



## **County of Prince George, Virginia**

*“A welcoming community • Embracing its rural character • Focusing on its prosperous future”*

### **Conversion of a Single Family Dwelling into a Business Office**

When changing the Occupancy of an existing structure from Single Family Dwelling to Business Office use, the first point of contact should be Prince George County Planning Department at (804) 722-8672. The Planning Department enforces zoning ordinances that determine what type of business is acceptable for the property. The Planning Department should acknowledge the intended use is acceptable for the property prior to the submittal of an application for a building permit. A building permit is required to convert a dwelling into a business office even if no alterations are proposed. A completed Building Permit Application, Asbestos Certification form and four sets of plans will be needed.

#### Items needed for permit application

1. Site plan shall indicate all items as approved through the Planning Department or the Minor Site Plan Review process and the following:
  - a) The building and any additional structures i.e. ramp, stoops etc., planned with dimensions given from lot lines to structure in question.
  - b) Any other existing buildings on the lot.
  - c) Accessible parking and loading zone with proper signage. Parking connected to accessible ramp by way of accessible route.
2. Building Plans shall indicate:
  - a) Foundation plan dimensioned indicating the size, spacing and direction of floor joists.
  - b) Code edition (2018), Use Group (B), Construction Type (5B) and Occupant load (area/100).
  - c) Total area (square footage) of building.
  - d) Floor plans showing the size and use of each room, location of hallways and all doors.
  - e) Any renovations such as removing or adding walls, enlarging openings should be shown.
  - f) Existing construction from new construction.
  - g) Location of all interior and exterior stairs.
  - h) The intended type of business for the building must be given.
  - i) At least one accessible building entrance. This usually means the installation of a ramp.

- j) Ramp construction details.
- k) At least one accessible route (32" clear opening) to primary function area.
- l) Lever hardware on all doors.
- m) Drinking fountain and service sink.
- n) Hand and Guardrails.
- o) Separate men's and women's bathrooms if the occupant load will exceed 15.
- p) Clarify type of ventilation to be provided – Natural or Mechanical. The minimum openable area to the outdoors shall be 4% of the floor area being ventilated for natural ventilation. Mechanical ventilation will need to provide 5 cfm/person.

#### Stairs and Ramps:

Handrails are required on both sides of stairs and ramps at a height of 34"-38". Handrails must have a circular cross section, 1.25" to 2" in diameter or a non-circular shape with a perimeter dimension of 4" to 6.25" with a maximum cross section dimension of 2.25". Handrail ends must extend horizontally at least 12" beyond the top riser or either end of a ramp and continue to slope for the depth of one tread or beyond the bottom stair riser and terminate at a wall or post. Guardrails are required along open sided stairs and around open sided landings. Guardrails must be a minimum of 42" high minimum. Open sided stairs require both a 42" high guardrail and a 34"-38" high handrail with 1.5" minimum clearance between the handrail and guard assembly. Tread and riser dimensions for stairs shall be 7" maximum rise and 11" minimum tread. Maximum ramp slope is 1 in 12 and the maximum ramp rise between landings is 30".

If renovations/alterations are made to the primary function area or accessible route then a minimum 20% of the total cost of construction must be in accessibility upgrades. (Floor covering, bathroom grab bars, ramp construction, etc.)

Additions to existing structures are required to comply with new construction provisions. Existing interior stairways are not required to comply with current building codes where the existing space and construction will not allow a reduction in pitch or slope. If the building has a basement, it is recommended that it be used for utilities access only. Any storage planned would require fire resistive construction to separate it from floor above or the installation of a sprinkler system.