



## DIVISION OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

### *Department of Permits and Inspections*

30 North Market Street • Frederick, Maryland 21701

Phone (301) 600-2313 • Fax (301) 600-2309 • TTY: Use Maryland Relay Services

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## ***Expedited Commercial Permit Process – No Construction***

**Monday – Friday between 8:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M.**  
**Application and fee payment must be processed prior to 3:00 P.M.**

### **Purpose**

As part of the County's commitment to assist businesses, the Department of Permits and Inspections offers an expedited permitting process for commercial occupancies that do not involve construction. This process provides a number of benefits to businesses and commercial property owners and it allows Frederick County to assist applicants by expediting all necessary reviews and approvals. It is an accelerated permit review, approval and inspection process that is designed to allow applicants to walk-through an application and to receive a building permit during a single "while you wait visit". It also provides for a predictable and timely inspection process needed for occupancy. The walk-through process is available to anyone whose project meets the established criteria however, be advised the County will determine final eligibility based on project, workload and availability of staff

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

The majority of tenant occupancy applications that do not involve construction are eligible for the *Expedited Commercial Permit Process*, if the application is for occupancy that:

- Is for a proposed use with an existing and valid site development plan approval, or is for a proposed use that is determined by the Zoning Administrator to be permitted due to its similarity to an approved use permitted within the zoning district. If the proposed use is not listed in the Use Table of the Zoning Ordinance, it is recommended that the Applicant obtain prior verification from the Zoning Administrator that the proposed use is permitted within the specific zoning district.
- Does not involve a change in use that is not allowed by the Zoning Ordinance.
- Does not result in an increase in density or intensity of the site that would require APFO testing. If there is any question relating to a potential increase in density or intensity of the site or in regards to an APFO impact, it is recommended that the Applicant obtain prior verification from the County Traffic Engineer.
- Does not propose or require any change, exterior to the tenant space, unit or suite (i.e. to the site) including changes to the required parking.
- Overall square footage does not exceed 5,000.
- Does not have any outstanding violations or outstanding conditions of prior approval attached to the tenant space, unit or suite requesting occupancy that would be required to be addressed prior to permit issuance.
- Does not change the International Building Code (IBC) occupancy classification.
- Is located within a municipality and the applicant has confirmed with the municipality that they will be able to accommodate their review as an expedited walk-through.

### *Notes:*

- (1) *If the commercial occupancy is for a specialized use or has other unique circumstances, it may require a more extensive review. These projects may not be eligible (as decided on a case by case basis) to be expedited and will be processed through the regular commercial plan review process.*

- (2) *If the proposed occupancy involves food service to the general public, an additional separate review process may be required by the Frederick County Health Department (FCHD)-Environmental Health Services.*

## **Submittal Requirements**

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1. Print out of the Maryland Assessments Real Property Data for the property. Please refer to the following link for this information ([www.dat.state.md.us](http://www.dat.state.md.us)).
2. One (1) copy of a site plan, plot plan or sketch plan that shows the existing building and site conditions. If there are multiple tenant spaces for the building, indicate the location of the proposed tenant space.
3. Three (3) copies of the proposed floor plan of the tenant space. The drawing does not need to be done by an Architect, however plans need to be scaled, labeled and dimensioned. Additionally, plans must include a key plan indicating where the proposed tenant space is within the building.
4. Completed Building Permit application for Non-Residential Tenant Occupancy (No Construction). The application is available on the Permits and Inspections website: [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/permit](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/permit).
5. If the property is located within a municipality, paperwork is needed from the municipality that approves the use and occupancy (zoning) requested. Contact the municipality for details. Municipal contact information is available from the County Permits office, or the website referenced in #4 above.
6. Payment of fees. Check, cash or credit cards are accepted (fees apply to all credit card and debit card transactions). Checks should be made out to the Treasurer of Frederick County.

## **Process**

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1. **Customer Intake:** A Customer Service Technician will review the submittal requirements with the Applicant to make sure everything that is required is being provided. The Technician will assist the Applicant in obtaining any missing information when possible. The Technician will also provide coordination to ensure staff is available to expedite the review and processing.
2. **Application:** A Permit Technician will review the completed permit application process, the permit data, calculate the fees, generate an invoice and issue the “walk-through” paperwork to the Applicant. The Technician will work with the Applicant to clarify and complete any paperwork as needed. The fees will be paid at the Treasurer’s Office, located in the same building.
3. **Reviews:** While the applicant waits, the application and information is distributed to the appropriate Reviewers. The Zoning Planner will first review for the use that is proposed. After receiving approval from the Zoning Planner, the Building Plans Examiner will review the submitted plans to evaluate code compliance with both the building code and the life safety code. If plan revisions are not significant, the plans will be released with appropriate conditions of approval noted on the plans.
4. **Permit Issuance:** Upon successful completion of the reviews, the plans and permit documents are processed by a Permit Technician, who then issues the building permit and releases the approved permit packet to the Applicant.

