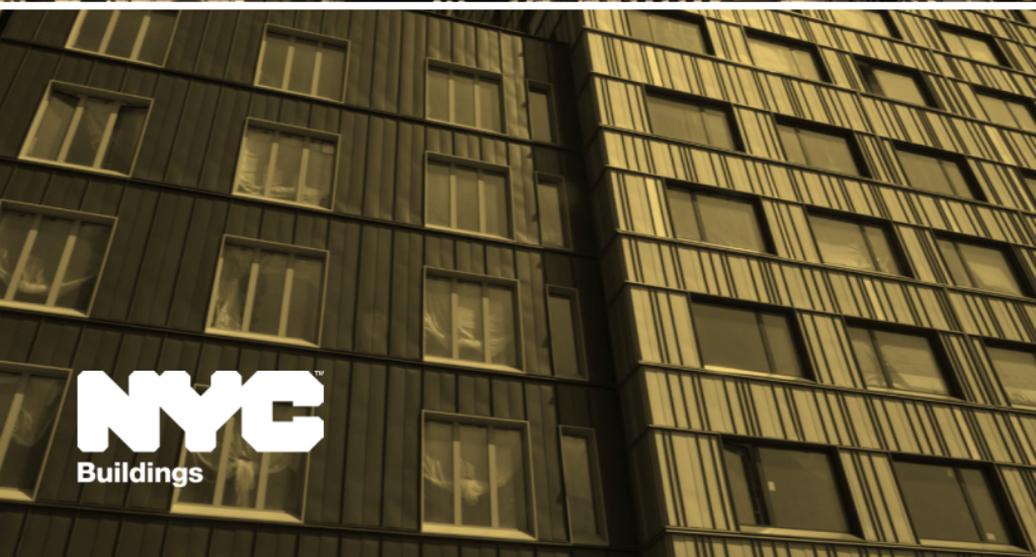
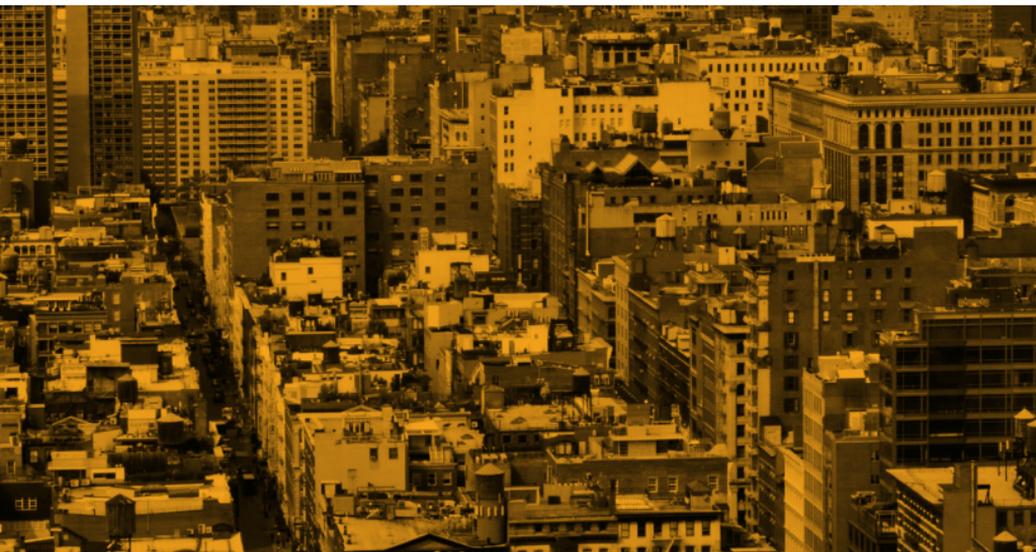
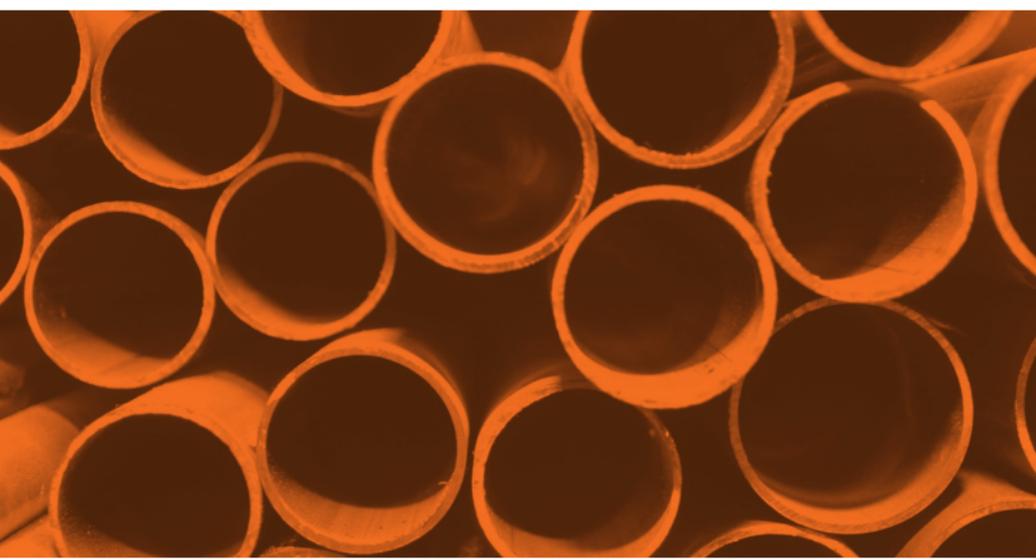


DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS GUIDE TO:

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY



CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

A Certificate of Occupancy (CO) describes the legal occupancy limits, layout, and allowable use of a building.

Some examples of these descriptions are a commercial retail store or an industrial manufacturing warehouse.

New buildings must have a CO, and existing buildings must either have an up-to-date CO or an amended CO if construction has changed the use, exits, or occupancy limit of your building.

Buildings cannot be legally occupied until we have issued a CO or a Temporary CO as described on the next page.

A CO must be updated if you are changing the use of your building. For example, if you are a restaurant owner that wants to use the backyard, and your CO does not list that you can use the backyard, you will need to update your CO.

We issue a final CO when the completed construction work matches the submitted plans for new buildings or major alterations. Separately, we issue a Letter of Completion for minor alterations. Having one of these documents confirms that the construction work complies with all applicable laws, the necessary paperwork has been completed, any fees owed to us have been paid, all violations have been resolved, and you have submitted all approvals from other City agencies.

Temporary Certificate of Occupancy

You must make sure that your building has a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). In some circumstances we may determine that a property is safe to occupy, but there are outstanding issues that must be resolved before we can issue a final CO.

A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) means that your property is safe to occupy. TCOs typically expire 90 days after we issue them. If the outstanding issues for a permanent CO have not yet been completely resolved prior to the expiration date, the TCO may not be renewed. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dob/cofactsheet. If you have a TCO, consult with a New York State-licensed Professional Engineer (PE) or Registered Architect (RA) to determine what may be needed in order to get a final CO.

Letters of No Objection

Buildings built before 1938 are not required to have a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) unless later alterations changed their use, exits, or occupancy. You may find out the year your building was constructed by checking on our BIS system. To access BIS, go to nyc.gov/buildings and scroll down to the 'Quick Links' panel.

If you require proof of a building's legal use, and it is exempt from the CO requirement, contact our borough office where the property is located to request a Letter of No Objection (LNO).

An LNO may be issued if the proposed or actual use of the building complies with New York City Building Codes and Zoning Resolutions, and the occupancy load and exits of the building are unchanged.

Checking a Certificate of Occupancy

To check a property's Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or when your building was built, visit www.nyc.gov/buildings. Once you are there, enter the property's address in the first box on the bottom left of our website, click on Find, and click "View Certificates of Occupancy." For pending COs, click on "Jobs/Filings" near the bottom of the page.

If your CO does not match how you would like to use the property, you may need to amend it to reflect your intended use, exits, or occupancy. You should consult with a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) or Registered Architect (RA) to figure out if you need to amend your CO.

Rick D. Chandler, P.E.
Commissioner, Department of Buildings

nyc.gov/buildings