

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: February

TO: Borough Superintendents

FROM: Irving E. Minkin, Director of Operations

SUBJECT: VACATING PREMISES OCCUPIED AS PLACES OF ASSEMBLY

The procedure to be observed in the vacation of places of assembly is as follows:

1. A place of assembly shall be vacated for defective exits or other hazards that may seriously interfere with the ability of the occupants to leave quickly in an emergency.
2. Where the exits are blocked or obstructed by furniture, boxes, or other material that may be removed without difficulty, the inspector shall require the obstruction to be removed before he leaves the premises. Likewise, where slide bolts or other illegal fastenings are found on exit doors, he shall require that they be removed before he leaves. If the delay in removing obstructions and fastenings exceeds a reasonable time, he shall inform the proprietor of the premises that the unlawful conditions are to be eliminated as quickly as possible and that he will return later in the day. Where the obstructions or fastenings are removed, the filing of a violation order or vacation of the premises will not be required. The Fire Department is to be notified where such obstructions are found, so that it may reinspect and keep the places under surveillance.
3. Where the lighting of exit signs may be provided by replacement of light bulbs or by other simple means, or where phosphorescent exit signs are missing, the owner shall be advised to correct the deficiency immediately, before the inspector leaves the premises, or before he returns the following day. If correction has not been made, a summons to court shall be served.
4. Where exits are obstructed because of an alteration of the structure or have been reduced in size or have been eliminated, or when the number of persons found in the premises exceeds the permitted number of persons, or when an owner does not remove other obstructions, the owner or manager shall be notified by the inspector that the premises may be vacated.

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