



A change of use occurs when there is any change in the occupancy of a building or structure that could trigger a change in the code requirements that apply to the site.

In some cases this is a change to a completely different use than that which previously occupied the building. For example, a single-family dwelling conversion into a commercial office or a warehouse space into a restaurant. In other instances, this is a change in use within the same occupancy classification, but at a different occupancy level; for example, a new restaurant with an increased number of seats. It is important for these changes to be reviewed by the Planning and Development Department to ensure that the site can accommodate the type of use that is proposed, and most importantly, that the building meets all requirements for public health, safety, and general welfare.

### STEP 1: Identify a potential location and verify property zoning district and permitted uses

When looking for an existing building for your business, it is important to know what a property is zoned. The zoning of a property will determine whether a use is allowed, allowed by conditional use or not permissible. You can find out the zoning district of any property by using the [Duval County Property Appraiser Basic Search](#). Information regarding permitted and conditional uses can be found in [Article VII](#) of the Jacksonville Beach Land Development Code.

Helpful Tip #1: Each location and business need is unique, so the steps may vary.

Helpful Tip #2: Just because a property is zoned properly for your organization or business that does not necessarily mean the structure has the proper occupancy classification. If your intended use of the building or unit does not match the use/occupancy classification, a building permit for change of use is required.

### STEP 2: Contact the Planning Division Office

When you have found a site you think would be suitable for your business, the [Planning Division](#) can verify that the use is permitted and if there is adequate parking and whether variances or conditional use may be required. An accurate boundary survey and proposed site plan may be required.

Helpful Tip #3: It is important that you collect the information noted above BEFORE signing a lease or purchasing property, so you can be sure the location you choose allows for your type of business.

Helpful Tip #4: Variance and conditional use approvals, if necessary, must be obtained prior to the issuance of a building permit or certificate of use.

### STEP 3: Schedule an inspection

[Inspections](#) are required by the Building Division and the local Fire Marshal to determine if your space meets Florida Building Codes, Fire Prevention Codes, and City zoning requirements for the use of the building prior to issuance of a certificate. **All inspections are performed between 10am and 4pm, Monday through Friday. There are no specific or assigned times for inspections.** You (or a duly designated representative) must be available on site when the inspectors arrive. If not, the inspection will be failed and a \$40 re-inspection fee will be charged and must be paid prior to re-inspection.

## **STEP 4: Contact a design professional**

Contact a Florida-licensed design professional to review the site and/or space to determine if other changes are required. These changes could include, but are not limited to, requiring the installation of a fire sprinkler system, a grease interceptor, fire alarm system, additional exit doors, additional restrooms, changes to the electrical or mechanical systems, etc.

## **STEP 5: Obtain applicable building and sign permits**

The Florida Building Code (FBC) designates every building according to its intended use, based on several factors including fire hazard, number of persons occupying the structure, and general public safety. When the use of a building changes, the FBC requirements may also change. Therefore, a building permit is required to verify that these requirements have been met. A [permit application](#) will require, at a minimum, a life safety plan and code summary provided by a Florida-licensed design professional. A separate permit is required for the installation of signs.

## **STEP 6: Receive a Certificate of Occupancy**

Once compliance with zoning regulations is obtained and the Building Division and Fire Marshal determines that the building meets all FBC requirements, the Building Official will issue a Certificate of Occupancy allowing you to move into the space. Inspections are required.

## **STEP 7: Obtain a Local Business Tax Receipt**

A [Local Business Tax](#) is levied on any person who maintains a permanent business or branch office within the City for the privilege of engaging in or managing any business, profession, or occupation within the city limits of Jacksonville Beach.

Helpful Tip #5: A number of factors could delay the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, it is strongly recommended that you do not schedule or announce grand openings prior to actual receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy and the Local Business Tax Receipt.

**For More Information:**  
Building Division, 904-247-6235  
Fire Marshal, 904-247-6201  
Planning Division, 904-247-6231  
Public Works Division, 904-247-6219