

CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY (USE)

Purpose

When a business wishes to locate in Walla Walla County, or relocate into an existing building or space, a change of occupancy permit is required prior to taking occupancy. The purpose of a change of occupancy permit is to ensure the business/proposed use is permitted at the proposed location. The Planning Division (zoning) will ensure the business is permitted at the site and if the parking requirements can be met. The Building Division will ensure the business/proposed use can operate safely with the proposed building or space.

Limitations

A change of occupancy permit is limited to a business that wishes to move into an existing building or space "as is." The business can perform cosmetic changes such as painting or new floor finishes, however, there can be no alterations or additions of any type to the interior or exterior of the building. If an alteration or addition is planned by the business, they must apply for a **building permit**.

A change of occupancy permit is limited to a business that wishes to move into an existing building or space that was previously occupied by a similar use. For example, a mercantile business may occupy a building or space that was designed and previously used for a mercantile business. If a restaurant wishes to occupy a building or space that was designed and previously used for a mercantile business, they must apply for a building permit to convert the space to meet the needs of a restaurant. Residential houses cannot be converted to a commercial business space unless the business receives an approved building permit to convert the house and all applicable building and zoning codes must be met.

If a business wishes to change existing signage or install a new sign, a sign permit will have to be obtained in addition to the change of occupancy permit.

Application Requirements

- Complete an application form
- Submit a set of plans to indicate how the proposed business intends on utilizing the building or space.
- Pay all fees associated with the issuance of a Change of Occupancy or Building Permit.