Use



IMPORTANT! The owner or tenant shall contact the Planning & Zoning Department to confirm the USE is permitted for the location according to the city's Land Use & Comprehensive plans. We do NOT recommend signing a lease on a property before confirming the use is compatible.

Documents Required

Forms and applications available at <https://www.cityofdoral.com/Departments/Building-Department/Documents>

- ☒ Permit Application signed by property owner and qualifier
- ☒ Property Appraiser Summary
- ☒ Sunbiz Info for Property Owner (if applicable)
- ☒ Plans, elevations, and specifications necessary to convey scope of work in compliance with Florida Building Code (FBC) and referenced codes (e.g. NFPA, NEC, etc.)
 - Where no work is taking place, obtain existing floor plans or design professional must provide the minimum requirements of the FBC for Construction Type, Use, Occupancy, Occupant Load, Fixture Count/Requirements, etc. as well as path of egress and accessible route and life safety features noted (fire alarm, fire sprinklers, etc.)
 - Statement on plans: "Scope of Work: Change of Use / No Work Proposed".
- ☒ Flood Legend showing Flood Zone, Base Flood Elevation (BFE) and FIRM Panel Number
 - See <https://www.cityofdoral.com/Departments/Building-Department/Flood-Information>

Reviews Required (Typically; other reviews may be required based on scope of work)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zoning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building/Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electrical (interior alteration) | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction Access |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plumbing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outside Agency Approvals ¹ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structural | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DERM ² <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MD Fire |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Floodplain | <input type="checkbox"/> DOH <input type="checkbox"/> AHCA |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mechanical (interior alteration) | <input type="checkbox"/> Army COE <input type="checkbox"/> SFWMD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roofing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Inspections Required

- ☒ Zoning Final
- ☒ Building Final
- ☒ Others as required for scope of work for interior alterations

¹ Applicant must submit to Miami Dade County RER Departments (Fire, DERM, WASD, etc.), if applicable. See

<https://www.miamidade.gov/Apps/RER/EPSPortal>

² DERM Review required water and sewer capacity for intended use.



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Resources Needed

- ☑ Florida Building Code <http://www.floridabuilding.org>
- ☑ Property Appraiser <https://www.miamidade.gov/Apps/PA/propertysearch/#!/>
- ☑ Sunbiz <https://dos.myflorida.com/sunbiz/>
- ☑ CSS / Permitting Portal www.cityofdoral.com/permitting
- ☑ Existing Plans & Permit Drawings
 - For buildings constructed before 2004, please visit MDC Microfilm at <https://bldgappl.miamidade.gov/microfilm/>
 - For building constructed after 2004, please visit www.cityofdoral.com/permitting and select Apply → Search BD Records Requests
- ☑ MDC Permitting Portal <https://www.miamidade.gov/Apps/RER/EPSPortal>
- ☑ Flood Legend <https://www.cityofdoral.com/files/assets/city/v/1/departments/building/documents/floodplain-requirements-for-existing-building-design.pdf>
- ☑ Doral Business Licensing <http://www.cityofdoral.com/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning-Department/Business-License-Process>

Process Requirements

Step 1: Determine **existing** use and occupancy.

- Verify with the Planning & Zoning Department that the proposed use is permitted under the city's approved Land Use & Comprehensive Plans. Refer to CSS for:
 - Preliminary Zoning Verification Review
 - PZ Zoning Determination Letter
- Your design professional can verify in the Florida Building Code if the proposed change of use is allowed for the size and type of structure.
- Obtain the last permitted set of drawings.



IMPORTANT! If the last permitted set of plans do not match your space, then work was completed without a permit and may be in violation. The owner must pull a permit (**BD Interior Alteration**) to either legalize the work or to remove the unpermitted work.

Step 2: If the change of use is allowed, apply for a permit to the City of Doral Building Department.

- If no construction or work is taking place and applicant is simply moving into the space, applicant can use **BD Change of Use**. A Design Professional (architect or engineer) will verify that the proposed use of the space complies with square footage, life safety provisions (exits, egress, fire alarm, fire sprinkler, etc.), and restroom requirements of the **FBC Existing Building** code.
- If an applicant intends to alter the space, a building permit is required, and the applicant can use **BD Interior Alteration (Commercial)** to apply.

