

## 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 below. 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.

**Exceptions:**

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. A room or space used for assembly purposes that is less than 750 square feet ( $70\text{ m}^2$ ) in area and is accessory to another occupancy shall be classified as a Group B occupancy or as part of that occupancy.

Assembly occupancies shall include the following:

**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

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

- Banquet halls
- Night clubs
- Restaurants
- Taverns and bars

**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
- Places of religious worship
- 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
- Museums
- Waiting areas in transportation terminals
- Pool and billiard parlors

**A-4** Assembly uses intended for viewing of indoor sporting events and activities with spectator seating including, but not limited to:

- Arenas
- Skating rinks
- Swimming pools
- Tennis courts

**308.5 Group I-4, day care facilities.** This group shall include buildings and structures occupied by persons of any age who receive custodial care for less than 24 hours by individuals other than parents or guardians, relatives by blood, marriage or adoption, and in a place other than the home of the person cared for. A facility such as the above with five or fewer persons shall be classified as a Group R-3 or shall comply with the *International Residential Code* in accordance with Section 101.2. Places of worship during religious functions are not included.

**308.5.1 Adult care facility.** A facility that provides accommodations for less than 24 hours for more than five unrelated adults and provides supervision and personal care services shall be classified as Group I-4.

**Exception:** A facility where occupants are capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from the staff shall be classified as Group A-3.

**308.5.2 Child care facility.** A facility that provides supervision and personal care on less than a 24-hour basis for more than five children  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years of age or less shall be classified as Group I-4.

**Exception:** A child day care facility that provides care for more than five but no more than 100 children  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years or less of age, when the rooms where such children are cared for are located on the level of exit discharge and each of these child care rooms has an exit door directly to the exterior, shall be classified as Group E.

## SECTION 309 MERCANTILE GROUP M

**309.1 Mercantile Group M.** Mercantile Group M occupancy includes, among others, buildings and structures or a portion thereof, for the display and sale of merchandise, and involves stocks of goods, wares or merchandise incidental to such purposes and accessible to the public. Mercantile occupancies shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Department stores
- Drug stores
- Markets
- Motor fuel-dispensing facilities
- Retail or wholesale stores
- Sales rooms

**309.2 Quantity of hazardous materials.** The aggregate quantity of nonflammable solid and nonflammable or noncombustible liquid hazardous materials stored or displayed in a single control area of a Group M occupancy shall not exceed the quantities in Table 414.2.5(1).

## SECTION 310 RESIDENTIAL GROUP R

**310.1 Residential Group R.** Residential Group R includes, among others, the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for sleeping purposes when not classified as an Institutional Group I or when not regulated by the *International Resi-*

*dential Code* in accordance with Section 101.2. Residential occupancies shall include the following:

**R-1** Residential occupancies containing sleeping units where the occupants are primarily transient in nature, including:

- Boarding houses (transient)
- Hotels (transient)
- Motels (transient)

**R-2** Residential occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature, including:

- Apartment houses
- Boarding houses (not transient)
- Convents
- Dormitories
- Fraternities and sororities
- Hotels (nontransient)
- Monasteries
- Motels (nontransient)
- Vacation timeshare properties

Congregate living facilities with 16 or fewer occupants are permitted\* to comply with the construction requirements for Group R-3.

**R-3** Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature and not classified as Group R-1, R-2, R-4 or I, including:

- Buildings that do not contain more than two dwelling units.
- Adult care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours.
- Child care facilities that provide accommodations for five or fewer persons of any age for less than 24 hours.
- Congregate living facilities with 16 or fewer persons.

Adult and child care facilities that are within a single-family home are permitted to comply with the *International Residential Code*.

**R-4** Residential occupancies shall include buildings arranged for occupancy as residential care/assisted living facilities including more than five but not more than 16 occupants, excluding staff.

Group R-4 occupancies shall meet the requirements for construction as defined for Group R-3, except as otherwise provided for in this code, or shall comply with the *International Residential Code*.

**310.2 Definitions.** The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this section and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

**BOARDING HOUSE.** A building arranged or used for lodging for compensation, with or without meals, and not occupied as a single-family unit.