



CODE ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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EXISTING Commercial Permit Occupancy Guideline 2026

Helping Businesses Navigate the Building Department with Confidence



Understanding the Law: PA Uniform Construction Code (UCC)

Since 2004, the **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania** has adopted the **Uniform Construction Code (UCC)** statewide. This means **all municipalities** must follow the same minimum building standards. – Codes change and update every 3 years.

What the Law Says (§ 403.42):

- If you plan to **construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy** of a commercial building or system (electrical, plumbing, mechanical, etc.), you **must apply for a permit**.
- **Emergency repairs** may proceed without a permit **only if** the permit application is submitted **within 3 business days** after the repair.



What Type of Permit Do I Need?

Commercial projects may require one or more of the following:

- **Construction Permit**
- **Mechanical Permit**
- **Plumbing Permit**
- **Electrical Permit**
- **Fire Protection Permit (Fire alarms and suppressions)**
- **Occupancy Permit- Existing, Unoccupied, Real Estate Transfer or New Construction**

These can be submitted **together** in a design plan or **separately**, depending on your project.

17 When Is a Permit Required?

You'll need a commercial permit for **any** of the following:

- New construction
- Additions or alterations
- New Occupants including tenant move in / move out
- Change of use or occupancy (including increase in capacity)
- Structural changes- anywhere in building
- Equipment upgrades (mechanical, plumbing, fire, electrical)
- Fire alarms or suppression systems (installation or upgrades)
- Accessibility improvements

Even small changes may require review. If you're unsure, **ask the Building Department first.**

"All I'm Doing Is..."

We hear this often—and we understand! Whether you're replacing a main door, adding a wall, flipping a tenant, or upgrading a system, it's important to check with the Building Department.

Remember:

- **Employees are considered part of the general public** under safety laws.
- The Building Department is here to **support**, not hinder, your success.
- We review plans and information for **life safety, accessibility, and emergency services** (Police, Fire & EMS).


We strive to keep this simple and straight, based upon your information and details.

Why Might I Need or REQUIRED a Design Professional?

Pennsylvania does **not require contractors to be licensed** for commercial work. However, for certain projects, a **Design Professional** (licensed architect or engineer) may be **required**.

Why?- ITS Legally Required by Statute.

- To ensure your project meets **legal safety standards**.
- To protect your **business, building, employees, and customers**.
- To provide **sealed plans** that meet PA UCC requirements.
- To avoid costly Notice of Violations, Stop Work Orders and Shutdowns.

 The Building Department **cannot** recommend or design for you. We **only inspect** what is submitted and approved. **Must be a Pennsylvania registered Design Professional.**

Help Us Help YOU.....

We're here to:

- Answer your code questions and concerns
- Guide you through the permit process efficiently
- Ensure your business is safe and compliant to thrive

Working together with proper applications and professional plans helps:

- Speed up approvals
- Avoid costly delays
- Ensure long-term safety and success

Need Help?

Contact your local Building Department for:

- Permit applications (remember these are legal documents, must be complete and legible)
- Design requirements
- Inspection scheduling
- General questions or concerns

Let's build a safer, stronger community—**together.**