



**Boston Fire Department
Fire Prevention Division
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Boston, MA 02118
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Place of Assembly Requirement Check List

In addition to your application where applicable one or more of the following may be required:

- _____ 1. Current Alarm Report or Record of Completion if new.
- _____ 2. Current Sprinkler Report or NFPA Reports if new.
- _____ 3. Name of monitor company – letter if different from alarm company.
- _____ 4. Copy of kitchen hood system tag.
- _____ 5. Contract with kitchen hood cleaning company.
- _____ 6. Report of last hood cleaning.
- _____ 7. Evacuation plans in narrative form.
- _____ 8. Confirm fire extinguisher provided with up to date tag.
- _____ 9. Flame certifications for interior finish.
- _____ 10. Fire Escape report (due every 5 years).
- _____ 11. Fire Pump yearly test report.
- _____ 12. 3 Sets of Egress Plans per the requirements listed below.

This information is required for new owners, a new business or a name change. Other reports may be required if it is a newly constructed building see our Certificate of Occupancy Guidelines

Place of Assembly Plans Submittal Requirements

The Boston Fire Prevention Code (Section 27.02) requires that a permit from the Boston Fire Department be obtained to operate a “Place of Assembly”. The egress plans that the Boston Fire Department requires should be prepared in accordance to the code of record. The current code is the 8th edition of 780 CMR (2009 IBC with MA amendments). The plans are to include at a minimum the following information [and must be kept at the premises at all times]:

1. A minimum of 24-inch by 36-inch sheets sealed by registered design professional (architect or engineer competent in the design of means of egress systems). The code of record that the egress analysis was performed in accordance with, a useable scale, and the use and occupancy classification as approved by ISD shall be notated on the plans prior to BFD intake. Places of assembly means of egress are required to comply with Section 1028.0.
2. Current name and address of establishment as indicated by ISD records at the time of proposed event.
3. The occupant load for each floor and or space shall be calculated in accordance with CMR 780 Section 1004.0. This shall be done by a Massachusetts Registered Architect or Engineer competent in the design of building egress systems.
4. Location of all exits shall be labeled uniquely by floor and number or letter. For example, 1-A and 1-B could indicate the exits on the 1st floor. Designation 2-A and 2-B could indicate two exits on the 2nd floor. The plans shall clearly identify the occupant’s main exit, where required, also.
5. The plan shall clearly indicate that the main exit is able to accommodate ½ of the required exit capacity. Please note that all new and/or existing (as required by 780 CMR) A-2 Nightclubs shall conform to 780 CMR Section 1028.2 and Chapter 34, Section 102.2.2.1.4. Capacity of all other exits combined shall be at least ½ of the occupant load.

6. For each exit, the route to the outside of the building, not just outside the space in question, shall be clearly indicated. The effective width of each exit shall be dimensioned. The resulting width could be less than the actual width of the door if the door leads to a narrower hallway or set of stairs. This is particularly true if the exit leads to an adjacent space. The capacity of an egress component shall be calculated based on the effective width as dimensioned on the plan.

7. If a single location has different possible “set-ups”, such as a restaurant (with tables) during the day and a bar at night (tables removed), then a separate egress plan is required for each use and an explanation of where the furniture has been relocated to is necessary.

8. The location of all seating shall be shown and the egress plan shall clearly indicate that all proper separation distances are in place to meet the aisle and access-way requirements of 780 CMR.

9. Each space with a unique use, such as standing, seating, dancing, and aisle width shall be clearly delineated. The total square footage of each space shall be indicated on the plans. Areas containing seating and their required aisles and aisle access-ways shall not be used for the calculation of standing space occupant load.

10. It shall be shown that at least two exits are remotely spaced as required in 780 CMR.

11. The plan shall indicate whether or not the building is protected by an automatic sprinkler system and/or fire alarm system – with or without emergency voice/alarm communication (EVAC) capabilities. If there are residential units in the building, the alarm system must activate the residential alarm, unless the residential portion is separated from the place of assembly in accordance with 780 CMR. Any extinguishing system that is separate from the sprinkler system, such as a kitchen hood extinguishing systems, shall activate the building alarm system.

12. Location of all fire alarm devices, exit signs, emergency lighting fixtures and panic hardware shall be indicated on the floor plans as well as the source of emergency power.

13. Street name and side street names shall be placed on drawing at exit locations.

Application for place of assembly permits that are not accompanied by egress plans meeting these requirements will be *disapproved*. If upon inspection, the location set-up differs from the approved plans, the application will be *disapproved*.

The following are technical bulletins for assistance when preparing place of assembly plans.

3.1 Occupancy classification

Section 508.2 allows for 10% of an occupancy to be considered an accessory area. Accessory areas are required to be protected in accordance with the occupancy classification that it reflects. In following this logic, for restaurants and bars where standing area exceeds 10% of the occupant load then the occupancy has a higher than normal occupant load. Therefore, the standing (accessory) area conforms to the definition (780 CMR 303.1.1) of a nightclub and is to be protected as such when any other condition listed in Section 303.1.1 exists. For accessory standing areas that exceed 50 persons additional protections are then required.

3.2 Main Exits

3.2.1 New construction

3.2.1.1

Group A-2nc occupancies require a 72-inch main exit where the occupant load exceeds 50 persons (780 CMR 1028.2). The intent is to increase egress flow during a fire event. Therefore, construction of the doors is required to be adjacent and clear to each other so that no architectural features such as astragals or mullions counteract the intent of increased flow.

3.2.2 Existing buildings

3.2.2.1

780 CMR Ch 34 (IEBC) amendment 102.2.2.1[4] requires all Group A-2nc occupancies with an occupant load of 50 or more to be corrected to have the unimpeded 72-inch main exit.

3.2.2.2

This section also allows a registered professional, i.e., architect or engineer competent in the design of egress systems to evaluate whether the existing means of egress is capable of providing the existing occupant load with a safe means of egress. Said evaluation is to be done by performing acceptable calculations. Acceptable calculations include proving that the available egress width exceeds the required width significantly or performing a tenability analysis based on likely smoke production rate.

3.3 Standing areas

Standing areas are to be delineated on the plans and the resulting square footage shown. Standing areas are allowed to be calculated at 5 square foot per person (sfp) per the code; however, clear aisles are also required by the code. 5 sfp results in shoulder to shoulder occupation and when an area is fully loaded at this capacity there is no room for occupants to step into to begin egress. Therefore, clear aisles are required to be maintained in the standing area and aisle floor area is not allowed to be used when calculating the occupant load.

3.4 Seating Areas

All furniture must be shown in seating layouts. Furniture varies in size and can affect the available space for the occupants significantly. For example, when using an occupant load factor of 15 square foot per person (sfp) over an unoccupied area a certain occupant load will be determined. However, if one then places very large furniture in that area, the remaining open/available area may no longer be sufficient to accommodate the calculated occupant load even at 5 sfp. The furniture could also block clear aisles and access to exits.

3.5 Museums

780 CMR Table 1004.1 does not list an occupant load factor specifically museum space. The BFD has determined that the load factor for retail space is most applicable as the occupants will be viewing art in a similar fashion to those viewing clothes displays. This results in enough area per person to comfortably view the exhibits as well as be provided a clear path of viewing. In addition, this load factor will prevent other occupants from requesting other occupants to move aside resulting in a densely concentrated area.