



# COUNTY OF LAKE

## DEPARTMENT OF LAKE COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTION

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PAINESVILLE, OH 44077  
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David V. Strichko, Chief Building Official

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY FOR AN EXISTING BUSINESS / STRUCTURE

At times it may be required by the local jurisdiction, your insurance provider, your financial lending institution or a state agency for a new or existing business owner to obtain an inspection and/or a Certificate of Occupancy. The following information is to help guide you through the procedure and hopefully make it as easy as possible.

First, when you need to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy it is recommended you contact the Lake County Building Department at 440-350-2636 to see if there is an existing Certificate of Occupancy already on file. If so, we can provide you with a copy via email.

Next, if a Certificate of Occupancy is not on file or you are required to have your name on the Certificate of Occupancy, a formal request must be submitted to the Lake County Building Department for review and approval. The request and submittal must include the following information.

1. A letter addressed to the Building Official requesting a Certificate of Occupancy for an existing structure / business. The letter must include the name of the new business (if name is changing), the name of the old business, the address of the business, owner or owners authorized agent's contact information, the reason for the request and that no work and / or alterations have been performed to the business. If any work and / or alterations have been performed, the occupancy is no longer considered existing and a submittal for an alteration must be approved prior to a Certificate of Occupancy being issued.
2. A drawing / sketch of the layout of the occupancy showing all exit doors, exit / emergency lights, hallways, restrooms etc. List the number of employees and customers (occupant load) on the plan. If the occupancy has existing sprinklers and or fire alarm system, please note on the plan.
3. An application for commercial building permit plan review must be attached and can be found on our website. Note: under detailed work description put "Request for C of O of an existing business."
4. Zoning Permit and Fire Dept Comments from the local jurisdiction are required.

5. A fee of \$231.75 is required (this fee is subject to change). Checks made payable to Lake County Treasurer.

After we receive your complete application, it will be reviewed by the Chief Building Official for general compliance with the Ohio Building Code. **Expect this process to take no less than three to four weeks.** If we have any questions regarding the application and / or plan, we will contact the submitter for any clarifications. After the plan has been determined to be in compliance, approval will be issued. Once approval has been issued the applicant can schedule a safety inspection with the Lake County Building Department. Upon completion of the inspection and if no serious hazards are found, a Certificate of Occupancy will be generated and can either be picked up at the Building Department or emailed to the applicant.

Note: This approval is not an exemption from any state or local rules and regulations, and it is the owner or owners authorized agent's responsibility to contact any other agencies that may have their own requirements for occupancy.

Sincerely,



David V. Strichko, CBO  
Lake County Building Official  
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DS/jlh