Step 3: All applications must be filled out completely and include the following information:



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- The name and address of the owner and the address of the property
- The proposed new use of the property according to **Florida Building Code, Chapter 3 Use & Occupancy** and occupant load calculated using **Chapter 10 Table 1004.5**
- Signed & sealed plans and specifications for the proposed change of use including:
 - Square footage and use of spaces (conference rooms, warehouse, offices, etc.)
 - Ingress/egress points including doors, stairs, ramps, etc.
 - Parking (including accessible or ADA-compliant parking)
 - Restrooms (including water closets or toilets, lavatories, or sinks, drinking fountains, and mop sinks) based on proposed use using **Florida Building Code – Plumbing Volume Chapter 4 Table 403.1**.
 - Floodplain Criteria – See Floodplain Requirements for Existing Building Design under the Forms section at www.cityofdoral.com/building.
 - Life Safety Data
- Payment of all permitting fees

Step 4: The City of Doral Development Services Departments will review the application and determine whether the proposed change of use complies with applicable laws, rules and codes.

- For most commercial applications, review by Miami Dade County will be required for Fire, Water/Sewer, Environmental and Traffic, at a minimum. Please visit the Miami Dade County permitting portal.
- Applicant may submit to county after obtaining a Doral processing number.

Step 5: If the proposed change of use complies with the applicable codes, the building department will issue a permit once all agencies have approved, and all fees are paid.

Step 6: The applicant must then complete the associated interior alteration in accordance with the plans and specifications that were submitted with the application. If no work is anticipated, applicant will schedule a final inspection with Miami-Dade Fire / Life Safety (if applicable), Doral Zoning Final and Doral Building Final.

Step 7: Inspections are required to monitor the progress of the work. Inspections are scheduled online via the permitting portal. Review your Permit Snapshot Report or Inspection Card found in your permitting portal under “attachments” for required inspections. Inspections may be scheduled for the next day before 3pm. 99% of inspections are completed for the day requested.

Step 8: When inspections have concluded, the building department will issue a certificate of occupancy (CO) for the new use of the property which will indicate the total occupancy for the space. The CO allows the Licensing Division to issue a Certificate of Use (CU) and a Business Tax Receipt (BTR). Initial applications for a BTR will be required to obtain approval from Miami-Dade County Fire and DERM divisions. This is a separate approval from the construction permitting process.

- BTR's are renewable annually.
- If applicable, Miami Dade County Fire Rescue will also issue an annual operating permit and may conduct an annual life safety inspection.

Find FAQ's on the Back



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FAQ's

What if I have already signed a lease? The Land Development Code explains the permitted uses for the various zoning districts. Meet with a Planning & Zoning (PZ) representative to discuss it further.

https://library.municode.com/fl/doral/codes/code_of_ordinances.

Scenarios we have seen before and the challenges they can bring.

I own a vacant warehouse and have not been able to lease it. Can I turn it into a gym or kids entertainment play space? I would be able to make some money quickly.

First, the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Zoning Planning will define uses permitted in warehouse/industrial areas. Check with PZ! Next, check with your design professional. That 10,000 square foot warehouse (**storage occupancy**) allowed a total of 20 occupants and had one grandfathered non-compliant restroom. The gym (**assembly occupancy**) allows over 200 people and requires at least three new ADA-compliant restrooms and will likely have a higher impact on traffic (infrastructure, roads) and sewer capacity. That equals more money.

This vacant retail store would be perfect for a small church.

Planting a church is exciting and doing it the right way can save money. Retail use (mercantile occupancy) has a 1:60 factor. Your 3,000 sf shop holds 50 people and had 1 toilet. Changing the use to a church (assembly occupancy) with maybe just a 1,000 sf sanctuary and some meeting rooms now potentially has an occupancy of over 150 people, needs to two toilet rooms and adequate means of egress. Traffic impact and sewer capacity are also affected.

This business office suite is just the right size for a boutique medical office/surgical suite. I don't need to do any work.

The Agency for Healthcare Administration will define what constitutes a surgical suite and how many you can have before additional systems and protocols needs to be in place. Schedule a meeting with the Building Official to discuss further.

I make homemade pizza and breads. I need a small storefront to sell them. I just signed a lease for an old bakery with a serving counter. I am so excited to also have a pizza bistro with an oven direct from Napoli and seating for 20 people to try my calzones and stromboli.

We can't wait to try it. But a few things stand out. A take-out counter is different than having a place to sit and eat/drink. Miami-Dade County's Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM) will need to see plans showing a grease trap and to verify sewer capacity for the increased use. That oven sounds amazing but we need to know that the product is UL-listed with Underwriter's Laboratories and that it is safe to operate in the United States. The bakery never baked on the premises and now that you will be cooking on site, the oven requires an Exhaust Hood.

These are just some of the hurdles our applicants' have experienced before doing their due diligence on that "perfect space" for their business. We look forward to helping you navigate the process.

Let's Build Doral Together!

www.cityofdoral.com/building