



City of Santa Barbara
Building & Safety Division
**Procedure for Change in Use
or Change in Occupancy**

Community Development
630 Garden Street
805-564-5485

Every building is classified by the building official according to its use or occupancy as a building of Group A, B, C, E, F, H, I, L, M, R, S, or U type as defined the 2022 California Building Code (CBC) Chapter 3. Building permit records or past approved plans may be used to identify or establish legally existing occupancies. Any occupancy about which there is any question shall be classified by the building official and included in the group that it most clearly resembles, based on the existing life and fire hazard (including outdated classification types).

A change of occupancy classification or use of any building requires approval of the building official. No change shall be made in the character of occupancies or use of any building unless such building is made to comply with all current code requirements (2022 California Existing Building Code, Part 10, Section 506.1). The basis for this requirement is to provide for a higher level of safety to the general public due to the anticipated intensification of use caused by the change in occupancy.

The change of occupancy must also be in conformance with the land use and parking requirements of the zoning ordinance. Please consult Planning and Zoning for possible parking requirements.

A qualified design professional is required to submit a code analysis report and prepared plans which will identify existing conditions and/or proposed alterations necessary to bring the building into full code compliance. The completeness and accuracy of the report is essential for staff to determine the extent of alterations required to accomplish the change in use. A code analysis report shall include, but may not be limited to, the following issues:

- ❑ Types of Construction pursuant to requirements of CBC Chapter 6,
- ❑ Fire resistance of exterior walls and wall opening protection based on proximity to property lines pursuant to requirements of CBC Chapters 5 & 7,
- ❑ Allowable floor area, allowable maximum height, maximum number of stories permitted and automatic fire-sprinkler requirements pursuant to requirements of CBC Chapters 5 & 9,
- ❑ Conformity with required exiting pursuant to CBC Chapter 10,
- ❑ Conformity with State accessibility requirements pursuant to CBC Chapter 11A or 11B,
- ❑ When a change of occupancy results in a structure being reclassified to a higher risk

category, the structure shall conform to the seismic requirements for a new structure of the higher risk category – California Existing Building Code, Part 10, Appendix A,

- A specific proposal that includes alterations required for the building to meet applicable building code requirements,
- Compliance with minimum number of restroom facilities and number of plumbing fixtures pursuant to CPC Chapter 4 & Table 422.1,
- Review and approval by ABR/Landmarks Commission design review boards for all proposed or required exterior alterations,
- Plan approval necessary from any other divisions, departments, and agencies which may include Planning & Zoning, Public Works Engineering, Public Works Transportation, Public Works Water Resources Division, Fire Department, SBAPCD, and SB County Health Department.

Permit applications and general plan submittal requirement handouts are available at the City of Santa Barbara website: [Construction & Land Development | City of Santa Barbara \(santabarbaraca.gov\)](https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/construction-land-development)