



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

HOW TO OBTAIN AN

# Occupant Load Sign

CITY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS-301 SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-4101

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN

## 590

APRIL 2015

This information bulletin describes the procedures for obtaining an Occupant Load Sign from the City of San Diego for assembly spaces within existing buildings. Projects proposing an increase in the occupant load within an existing permitted assembly space and/or a change of occupancy classification may require modifications to the structure for the increased occupant load (e.g., additional exits or fire sprinkler requirements) and will be required to obtain a new Building Permit.

Please see Section 2 of the Land Development Manual Project Submittal Requirements for new Building Permit applications. Effective August 1, 2014, City of San Diego Occupant Load Signs will be provided after final inspection is passed on all building permits for assembly occupancies.

### I. WHAT IS AN OCCUPANT LOAD SIGN?

Occupant load signs indicate the maximum number of people allowed to occupy a public assembly at any given time. Every room or space that is an assembly occupancy with 50 or more occupants shall have the occupant load of the room or space posted in a conspicuous place near the main exit or exit access doorway. This number includes staff. The occupant load sign is critical as it gives rapid information that is readily available for the prevention of overcrowding.

### II. WHEN DO I NEED AN "OFFICIAL" CITY OF SAN DIEGO OCCUPANT LOAD SIGN?

An "official" City of San Diego Occupant Load sign is required if an occupant load sign is not present, appears to be inaccurate or has otherwise been modified. The Fire Marshal may accept the approved/stamped plans to verify existing occupant load signs for building that obtained and passed final building inspection prior to August 1, 2014. Projects completed after August 1, 2014, will receive the "official" occupant load sign upon approval of final inspection.

### III. PERMITS REQUIRED

An occupant load verification Building Permit allows the submittal of previously approved plans to verify the occupant load within an existing permitted assembly space.

If the previously approved plans are not provided, it will be assumed that the assembly space was constructed without permits and that a Building Permit must be obtained. All existing and proposed tenant space work will be reviewed/inspected per the Building Code in effect at the time of project submittal (see Land Development Manual Project Submittal Requirements, Section 2 for processing information).

### Documents Referenced in this Information Bulletin

- [Project Submittal Manual, Section 2](#)
- [Information Bulletin 501, Fee Schedule, Construction Permits - Structures](#)
- [General Application, DS-3032](#)

### IV. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

#### A. General Application

General Application form (DS-3032) must be submitted with all projects. **Note:** A contractor will not be required to obtain the Building Permit as no work is being performed.

#### B. Plans

Provide a copy of the approved building construction plans that permitted the assembly occupancy. The approved plans shall include, at a minimum:

1. Site plan and/or title sheet showing the project location, occupancy classification and occupant loads.
2. Floor Plans.

### V. OPTIONS FOR SERVICE

#### A. Appointment

Building Permit applications for occupant load verification may be reviewed over-the-counter. Appointments for project setup are highly recommended. To schedule an appointment, call (619) 446-5300.

#### B. Walk-in Services

Visit the Development Services Check-In counter on the 3rd floor of the Development Services Center located at 1222 First Avenue.

### VI. FEES

A non-refundable plan check fee at the reviewer(s) hourly rate(s) will be assessed (minimum 1 hour for structural plan review), as well as a records and issuance fee (see information Bulletin 501 for a list of fees). One hour of inspection will also be charged at permit issuance.

### VII. INSPECTIONS

A "Final" inspection type will be required to confirm the building conditions match the previously permitted plans. Upon passing this final inspection, a City of San Diego Occupant Load Sign will be provided to the applicant (via US Mail or at Will-Call at our Inspection Services Offices located at 9601 Ridgehaven Court, Suite 220, San Diego, CA 92123).

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