## **FAQ’s:**

### **When are Walk-Through Permit Applications involving no construction accepted?**

- All applications must be made in person and are processed on a first come, first served basis, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am. and 3:00 p.m., excluding holidays. **Where are applications accepted?**
- The Department of Permits and Inspections, 30 North Market Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701. See the Frederick County website for directions: [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov). The main department telephone number is 301-600-2313. A limited amount of free parking is available to the rear of the building. The parking lot can be accessed from either Market Street or Patrick Street.

**Who may apply for the permit?**

- The property owner, licensed contractor, design professional, or the owner’s agent. An owner’s agent other than a licensed contractor or design professional, (such as the proposed Tenant), must be authorized by the owner to make application.

**What are the fees?**

- **Commercial occupancies that do not involve construction**

○ Filing fee	\$ 27.00
○ Life Safety fee	\$118.00
○ Zoning fee*	\$ 44.00
○ <u>Automation Enhancement fee</u>	<u>\$ 10.00</u>
<b>Total application fee</b>	<b>\$198.00</b>

**\*If property is within a municipality, the Zoning fee does not apply, and the Total is \$155.00**

**What types of inspections are required after the permit is issued?**

- For **commercial occupancies that do not involve construction**, a single combination inspection will be performed. We offer next day inspection if the request is received by 12:00 p.m. on the business day prior to the date when the inspection is needed. This inspection will confirm the minimum occupancy requirements have been met. An inspection procedure checklist is attached, for reference, and will also be included in the permit packet when issued.

**What is needed for Occupancy?**

- Upon completion of the inspection process, a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued, usually within 24 hours. Receipt of this document concludes the process and allows for legal occupancy of the space.

**Other helpful contact information:**

- **Food Service:** When Food Service is involved, contact Environmental Health Services Food Control Office at 301-600-2542 for additional requirements and inspections to be obtained prior to occupancy. Visit their web page at: <http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/index.asp?NID=75>
- **Business License:** The Clerk of the Circuit Court issues business licenses. For information, call 301-600-1976.
- **Liquor License:** The Liquor Board issues liquor licenses. For information visit their webpage: <http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/index.asp?NID=1291> or phone 301-600-2984.



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**INSPECTION SUMMARY**

***Commercial - No Change of Use and No Construction***

A combination occupancy inspection is required by the Office of Life Safety in order to receive a Certificate of Occupancy. Please note that no other inspections from the Department of Permits & Inspections are required when no construction is involved.

The following items are the primary items that will be inspected and/or tested, if applicable. Other items not specifically mentioned, but as needed based on occupancy or as identified by the plan review and permit process, may also arise.

- ***Emergency Lighting.*** If emergency lighting is required, or already exists, an inspector will make sure it is properly installed and in proper working order.
- ***Exit Signs.*** Exit signs are always required and an inspector will make sure they are properly installed and in proper working order.
- ***Means of Egress.*** An inspector will inspect the exits, and paths leading to the exits, to ensure exit and travel paths are adequate in width and free from obstructions. They will check to ensure there are no blocked exits and that proper hardware is installed on doors. Panic hardware, if existing, will be checked to ensure it is in proper working order for the ease of operation.
- ***Fire Extinguishers.*** Fire extinguishers are always required and an inspector will check the type, locations & service date. A 10 pound ABC fire extinguisher, in most cases, will be required. Cooking operations shall require a Class K fire extinguisher. In most cases, the fire extinguisher(s) shall be mounted at or near the exit(s) of the tenant space and at a height of no lower than four inches, and no higher than 54 inches, off the floor. An inspector can assist with fire extinguisher mounting locations if mounting at or near the exits presents a cumbersome situation for staff or customers.
- ***Fire Protection, Detection & Suppression systems.*** All existing sprinkler, fire alarm, kitchen hood systems and other systems shall be in working order and have been serviced by a qualified service technician within 1 year for fire alarm & suppression systems and within 6 months for kitchen hood systems. Documentation from the service vendor will need to be provided to the inspector during the inspection.
- ***Knox-Box.*** A key, or card key, for emergency response access shall be provided for an entrance door and for any other internal locked doors housing electrical equipment, sprinkler valves or fire alarm control panel etc. An inspector will label and secure your keys in the Knox Box.
- ***Building Address.*** All nonresidential occupancies shall have a proper address correctly posted. Addressing shall be a minimum of eight (8) inch numbers on the front of the space and within three (3) feet of the main entrance. Rear access doors shall be posted with a minimum of six (6) inch numbers. Numbers shall be on a contrasting background with proper font that is easily readable.

Requirements and guidelines for the above items as well as other general information and details can be found on our web page at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ols](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ols) .

Please also review the approval comments as found in your approved building permit packet. If there should be any questions, please feel free to contact a plan reviewer concerning these or any other issues at 301-600-2313.

The most referred to adopted codes and standards are:

- Annotated Code of Maryland COMAR 29.06.01: January 1, 2015
- IBC (International Building Code, 2015 Edition w/amendments
- NFPA 101 (National Fire Protection Assoc.) Life Safety Code, 2015 Edition
- NFPA 1, Fire Code, 2015 Edition

***To schedule your occupancy inspection, please email: [permits@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:permits@frederickcountymd.gov)***