

## