



KEY

*Fee information

HOW TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (C/O)

Opening a new business in an existing commercial building?

An Occupation Tax Certificate (Business License) is NOT a Certificate of Occupancy (C/O).

Option 1: New C/O

Obtain a new Certificate of Occupancy with a new business name.

Begin with step 1 below.

Option 2: Information Change

If **NO** changes are made to the interior or exterior of a tenant space (*other than cosmetic*), the occupant load, and/or business type, *you may be eligible* to submit an Information Change Form to the FMO.

See *INFORMATION CHANGE PROCESS* on Page 3.

All commercial businesses require a valid Certificate of Occupancy (C/O). It is the APPLICANTS RESONSIBILITY to verify compliance with Cobb County and/or State departments regardless of the type of permit application:

- ☐ Cobb County Community Development Agency, Structural Plan Review Department
- ☐ Fire Marshal's Office (FMO)
- ☐ Cobb County Water System (CCWS)
- ☐ Cobb County Community Development Agency, Zoning Division
- ☐ Cobb & Douglas Public Health (if applicable)

Official Code of Cobb County: Chapter 18, Article VIII, Section 18-234

HOW TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (C/O)

1. Complete a Commercial Permit Application

- The Commercial Permit Application (CPA) is located at www.cobbcounty.org/comdev
- Please read and review all pages of the CPA.
- Required documents may include but are not limited to:
 - Commercial Application (completed entirely with applicable information)
 - Scope of Work letter (1 page summary of proposed construction or non-construction activities)
 - Virtual set of plans (if larger than 20MB, request a "shared folder" in the application submittal)
 - Copy of applicant's driver's license
 - **Copy of General Contractor's GEORGIA state license and business license (if applicable)
 - **Authorized agent form

****NOTE:** If General Contractor (GC) bids are still being collected for a project, the Building Department *will accept* the application without GC information and Authorized Agent form. However, the hired GC MUST submit their GEORGIA business license, state license, and Authorized agent form before a permit is issued.

- *Permitting fees are applied based on construction costs, type of structure, and inspections required, etc.
- (770) 528-2071 | commbldgapplication@cobbcounty.org

Continued Next Page

2. Cobb County Water System Approval

- *During the permitting process, CCWS plan review will contact the applicant if more information is needed, or to discuss any applicable water/sewer fees.
 - (770) 419-6324 | ccwsplanreview@cobbcounty.org
 - Every commercial water service (domestic, irrigation, and fire) will need a testable backflow assembly installed after the water meter. Plans will be reviewed by CCWS' Backflow Program to verify containment and isolation of cross connections.
 - To schedule inspection of new assemblies, contact the Backflow Program. (770) 528-3343
 - To schedule inspection of oil/water separators, contact CCWS' Industrial Pretreatment Program. (770) 528-8216
- Any business serving food, should also submit a food service establishments (FSE) application. This form can be found at <https://www.cobbcounty.org/water/compliance/grease-management/fse>
- Food service establishments must contact CCWS' Grease Management Office to schedule a new trap inspection prior to installation. For exterior traps, another inspection should be scheduled before trap is covered. (770) 419-6430 | FOG@cobbcounty.org
- *All CCWS fees must be paid before a building permit is issued.

3. Contact the Cobb & Douglas Public Health office for approval. *(Not required for all businesses.)*

- (770) 435-7815 | <https://cobbanddouglaspublichealth.com/environmental-health/>
- *Fees may apply.

4. Fire Marshal Review and Approval

- Submit Commercial Permit Application and all drawings to the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) online at www.cobbfmo.org
 - All Fire Marshal inspections are schedule through the FMO's 'Mobile Eyes Contractor Portal'
 - Plan Reviews are generally scheduled within 2 weeks of when all documents are received.
- *FMO fees may include, but not limited to new tenant plan review and inspections (fee determined by square feet of building/facility, type of plan review, etc.), re-reviews, consultations, expedited review, etc.
 - *Plan Review and Inspection Fees and additional resources are available on the Cobb County FMO Website: <https://www.cobbcounty.org/public-safety/fire/fire-marshal/certificate-occupancy>
- (770) 528-8310 | www.cobbfmo.org

Top 10 Fire Code Violations:

This list is provided as a guide to help you prepare for your Fire Inspection.

- ☐ Address posted (street & suite numbers)
- ☐ Fire extinguishers annual inspection completed
- ☐ Sprinkler system annual inspection completed
- ☐ Fire alarm annual inspection completed
- ☐ Locking arrangements on egress doors
- ☐ Emergency lights and exit signage
- ☐ Handrail/guardrails
- ☐ Interior finishes
- ☐ Ceiling tiles missing
- ☐ Hydrant reports / fire lane markings

5. OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (C/O)

Once ALL applicable final inspections (including building, FMO, arborist, CCWS, and special inspections) have been completed and passed, the C/O may be obtained from the Community Development Agency via email at subpermits@cobbcounty.org

- * The C/O fee is included at the time of permit issuance.
- Display or store your C/O and Business License in an easily accessible location.



Continued Next Page

INFORMATION CHANGE PROCESS:

If the following criteria are met you may be eligible to submit an Information Change Form (ICF) to the Fire Marshal Office (FMO) in lieu of a new Certificate of Occupancy (C/O). *Not all businesses are eligible for the ICF process. The ICF process changes contact information ONLY. This does not change the registered business name listed on the C/O.*

1. A valid C/O exists for the space being moved into
2. Tenant space is the same occupant classification as the previous occupant
3. No changes to the occupancy are proposed
4. No work without a permit is performed

*Charges will be incurred to submit an ICF for consideration.

Scan this QR Code for
a video about the
FMO process:



Common ineligibility criteria for ICF applicants:

1. No previous C/O available
2. Construction of any kind including mechanical, electrical plumbing. Cosmetic work such as painting or repairing holes in the wall is acceptable
3. Drawing does not match previous floor plans. If the FMO has previous drawings they will compare them with the drawings and pictures provided by the applicant. Sometimes pictures provided can give us clues if any construction took place
4. Significant change in furniture layout, especially for restaurants. This usually results in an occupant load modification
5. The occupancy classification is the same but change of use will modify the occupant load. For example, insurance business going to a tutoring business

To Submit an Information Change:

1. Visit www.cobbfmo.org
2. Select 'Certificates of Occupancy/Plan Review.'
3. Scroll down to the Plan Review Resources heading, then select 'Information Change Form.'
4. Follow the steps outlines on the form. You must submit all required information to the FMO for consideration.
5. After submission, you will be contacted via email with instructions on how to move forward.