

- Fire Department
  - Compliance with fire codes
- Zoning
  - Compliance with zoning code requirements
- Assessor
  - Update building records
  - Personal property account information
- Water Utility
  - Compliance with State/local regulations
- Property Maintenance
  - Compliance with codes (exterior condition of building, yards free of nuisance materials, weeds)

After all inspections have been conducted and approved, the Certificate of Occupancy will be issued.

**A copy of the  
Certificate of Occupancy  
must be issued  
and  
in your possession  
prior to operating the business.**

**Verbal permission does not constitute approval to operate your business.**

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**How can I check on the progress of the inspections before opening my business?**

1. Log on to [www.kenosha.org](http://www.kenosha.org)
2. In the "**Quick Links**" category, click on: [Search for Building permits](#)

3. **Enter Permit Number**  
(The permit number will be made available to you upon payment of the permit application fee)
4. The information displayed will apprise you of the required departmental inspections, and verifies when inspections are approved.
5. An "X" in the Final Status category from all departments fulfills all requirements for the Certificate of Occupancy and it may be issued.
6. Contact the Department of Community Development and Inspections, Room 100, at 262.653.4263, to obtain a copy of the approved Certificate of Occupancy.
7. Once you have possession of the Certificate of Occupancy, you may legally operate your business.

**CITY OF KENOSHA  
Department of  
Community Development and Inspections  
625 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, Room 100  
Kenosha, WI 53140  
262.653.4263  
[www.kenosha.org](http://www.kenosha.org)**

BROCH/OcexInfoBroch – 2/27/15

## Guide to Obtaining a Business Occupancy



**City of Kenosha**  
Community Development and Inspections  
625 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, Room 100  
Kenosha, WI 53140  
262.653.4263

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## What is the purpose of obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy?

The purpose of obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy is to ensure that the building is safe for you and the general public; and, that the property is in compliance with all local and State building, fire, and zoning codes.

## When Do I Need A Certificate of Occupancy?

You will need a Certificate of Occupancy when:

- You are opening your business in a previously occupied store or office.
- You change the type of occupancy of a previously occupied facility (e.g., retail store or office to a place of assembly).
- You open a retail store or office in a new shopping center or new office building.
- You are constructing a building addition or for certain types of alterations.

## Checklist Review

The following steps should be taken when applying for a Certificate of Occupancy:

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1. Check with Community Development and Inspections, Room 100, to ensure the property is zoned appropriately for the new business.
  2. Complete the Certificate of Occupancy application and submit it to Community Development and Inspections, Room 100, for review and processing.
  3. Obtain Seller's Permit (if required). Contact the Wisconsin Department of Revenue at 262.653.7088.
  4. If a restaurant or retail food establishment, contact the Health Department at 262.605.6700 for additional licensing requirements.
  5. For alcohol (liquor, wine, beer) licensing, contact the City Clerk's Office at 262.653.4020.
  6. Additional local licensing requirements can be accessed at [www.kenosha.org](http://www.kenosha.org) (Guide to License/Permits)

## What happens after I apply for my Certificate of Occupancy?

After applying for a Certificate of Occupancy, the application is reviewed by zoning staff to verify application information and that the proposed use is in accordance with Zoning Ordinance standards. The proposed use is also

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evaluated to ascertain additional licensing requirements (i.e., secondhand dealer, jewelry dealer, amusement operator, etc.).

The application is then processed and an invoice is mailed to the applicant. Upon payment of the application fee, the applicant is provided a permit number and authorization to proceed with the inspection process.

## Related Inspections:

- Building Inspection
  - Address numbers
  - Security locks for bathrooms
  - Stairs/handrails/guardrails/treads/risers/headroom
  - Vent fans or operable window in bathrooms
  - Kitchen/bathroom flooring
  - HVAC dampers and grilles
  - Gas shutoff valves
  - Furnace and water heater venting
  - Check for unsafe conditions of plumbing and electric
  - Exit lights and emergency lighting
  - Exit doors operate properly
  - Bathroom signage
  - Combustion air for furnace and water heater