



## **Determining Occupant Load / Capacity**

June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Under Governor Inslee's Phase 2 Re-opening plan, certain King County businesses can re-open, but at reduced capacity. For businesses with a posted occupant load, or a certificate of occupancy that stipulates occupant load, that should be used as the basis to determine the reduced capacity per the order. Many businesses do not have a posted occupant load and are trying to determine what their occupant load is, in order to comply with the reduced capacity requirements of Governor's Plan.

**Online guidelines:** <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/safe-start.aspx>

This document is provided, as a reference tool, to assist with determining your (unofficial) occupant load. The official occupant load has been provided by your local Building Department and can usually be found on your occupancy permit for your business. If you do not have access to the permit, the following may help you determine your occupant load.

In areas without fixed seats, the occupant load is determined based on the use of the space. For example:

**Restaurants:** Areas with tables and chairs: 15 s.f./person

Example: Restaurant area of 3,000 s.f. (does not include kitchen and other "back of house functions):  
 $3,000/15 = 200$  persons. / 50% = 100 persons.

Maximum 50% outdoor Capacity / 50% indoor capacity based on tables and chairs, provided more than 6 feet apart. – no bar seating.

**Retail (not including malls):** 60 s.f./person

Example: Store area of 1,500 s.f. (does not include storeroom and other "back of house functions):  
 $1,500/60 = 25$  persons / 30% = 7.50 persons, rounded up = 8 persons.

Maximum 30% Capacity.

**Business (Offices, Barber & Beauty Shops):** 100 s.f./person

Example: Store area of 1,600 s.f. (does not include storeroom and other "back of house functions):  
 $1,600/100 = 16$  persons / 50% = 8 persons.

Maximum 50% Capacity for Personal and Professional Services.

Building and Fire Codes are used to determine the occupant load (capacity) of buildings and spaces. The determination is used to ensure that there are enough exits, they are properly separated, and of sufficient width so that in an emergency, occupants can safely evacuate. The reduced occupant load required by the Governor's Phase 2 reopening, reduces the normally allowable occupant load to help maintain proper social distancing.

If you need additional help, an online occupant load estimator is available at this site:

<https://www.fireinspection360.com/occupantload>. You can also contact the Fire Prevention Division ([firemarshals@esf-r.org](mailto:firemarshals@esf-r.org) or 425-313-3200) for additional assistance.