

Government of the District of Columbia  
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs



## Applying for a Capacity Placard

### Permit Operations Division CAPACITY PLACARDS

The District of Columbia Construction Code requires every assembly occupancy shall have the occupancy load of the room or space posted in a conspicuous place, near the main exit or exit access doorway from the room or space. (*Please refer to the relevant section of building code attached.*) This brochure describes the process of formal approval of capacity placards, either to bring existing premises into compliance, or to obtain capacity placards for new or newly renovated spaces.

### Posting of Occupancy Load

*Section 1004.3 of the International Building Code (IBC) 2006.*

Every room or space that is an assembly occupancy shall have the occupant load of the room or space posted in a conspicuous place, near the main exit or exit access doorway from the room or space. Posted signs shall be of an approved legible permanent design and shall be maintained by the owner or authorized agent.

### How to Get Capacity placard Approved

Approval of one or more capacity placards for new/existing spaces in the same building (same address), can be obtained through approval of a Capacity Placard Permit. Placards for new or newly renovated spaces can also be approved within the scope of the respective building permit, at no additional cost, if all information, as specified in this brochure, is provided with the building permit application.

### Where to Apply

Application and documents shall be submitted to the Permit Center counter, at (1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, 2<sup>ND</sup>. Floor). The Center is open to the Public between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and 9:30 – 4:30 pm on Thursday.

Apply through DCRA's Online Construction Permit Intake application:

<http://cpms.dcrd.dc.gov/OCPI/PermitMenu.aspx> by clicking on the  button on the DCRA homepage <http://dcrd.dc.gov>

### What to File

Filing for a Capacity Placard Permit requires submission of the following documents:

#### A. APPLICATION

On the application be sure to identify the room(s) (room number or room name) for which capacity placard approval is being sought.

#### B. ARCHITECTURAL EGRESS PLANS

Provide four (4) sets plans drawn to a scale of at least 1/8 inch to a foot and shall contain the following information:

- Room(s) dimensions;
- Seating arrangement(s) diagram(s);
- Egress plan showing the location and width of aisles, corridors and exits.
- Location of existing fire protective signaling systems;
- Location of existing emergency lighting and exit signs;
- Occupant load capacity applied for (room by room)
- Date of construction or of substantial renovation of the premises, or of the most recent tenant layout renovation, if known.
- Existing toilet facilities serving the space.

EXAMPLE:

<p><b>MAXIMUM SEATING CAPACITY</b></p> <p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p> <p><b>MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CAPACITY</b></p> <p><b>1 2 3 4</b></p> <p>NAME OF BUSINESS TABLES AND CHAIRS</p> <p>LOCATION: 1<sup>st</sup> FL. ROOM 112 RIVERSIDE BUILDING – 4321 J ST. SW</p>
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## C. PLACARD DRAWINGS

Submit four (4) sets of placards fully dimensioned and drawn to scale of at least half (scale of 1:2). Full size (scale 1:1) drawings are preferable. Placards should be designed as close as possible to the standard format shown below:

- Minimum placard dimensions: 8" high by 10" wide.1<sup>st</sup>line:
- 1<sup>ST</sup> line: Words MAXIMUM SEATING CAPACITY, in characters at least 3/8 of an inch high.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>.line: the numeral for the approved capacity, in Arabic numbers at least 2" high and stroke width between 1/8 and 1/4 of their height.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> line: Words MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CAPACITY, in characters at least 3/8 of an inch high
- 4<sup>th</sup> line: the numeral of the approved capacity, in Arabic numbers at least 2" high and stroke width between 1/8 and ¼ of their height.
- 5th line: Indicate the type of business in characters at least 3/16 of an inch high.
- 6th line: indicates the type of floor arrangement, in characters at least 3/16 of an inch high; use the words CHAIRS ONLY for rows of movable chairs (concentrated); the words TABLES AND CHAIRS for table seating (unconcentrated); the words FIXED SEATS for fixed seating.
- Next block of lines: word LOCATION:, followed by identification (number or name) of the room and the floor, in characters at least 3/16 of an inch high.
- Last block of lines: the identification of the building, including its street address, in characters at least 3/16 of an inch high.

## What to Post

The actual placard(s) shall be made of a material that will ensure durability (not of paper). Placard(s) shall reproduce accurately the approved drawings in overall dimensions, copy, graphic layout and font sizes.

## How to Post

The placard(s) shall be securely fastened to the structure, in a conspicuous place near the main exit from the room(s). Room(s) with more than one approved layout and capacity shall be posted for each such arrangement and approved capacity.

## How Much Does It Cost?

The permit fee is assessed based on the approved hourly fee schedule for review of plans.

No additional fee required if processed in conjunction with the building permit to build or alter the space.

## How Long Does It Take?

If the submittal is complete, the application review process can be completed within 14 business days.

Information provided here was simplified for clarity, does not cover all cases and does not relieve applicants from full compliance with the requirements of the applicable laws and regulations.

**Permit Operations Division, Permit Service Center**  
**1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW**  
**Washington DC 20024**  
**To Schedule Inspections: Call 202-442-9557**

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International Building Code 2006

### **Section 1004.2**

#### **1004.2 Increased occupant load.**

The occupant load permitted in any building, or portion thereof, is permitted to be increased from that number established for the occupancies in Table 1004.1.1, provided that all other requirements of the code are also met based on such modified number and the occupant load does not exceed one occupant per 7 square feet (0.65 m2) of occupiable floor space. Where required by the building official, an approved aisle, seating or fixed equipment diagram substantiating any increase in occupant load shall be submitted. Where required by the building official, such diagram shall be posted.

**Note:** All maximum capacities are computed pursuant to the International Building Code (IBC) 2006 Section and table 1004.1.1 and all affected systems shall be designed to the computed capacity.