

Information Bulletin

Defining Occupancy

A building occupancy permit is used by the City of Winnipeg to help regulate building code requirements and other applicable codes and standards. A building occupancy permit is required for the construction, substantial alteration or change of use of portions of most buildings, with the exception of single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings without shared exits. Some temporary buildings and events, such as weddings with large tents, also require a building occupancy permit.

A building occupancy permit identifies how a space can be used. Per the [Winnipeg Building By-Law No. 4555/87](#), it is your responsibility to obtain a final or interim building occupancy permit prior to occupying a space.

Manitoba Building Code Definition:

“Occupancy” means the use or intended use of a building or part thereof for the shelter or support of persons, animals or property.

Permissible property and activities prior to obtaining an occupancy permit include:

- Construction
- Delivery¹ and installation of fixed equipment and furnishings, such as:
 - Warehouse racking
 - Fixed shelving
 - Cubicle partitions and attached furniture
 - Office and reception desks
 - Built-in furniture
 - Loose furniture such as chairs and tables
 - Hard-wired machines or equipment
 - Large work stations
 - Large exercise equipment
 - Large medical equipment (X-ray machines, dental chairs, MRI equipment, etc.)
 - Hard-wired commercial kitchen equipment

Prohibited property and activities prior to obtaining an occupancy permit include:

- Product and/or supplies (merchandise, groceries, goods for sale, parts, etc.)
- Adding or storing personal belongings

- Installing loose equipment and stationary (computers, printers, copiers, printing paper etc.)
- Conducting business
- Stocking shelves
- Training staff
- Meeting clients

The above lists are not meant to provide a comprehensive account of all conceivable instances, but are meant to give some examples.

The Planning, Property & Development Department, in its role as The Authority Having Jurisdiction, reserves the right to interpret the Manitoba Building Code and to administer the Winnipeg Building By-Law based on that interpretation.

Contact

If you have further questions regarding occupancy, contact the Occupancy Permit Branch at occupancy@winnipeg.ca or 204-986-5136.

¹ The General Contractor is responsible for the safety of all persons entering the construction site prior to the issuance of an occupancy permit.