



City of Meridian – Building Services
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Certificate of Occupancy Process - *"Every business or tenant in the City of Meridian is required to have a Certificate of Occupancy from Meridian Building Services. It is unlawful to use or occupy any space without a certificate of occupancy issued in your business name regardless if construction or alterations are actually performed".*

The purpose of this article is to describe the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) process and requirements within the City of Meridian.

Adopted International Building Codes require every business and tenant to be issued a Certificate of Occupancy prior to moving in and opening for business.

This requirement protects our citizens by verifying minimum code standards through permits and inspection, and thereby ensuring that our businesses are safe environments to work in and patronize.

A Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is required regardless of whether or not you perform any actual changes. Use or occupancy without a certificate is unlawful as stated in the adopted International Codes.

Business types vary greatly, therefore it is critical that there is a check for compliance with zoning and building codes. Without these checks, tenants potentially put adjacent businesses at risk because of the nature of their business.

It is important that all building owners, leasing agents and tenants understand this requirement. For more information or plan submittal please contact Meridian Building Services at (208) 887-2211.

Tenant Improvements & (CO)

A tenant improvement is typically the interior improvement or alteration of any space. In addition to the City of Meridian requirements, ADA County Highway District and Central District Health Department are examples of other agencies that are also involved in the plan review and inspection process. If you are improving any space for use or occupancy please visit www.meridiancity.org and select the Building Services homepage. Under applications and forms please download the tenant improvement submittal package. This package describes the plan intake submittal process.

Question

What if I am not making any changes or improvements? I am simply leasing a "vanilla" space as-is.

Answer

Prior to use or occupancy, a Commercial Building Application is required from Meridian Building Services. This application also has an area for the required Meridian Planning Department approval. In addition, Form PW-100 is required and can be received by calling the Public Works Department at (208) 898-5500. This form verifies all address and suite numbers in the City of Meridian.

Outside agency approval from ADA County Highway District (ACHD) and Central District Health Department (CDHD) may also be required.

After Meridian Building Services receives your completed Commercial Building Application, permits will be issued for field inspections to verify code compliance for the new use. After the inspection fees have been paid and you have received all inspector signatures on the field inspection card, a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) will be issued to your business.

Please call Meridian Building Services at (208) 887-2211 for any additional questions.

“VANILLA” Tenant Improvements

A “vanilla” tenant improvement submittal is required when improvements are being made to the shell but the tenant is not known. Typically, owners will perform “vanilla” finish construction so the space is ready to lease. This may include one tenant space or multiple spaces within the shell. The following minimum requirements must be followed for any vanilla tenant improvement submittal to Meridian Building Services.

The design professional must provide a drinking fountain and mop sink per International Building Code (IBC). The code design analysis must include use groups per the IBC and the vanilla submittal must be designed to the most restrictive group listed. In addition, fire extinguishers must be provided and all exit doors shall be considered as exits, including but not limited to signage, exit lighting, emergency lighting and door hardware. If the building is fire sprinklered, an audible notification device must be provided. Depending on the total square footage of the space other requirements such as fire alarm, exiting or additional fire sprinklers may be required.

The “vanilla” tenant improvement will be reviewed, permitted (given compliance), and inspected. After final inspection a Letter of Substantial Completion (LSC) will be issued for the specific space/suite. The Letter of Substantial Completion does not allow for use or occupancy.

If a vanilla tenant space is leased as is, and no changes are proposed, you are required to follow the requirements mentioned on page one “*question and answer*” to obtain

a Certificate of Occupancy for your new business use.

However, if changes or further improvements or alterations are made to the “vanilla” space a tenant improvement submittal with design is required.

If you are improving any space for use or occupancy please visit www.meridiantcity.org and the Building Services homepage. Under applications and forms please download the tenant improvement submittal package. This package describes the plan intake submittal process.

Please call Meridian Building Services at (208) 887-2211 for any additional questions.

Shell Building Submittals & (LSC)



Shell building submittals may or may not have planned finished interior walls and ceilings or heating and cooling. Shell submittals may or may not contain interior core bathrooms and stairwells. These items will be discussed in detail at the commercial plan intake meeting. Upon completion, the shell will receive a Letter of Substantial Completion (LSC) which does not allow for use or occupancy.

At the point in time a tenant improvement or “vanilla” tenant improvement is desired within a specific shell building, submittals will be required. It is important to note, a Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued for a tenant improvement inside any shell until the shell receives a Letter of Substantial Completion.

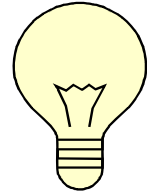
For shell only submittals please visit www.meridiancity.org and then the Building Services homepage. Under applications and forms please download the new commercial submittal package. This package describes the plan intake submittal process.

Commercial Builds – Including Partial Tenant Build & Occupancy



Meridian Building Services receives many commercial shell submittals, and only a portion (or floor) is identified as a tenant build out. Under this scenario, Building Services will review your submittal and upon project completion issue a Certificate of Occupancy for the project and tenant(s). All vacant space designed to be occupied by different tenants and business will require a tenant improvement submittal in the future. Each separate tenant space will receive Certificate of Occupancy respectively.

Final Thoughts



The compliance tool for use and occupancy is the Certificate of Occupancy. Every business and tenant in the City of Meridian is required to have received this document in their business name before use or occupancy. The certificate contains code information related to square footage, use, occupant load, address, construction type and if automatic sprinklers are provided. Adopted International Building Code states it is unlawful to use or occupy a building or structure unless a certificate has been issued.

As previously stated, business types vary greatly and therefore it is critical that there is a check for compliance with zoning and building codes. Without these checks, tenants potentially put adjacent businesses at risk because of the nature of their business.

The City of Meridian will communicate effectively and provide high level customer service to help support your project through completion. Under certain circumstances a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) may be issued if the project is not complete and you want to occupy. Naturally, several minimum requirements are necessary and our field inspectors will work with your construction team.

Please call Meridian Building Services at (208) 887-2211 or visit our website at www.meridiancity.org for all questions or to schedule a plan intake meeting with our staff.