

New and Existing Business Requirements



If you are a business planning to move into the City of Sterling Heights, you must obtain a Certificate of Occupancy from the Building Department. Before signing a lease, we highly recommend you contact our Planning Department, shplanning@sterlingheights.gov, to see if your proposed use is allowed in the zoning district you plan to move into.

The following situations require a new Certificate of Occupancy: change of ownership, change of use or moving into the City of Sterling Heights.

If you are not doing renovations or doing renovations do not require a Building Permit, you will need to apply for the Certificate of Occupancy. Renovations that do not require a Building Permit include painting, papering, tiling, finish flooring, cabinets, countertops, ceiling tile replacement, and other similar finish work.

If you are changing the business name and the ownership has not changed, we only require a use permit application be updated.

Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) Document Submittal for Building

☐ Special Inspection Application

The application must be filled out and submitted along with the appropriate fees.

- For a change of ownership that has been issued a C of O within the last five years: Fire, Building, and C of O are the only inspections required. **FOR ALL RESTAURANTS: ALL INSPECTIONS ARE REQUIRED.**
- If you are leasing a space that the City considers a suite: Fire, Building, and C of O are the only inspections required.
- If you are leasing a space in a collaborative workspace, such as 8220 Irving or 13820-13854 Lakeside Circle please see <https://www.sterlingheights.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18147/Coworking-Spaces?bidId=> or call Building at 586-446-2360.
- If permitted work is being done, you will only need to pay for the special inspections where work is not being done. For example: if you have a Building Permit, the Fire, Building, and C of O inspections will be done under that permit and you will only have to pay for Plumbing, Mechanical, and Electrical special inspections.

☐ Use Permit Application

The application must be filled out and submitted.

- Restaurants MUST include hours of operation in the "Description of Use" section of the application.
- Restaurants should include a copy of their menu, if available at time of applying.

☐ Applicant's driver's license.

☐ Floor plan showing the layout of the building along with the following information, all entrances, all exits, building dimensions, building sq ft and all suite or addresses in the building.

☐ Business License completed with the City Clerk. <https://www.sterlingheights.gov/1293/Business-Licensing>

Process After Submittal:

- Once the applications are submitted, they will be reviewed by the Planning and Building Departments.
- Once plan review is complete and approved, we will contact the applicant to schedule the inspections.

Inspection Process:

Please see the [Common Deficiencies](#) for what items are inspected.

1. Initial Inspection: Please do not stock the building. You will have Building, Fire, Electrical, Mechanical, and Plumbing inspections. Stocking and set up may begin after approval by all inspectors.
2. Final Inspection: Once the building is ready to open, call to schedule a Final Fire and Building inspection.
3. Once all the inspections are approved, you may open. The Certificate of Occupancy will be emailed within 2 business days.

Inspections are held between 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the day of the scheduled date. Each inspector will leave a green tag if approved. If inspections are disapproved, you will receive a correction notice. Once you have corrected the violations, you will need to call us 586-446-2360 to reschedule the inspections that are necessary.

Contact Information:

Building and Planning Departments: 586-446-2360

Fire Department: 586-446-2950

City Clerk: 586-446-2420