



TO: Development Services Customers

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION BULLETIN 127**
Determining Occupant Load

DATE: October 9, 2006
Revised February 21, 2012/ April 27, 2022

CREATED BY: Plan Review Division

Purpose:

As a customer service initiative, the Development Services Department (DSD) created this **revised** bulletin to update IB 127 to assist customers with determining occupant load with the International Building Code (IBC). Section 1004 of the IBC lists requirements for determination of the occupant load of a building/space. The occupant load is used to determine design requirements such as occupancy classification, means of egress, required fire protection systems, etc. This IB has been updated to include the attached application in preparation to on-line submittal through BuildSA. This IB has been updated to add the applicants company address, as well as clarification as to submittal requirements.

Scope:

Per Section 1004.5, the minimum occupant load for areas without fixed seating is determined by dividing the floor area under consideration by the applicable ‘occupant per unit of area factor’ listed in Table 1004.5. However, this section includes the following 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.

The intent of this exception is to allow the building official to review and evaluate unusual design conditions on a case-by-case basis. Where a customer wishes to utilize this exception in their design, the customer is required to submit a written proposal, using the attached application, or application and with a separate letter, to a Development Services Engineer for review at the address below. The proposal is required to:

- 1) Describe the intended use of the building or space (on attached application).
- 2) Clearly indicate the calculated occupant load using Table 1004.5 (see attached application). It is helpful to provide the calculations of the original and the proposed occupant load including square footage of spaces used for calculations in the letter or layout.

- 3) Clearly indicate the proposed occupant load (on attached application),
- 4) Include a letter with explanation why the calculation method prescribed in Section 1004.5 and Table 1004.5 is not appropriate or applicable to the design or the business model. Provide the rational why the increase of decrease in occupant load for a building/space is justifiable.
- 5) For a proposed increase in occupant load, provide the required and provided widths of exits and stairwells.
- 6) Indicate whether a fire sprinkler system and a fire alarm system currently exists or systems proposed.
- 7) Provide the layout and number of plumbing fixtures (existing or proposed).
- 8) Include any drawings with building or space layout with any fixed or proposed seating to support the proposed occupant load. If a building permit application is already submitted to the City, reference to the permit number is adequate so that the submitted plans may be reviewed as part of the analysis/determination of the request.

If the project requires an architect registered with the State of Texas, the application is required to be signed by the architect. The application is also required to be countersigned by the owner.

Development Service Engineers shall review the proposal and determine whether it is approved or denied and shall respond to the proposal in writing. The estimated turnaround time for review and action is five (5) business days. Should the customer be dissatisfied with the ruling taken on the request, the customer may appeal the ruling to the Building-related and Fire Code Appeals and Advisory Board in accordance with Chapter 10 of the City codes.

If you have any questions regarding this Information Bulletin, please contact the Plan Review Staff at DSDPlansManagement@sanantonio.gov.

Development Services Department
Plan Review Section
1901 S. Alamo
San Antonio, Texas 78204

Summary:

This Information Bulletin is for informational purposes only.

Prepared by: Richard Chamberlin, PE, Development Services Engineer
Reviewed by: Richard Chamberlin, PE, Development Services Engineer
Authorized by: Crystal Gonzales, PE, CBO, Assistant Director



IB 127 Request for Occupant Load Application

A. PROJECT: (Please complete all the following information. Please print.)

A/P # (if applicable):		
Project Name:		
Project Address:		
City, State, Zip:		
Intended use of the space:		
Use (continued)		
Calculated Occupant Load per Table 1004.5:		
Requested Occupant Load:		
Reason for the increased or decreased occupant load: (May require attached letter with the explanation)		

B. Applicant (Architect if the project requires a Registered Architect)

Applicant's Name:		
Company Name:		
Company Address:		
City, State:		Zip:
Applicant's Signature:		Date:
Telephone #:		
Email address:		

C. Owner

Owners Name:		
Owner's Signature:		Date: