

# Bulletin: Occupant Load Calculations

## Existing Buildings



Bulletin #20-0001  
Updated: April 14, 2025  
Created: March 18, 2020

*This bulletin is for informational purposes only and can change at any time.*

### Purpose

The Building and Permitting Department receives many requests each year for occupant load calculations regarding existing buildings. This Bulletin is intended to clarify the services we provided and those that we do not provide.

### Requirements

Common occupant load requests for existing buildings:

#### Liquor License Occupant Loads:

We provide these calculations for owners and/or operators of licensed liquor establishments. An occupant load permit is required, and the application is to include;

- an application fee of \$150,
- existing plans showing maximum occupant loads (if applicable)
- 2 hard copies of detailed floor plans (no larger than 11"x17"), AND IF these drawings are not to scale and legible - 1 hard copy of large-scale floor plan printed to scale.

Plans must show all;

- washrooms (indicate if they are accessible),
- exits,
- seating,
- fixtures,
- furniture
- individual service areas
- patios, and patio roof coverage area if applicable \*\*
- panic hardware, fire alarm and /or fire suppression (if applicable)

An Architect may also provide this service, however, the plans/occupant load will still need to be reviewed and approved by the authority having jurisdiction.

Applications can be made in person, at City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Upon receipt of the calculation number, it is the owner's responsibility to print the design occupant load card which can be obtained at gov.bc.ca. This card must be posted at the principal entrance to the room or floor area as per the BC Fire Code

#### Meeting Rooms and Special Event Occupant Loads (in existing buildings or open spaces):

Permitting Department does **not** provide these calculations. The BC Fire Code, section A-2.7.1.3(1) specifically states that the BC Building Code should **not** be used to determine occupant loads in existing buildings. The Building and Permitting Department is only able to apply BC Building Code requirements.

The Fire Department does **not** provide occupant load calculations for existing buildings or special events. It is the owner's responsibility to hire a professional to review the space to determine maximum occupant load referencing all applicable BC Fire Code. Property information requests are available through the permitting department for existing building that may be valuable to the professional when determining the maximum occupant load in these situations.

\*\* If a patio or deck has a roof structure, water closets must be adequate for total area of the interior and all areas of covered decks/patios.

\*\* If a deck/patio is open, (ie no roof covering); water closets must be adequate for 100% of the interior area plus 50% of all decks/patios total area(s).

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