



STATE FIRE MARSHAL GUIDANCE FOR DETERMINING OCCUPANT CAPACITY

On May 1, 2020, Governor Reynolds lifted restrictions for certain businesses and establishments in 77 Iowa counties. Businesses allowed to serve the public must reduce their capacity as outlined in the proclamation. The following guidance can be used to help estimate the permitted occupant capacity for certain businesses under the Governor's supplemental proclamation dated April 27, 2020. An official occupant load number should be obtained from a licensed architect, as there can be additional factors to consider to ensure the occupant capacity is accurate.



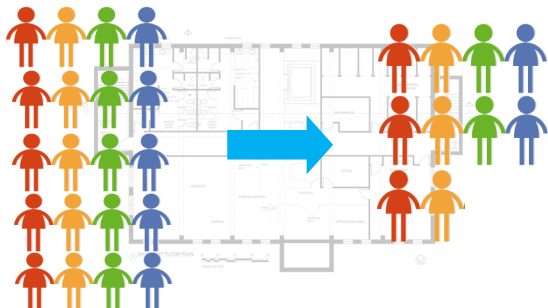
ESTIMATED OCCUPANCY CALCULATION*



Sample Retail Calculation:

$$2,000 \text{ SQ. FT.} \div 100 \text{ (occupant load)} = 20$$

$$20 \div 2 = 10 \text{ persons}$$



A non-restaurant business can estimate capacity by dividing the establishment's square footage by the occupant load factor (see table at right). In the above estimate calculation, a 2,000 square-foot retail store would normally have a capacity of 20 persons. Under the Governor's proclamation, the capacity must be reduced by 50%, which equals 10 persons.

For estimating purposes, any establishment with only one exit is limited to a capacity of 49 persons or less. Establishments with a capacity of over 49 people must have at least two exits. Exits can only be counted if they serve the general public area and are marked as exits.

As a result, any business greater than 5,000 square-feet with a single exit is limited to a capacity of 49 people. Under the Governor's proclamation, that capacity must be reduced by 50%, which equals 24 persons.

** This information is intended to provide an estimate of the permitted occupant capacity for certain businesses. If you have questions or need further guidance, please call your local code officials or you can call the Iowa Department of Public Safety—State Fire Marshal Division at 515.725.6161.*

BUSINESS OR ESTABLISHMENT	OCCUPANT LOAD FACTOR
RESTAURANTS	N/A – See Department of Inspections and Appeals Restaurant FAQ, question #12.
FITNESS CENTERS	50
LIBRARIES	
Reading Rooms	50
Common Book Areas	100
RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS	100