



City of Laredo

Building Development Services



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BUILDING BULLETIN 2020-004

Date: May 1, 2020

To: Building Development Services Customers

From: Mr. Arturo Garcia, Building Development Services Director
Mr. Gerry Pinzon, PE, Building Official

Subject: Occupancy Load

Purpose: The Certificate of Occupancy (CO) issued by the City of Laredo Building Development Services specifies the number of occupants. This is known as the occupancy load and is based on the use and nature of the business. This bulletin provides the steps to follow to obtain the Occupancy Load (OL) if a business does not currently have one a CO with OL or an OL verification letter from the Building Development Services Department.

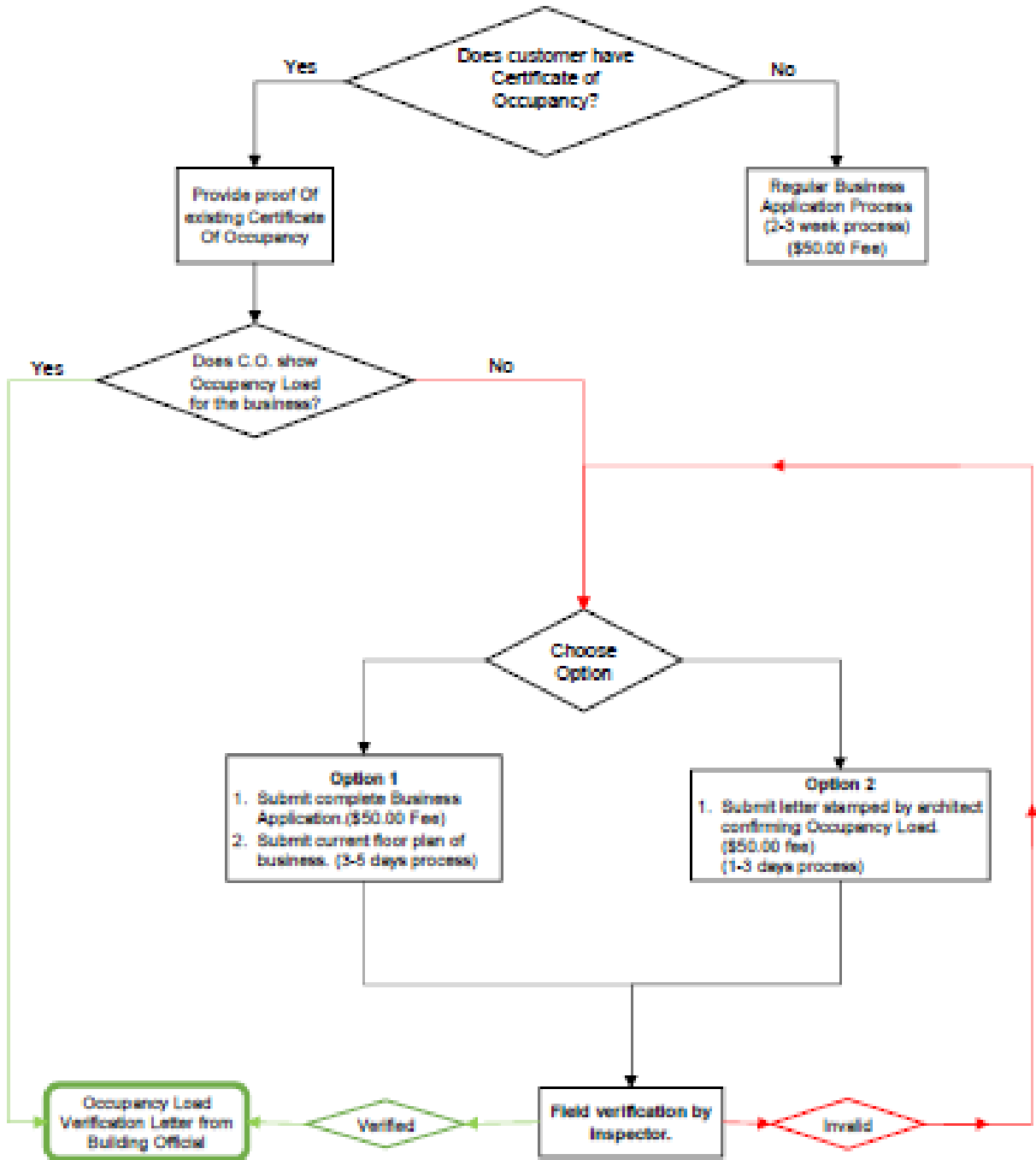
Process: The typical scenarios are the following:

1. **I don't have a Certificate of Occupancy:** This requires following the New Business Permit process (\$50 fee) to obtain CO and OL. This is a two to three week process as it involves review and inspections by several departments such as Health, Environmental, Planning, Utilities, Fire, and Building. There are various inspections depending on the type of business and related information. This is the normal process when opening a new business or a business is identified as open and is operating without a CO.
2. **I have an old Certificate issued by Building Department, but no Occupancy Load is listed:** These are typically prior to 2012 when the CO's were issued without an occupancy load. The business would need to submit a business application and site plan along with a \$50 fee. We can typically schedule within a day and is a quick turn-around. We are prioritizing these applications in-house when we get them. Typically, this should take one or two business days from submission of a complete application.
3. **I lost the Certificate of Occupancy and need a replacement:** We have "most" of the CO's issued since 2011 and could possible provide a copy to the business owner if available. There is a fifty dollar (\$50) fee for the copy of the document. It requires an inspection to verify no changes were made related to the copy being provided. If available, this is a quick turn-around within one or two business days from submission of a complete application. If no CO is found, business will have to go thru new business permit process.

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You may follow the flow chart for guidance and steps to follow:



Please visit our website
www.cityoflaredo.com/Building

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Typical Occupancy Load questions:

1. **Does the Occupancy Load include employees?** Yes, it includes all persons based on the total occupancy load stated on the CO or Certificate of Verification of Occupancy Load.
2. **Does the CO and Occupancy Load have to be posted?** Yes, the CO and OL need to be clearly posted and visible to the public.

You may download the Business Application for a CO or OL from www.cityoflaredo/building