

CHAPTER 3

USE AND OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

SECTION 301 GENERAL

301.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter shall control the classification of all buildings and structures as to use and occupancy.

SECTION 302 CLASSIFICATION

302.1 General. Structures or portions of structures shall be classified with respect to occupancy in one or more of the groups listed in this section. A room or space that is intended to be occupied at different times for different purposes shall comply with all of the requirements that are applicable to each of the purposes for which the room or space will be occupied. Structures with multiple occupancies or uses shall comply with Section 508. Where a structure is proposed for a purpose that is not specifically provided for in this code, such structure shall be classified in the group that the occupancy most nearly resembles, according to the fire safety and relative hazard involved.

1. Assembly (see Section 303): Groups A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4 and A-5
2. Business (see Section 304): Group B
3. Educational (see Section 305): Group E
4. Factory and Industrial (see Section 306): Groups F-1 and F-2
5. High Hazard (see Section 307): Groups H-1, H-2, H-3, H-4 and H-5
6. Institutional (see Section 308): Groups I-1, I-2, I-3 and I-4
7. Mercantile (see Section 309): Group M
8. Residential (see Section 310): Groups R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4
9. Storage (see Section 311): Groups S-1 and S-2
10. Utility and Miscellaneous (see Section 312): Group U

SECTION 303 ASSEMBLY GROUP A

303.1 Assembly Group A. Assembly Group A occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for the gathering of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions; recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation.

303.1.1 Small buildings and tenant spaces. A building or tenant space used for assembly purposes with an *occupant load* of less than 50 persons shall be classified as a Group B occupancy.

303.1.2 Small assembly spaces. The following rooms and spaces shall not be classified as Assembly occupancies:

1. A room or space used for assembly purposes with an *occupant load* of less than 50 persons and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.
2. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is less than 750 square feet (70 m²) in area and accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.

303.1.3 Associated with Group E occupancies. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is associated with a Group E occupancy is not considered a separate occupancy.

303.1.4 Accessory to places of religious worship. Accessory religious educational rooms and religious auditoriums with *occupant loads* of less than 100 are not considered separate occupancies.

303.2 Assembly Group A-1. Assembly uses, usually with fixed seating, intended for the production and viewing of the performing arts or motion pictures including, but not limited to:

Motion picture theaters
Symphony and concert halls
Television and radio studios admitting an audience
Theaters

303.3 Assembly Group A-2. Assembly uses intended for food and/or drink consumption including, but not limited to:

Banquet halls
Casinos (gaming areas)
Nightclubs
Restaurants, cafeterias and similar dining facilities
(including associated commercial kitchens)
Taverns and bars

303.4 Assembly Group A-3. Assembly uses intended for worship, recreation or amusement and other assembly uses not classified elsewhere in Group A including, but not limited to:

Amusement arcades
Art galleries
Bowling alleys
Community halls
Courtrooms
Dance halls (not including food or drink consumption)
Exhibition halls
Funeral parlors
Gymnasiums (without spectator seating)
Indoor *swimming pools* (without spectator seating)
Indoor tennis courts (without spectator seating)
Lecture halls
Libraries

3. The *fire area* is located on a floor other than a *level of exit discharge* serving such occupancies; or
4. The *fire area* contains a multitheater complex.

[F] 903.2.1.2 Group A-2. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group A-2 occupancies where one of the following conditions exists:

1. The *fire area* exceeds 5,000 square feet (464.5 m²);
2. The *fire area* has an *occupant load* of 100 or more; or
3. The *fire area* is located on a floor other than a *level of exit discharge* serving such occupancies.

[F] 903.2.1.3 Group A-3. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group A-3 occupancies where one of the following conditions exists:

1. The *fire area* exceeds 12,000 square feet (1115 m²);
2. The *fire area* has an *occupant load* of 300 or more; or
3. The *fire area* is located on a floor other than a *level of exit discharge* serving such occupancies.

[F] 903.2.1.4 Group A-4. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group A-4 occupancies where one of the following conditions exists:

1. The *fire area* exceeds 12,000 square feet (1115 m²);
2. The *fire area* has an *occupant load* of 300 or more; or
3. The *fire area* is located on a floor other than a *level of exit discharge* serving such occupancies.

[F] 903.2.1.5 Group A-5. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group A-5 occupancies in the following areas: concession stands, retail areas, press boxes and other accessory use areas in excess of 1,000 square feet (93 m²).

[F] 903.2.2 Ambulatory care facilities. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed throughout the entire floor containing an ambulatory care facility where either of the following conditions exist at any time:

1. Four or more care recipients are incapable of self-preservation, whether rendered incapable by staff or staff has accepted responsibility for care recipients already incapable.
2. One or more care recipients that are incapable of self-preservation are located at other than the level of exit discharge serving such a facility.

In buildings where ambulatory care is provided on levels other than the *level of exit discharge*, an *automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed throughout the entire floor where such care is provided as well as all floors

below, and all floors between the level of ambulatory care and the nearest *level of exit discharge*, including the *level of exit discharge*.

[F] 903.2.3 Group E. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided for Group E occupancies as follows:

1. Throughout all Group E *fire areas* greater than 12,000 square feet (1115 m²) in area.
2. Throughout every portion of educational buildings below the lowest *level of exit discharge* serving that portion of the building.

Exception: An *automatic sprinkler system* is not required in existing educational buildings unless 50 percent of the aggregate area of the building is being remodeled.

[F] 903.2.4 Group F-1. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided throughout all buildings containing a Group F-1 occupancy where one of the following conditions exists:

1. A Group F-1 *fire area* exceeds 12,000 square feet (1115 m²).
2. A Group F-1 *fire area* is located more than three stories above *grade plane*.
3. The combined area of all Group F-1 *fire areas* on all floors, including any mezzanines, exceeds 24,000 square feet (2230 m²).
4. A Group F-1 occupancy used for the manufacture of upholstered furniture or mattresses exceeds 2,500 square feet (232 m²).

[F] 903.2.4.1 Woodworking operations. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided throughout all Group F-1 occupancy *fire areas* that contain woodworking operations in excess of 2,500 square feet (232 m²) in area which generate finely divided combustible waste or use finely divided combustible materials.

[F] 903.2.5 Group H. *Automatic sprinkler systems* shall be provided in high-hazard occupancies as required in Sections 903.2.5.1 through 903.2.5.3.

[F] 903.2.5.1 General. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed in Group H occupancies.

[F] 903.2.5.2 Group H-5. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be installed throughout buildings containing Group H-5 occupancies. The design of the sprinkler system shall not be less than that required by this code for the occupancy hazard classifications in accordance with Table 903.2.5.2. Where the design area of the sprinkler system consists of a *corridor* protected by one row of sprinklers, the maximum number of sprinklers required to be calculated is 13.

[F] 903.2.5.3 Pyroxylin plastics. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided in buildings, or portions thereof, where cellulose nitrate film or pyroxylin plastics are manufactured, stored or handled in quantities exceeding 100 pounds (45 kg).

1004.1.1 Cumulative occupant loads. Where the path of egress travel includes intervening rooms, areas or spaces, cumulative *occupant loads* shall be determined in accordance with this section.

1004.1.1.1 Intervening spaces. Where occupants egress from one room, area or space through another, the design *occupant load* shall be based on the cumulative *occupant loads* of all rooms, areas or spaces to that point along the path of egress travel.

1004.1.1.2 Adjacent levels. The *occupant load* of a *mezzanine* or story with egress through a room, area or space on an adjacent level shall be added to the *occupant load* of that room, area or space.

1004.1.2 Areas without fixed seating. The number of occupants shall be computed at the rate of one occupant per unit of area as prescribed in Table 1004.1.2. For areas without *fixed seating*, the occupant load shall not be less than that number determined by dividing the floor area under consideration by the *occupant load* factor assigned to the function of the space as set forth in Table 1004.1.2. Where an intended function is not listed in Table 1004.1.2, the *building official* shall establish a function based on a listed function that most nearly resembles the intended function.

Exception: Where *approved* by the *building official*, the actual number of occupants for whom each occupied space, floor or building is designed, although less than those determined by calculation, shall be permitted to be used in the determination of the design *occupant load*.

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 1004.1.2, 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.

1004.3 Posting of occupant load. 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.

1004.4 Fixed seating. For areas having fixed seats and *aisles*, the *occupant load* shall be determined by the number of *fixed seats* installed therein. The *occupant load* for areas in which *fixed seating* is not installed, such as waiting spaces, shall be determined in accordance with Section 1004.1.2 and added to the number of *fixed seats*.

The *occupant load* of *wheelchair spaces* and the associated companion seat shall be based on one occupant for each *wheelchair space* and one occupant for the associated companion seat provided in accordance with the *Florida Building Code, Accessibility*.

**TABLE 1004.1.2
MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA ALLOWANCES PER OCCUPANT**

| FUNCTION OF SPACE | OCCUPANT LOAD FACTOR ^a |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Accessory storage areas, mechanical equipment room | 300 gross |
| Agricultural building | 300 gross |
| Aircraft hangars | 500 gross |
| Airport terminal | |
| Baggage claim | 20 gross |
| Baggage handling | 300 gross |
| Concourse | 100 gross |
| Waiting areas | 15 gross |
| Assembly | |
| Gaming floors (keno, slots, etc.) | 11 gross |
| Exhibit Gallery and Museum | 30 net |
| Assembly with fixed seats | See Section 1004.4 |
| Assembly without fixed seats | |
| Concentrated (chairs only-not fixed) | 7 net |
| Standing space | 5 net |
| Unconcentrated (tables and chairs) | 15 net |
| Bowling centers, allow 5 persons for each lane including 15 feet of runway, and for additional areas | 7 net |
| Business areas | 100 gross |
| Courtrooms—other than fixed seating areas | 40 net |
| Day care | 35 net |
| Dormitories | 50 gross |
| Educational | |
| Classroom area | 20 net |
| Shops and other vocational room areas | 50 net |
| Exercise rooms | 50 gross |
| Group H-5 Fabrication and manufacturing areas | 200 gross |
| Industrial areas | 100 gross |
| Institutional areas | |
| Inpatient treatment areas | 240 gross |
| Outpatient areas | 100 gross |
| Sleeping areas | 120 gross |
| Kitchens, commercial | 200 gross |
| Library | |
| Reading rooms | 50 net |
| Stack area | 100 gross |
| Locker rooms | 50 gross |
| Mall buildings—covered and open | See Section 402.8.2 |
| Mercantile | |
| Areas on other floors | 60 gross |
| Basement and grade floor areas | 30 gross |
| Storage, stock, shipping areas | 300 gross |
| Parking garages | 200 gross |
| Residential | 200 gross |
| Skating rinks, swimming pools | |
| Rink and pool | 50 gross |
| Decks | 15 gross |
| Stages and platforms | 15 net |
| Warehouses | 500 gross |

For SI: 1 square foot = 0.0929 m².

a. Floor area in square feet per occupant.