



Hickory Fire Department
Division of Fire and Life Safety

City of Hickory
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**TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY
INSTALLING FIXTURES, MERCHANDISING, STOCKING**

The following information is to be used as a guideline to allow contractors and building owners to begin installing fixtures, moving furniture, merchandise, or stock into their buildings prior to issuance of a temporary certificate of occupancy. This information is not inclusive of all the requirements; it is intended to address the most common issues that arise. Failure of the contractor or building owner to abide by the requirements of the appropriate inspections department can result in the fixtures, furniture, merchandise, or stock being removed from the building before additional inspections are conducted. Failure to obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy prior to allowing employees or the public to occupy a portion of the building is a violation of NC General Statute 160A-423 and constitutes a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Definitions:

- *Fixtures* – equipment that is fixed, attached, or movable that is intended for permanent use within the building. Examples: racks and modular workstations.
- *Racks* – any combination of vertical, horizontal, or diagonal members that support stored material.
- *Furniture* – equipment that is not fixed or attached to the building that is used in readying an area for occupancy or use. Examples: desks, tables, chairs, file cabinets, shelves, display cases, bed frames, headboards, etc.
- *Merchandising or Stocking* – product that is brought into the building to be displayed, or stored on shelves and racks, etc. These items can be for the purpose of retail/wholesale sales or for internal use.
- *Temporary Certificate of Occupancy* – issued for a portion(s) of a building that may safely be occupied prior to completion of the building.

Regulated Furnishings: The following items are regulated by this policy.

Fixtures: Minimum requirements prior to installing fixtures in a building.

- All overhead inspections in the area to be fixtured must be completed or prior approval to install fixtures must be obtained from all inspection departments.
- Placement of the fixtures shall not interfere with future inspections or work that is not completed.
- If fixtures must be installed in an area that requires additional inspections, approval from the appropriate inspection department must be obtained prior to installing the fixtures.
- Fire hydrants shall be installed, in service, and remain accessible.

Merchandising, Stocking, and Furniture: Minimum requirements prior to merchandising or stocking.

- Compliment of fire extinguishers must be evenly distributed throughout the building.
- Automatic sprinkler system must be in place, inspected, and approved as operational by the fire inspector. If the automatic sprinkler system is required to be monitored then monitoring must be in place or an approved fire watch shall be provided.
- Fire alarm and detection system shall be in place and the extent of operation shall be at the discretion of the inspector conducting the inspection based on the commodity classification, storage arrangement, and occupancy classification.
- Functional smoke test of all duct detectors shall be conducted, tied into the fire alarm and detection system, and approved.

- Special locking devices on exit/exit access doors shall be completely installed and acceptance tests approved or such devices must remain disabled until approved by the fire official.
- Work on all exit doors shall be completed with the appropriate hardware in place.
- All exits and access to the exits must remain free from trash and construction debris. This includes all stairwells and the exit discharge area.
- Areas that are being merchandised or stocked shall not interfere with unfinished work or inspections.
- Fire hydrants shall be installed, in service, and remain accessible.

Unregulated Furnishings: The following items are not intended to be regulated by this policy.

- Kitchen/Break room – permanently attached furnishings such as cabinets and countertops.
- Motel/Hotel – permanently attached furnishing such as headboards, dressers, and end tables.
- Plumbing and electrical fixtures.

Temporary Certificate of Occupancy: Minimum requirements in order to obtain a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy. The building inspector and fire inspector must both approve issuance of the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy.

- Automatic sprinkler system must be completed and approved by the fire inspector. If the automatic sprinkler system is required to be monitored then monitoring must be in place or an approved fire watch shall be provided.
- Fire watch is not intended to replace monitoring, it is only to be used on a temporary basis and must be conducted in a manner approved by the Hickory Fire Department Division of Fire and Life Safety.
- Fire alarm and detection system must be installed, inspected, and approved by the fire official.
- Functional smoke test of all duct detectors shall be conducted, tied into the fire alarm and detection system, and approved by the fire official.
- Special locking devices on exit/exit access doors shall be completed and acceptance tests approved.
- Fire extinguishers shall be in place.
- Temporary partitions or other approved methods of segregating areas that are not approved to be occupied must be sufficient to keep individuals from unauthorized areas.
- Unfinished areas and unoccupied floors or adjacent spaces awaiting upfit shall be separated by approved construction. If the building is protected by an automatic sprinkler system, the unfinished areas and unoccupied floors or adjacent spaces awaiting upfit shall be protected.
- Fire hydrants shall be installed, in service, and remain accessible.

The fire inspector has the authority to delay or suspend the installation of fixtures, moving furniture, merchandise, or stock into the building, or the temporary certificate of occupancy if a condition exists that could create an unsafe situation.