



Inspections Department

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Certificate of Occupancy (CO) Guide & Checklist:

The purpose of this document is to provide a *guide* and explain the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) process for Frederick County Virginia, the responsibility of the applicant (permit holder), and the responsibility of each County agencies recommending approval for the Certificate of Occupancy to the Building Official. The CO is the final construction document issued by the Building Official to authorize the occupancy of a structure upon completion of all building components (*§116.1 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, {USBC}*). The CO ensures the final approval of all **newly issued** building and the associated trade permits.

It is highly recommended that at least one week of time be given between the completion of construction and the intended settlement date or event requiring the issued CO. This one-week period will allow for any noted deficiencies to be corrected in time for the scheduled settlement/opening without delay. It is important to coordinate the inspection process, communicate with the inspection agencies to resolve any dispute, and then follow up with the Building Inspections to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy.

Even with the best planning and communications, it is sometimes necessary to request to move furniture in or stock goods prior to the CO being approved and issued. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and require the approval of the Building Code Official.

It is sometimes possible for the Building Official to approve the temporary occupancy of a structure in accordance with §116.1.1 of the USBC. For a temporary CO to be considered, all portions of the structure to be occupied must not endanger life or public safety. This requires that all fire alarms and fire suppression/sprinkler systems must be installed and pass field acceptance tests. Common areas, accessibility, and access/egress components including emergency & egress lighting are installed, inspected and approved. Additionally, agency approval for a temporary occupancy permit is required from Frederick County Public Works, Frederick County Planning and Zoning, and Frederick County Fire Marshal's office.

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY CHECKLIST

In order to be ready for issuance of a CO, please use the following checklist *guide* to make sure that the project is ready to CO approval. Please contact each agency by the number provided if you have any questions about what they require or will be inspecting.

Building Inspections

1. All trades have received final inspections (plumbing (backflow certification), gas and mechanical (air balance report), and electrical)
2. Building permit has received a final building inspection
3. Accessibility requirements are met as delineated on approved plans.
4. All Third Party and/or Special Inspection Reports have been submitted and approved by the Building Official
5. All Signage has proper permits and inspections
6. Building/House number have been posted
7. Floodplain elevation certification, is applicable
8. Site lighting/exterior exit lighting
9. Approval of the following agency's

Frederick County Planning and Zoning	540-665-5651
Frederick County Department of Public Works	540-665-5643
Frederick County Fire Marshal's Office (commercial structures only)	540 665-6350
Virginia Department of Health (Food Service Establishments/Private sewer & well)	540-722-3480
Virginia Department of Agricultural & Consumer Services Food Safety Program	804-625-3033
Frederick Water	540-868-1061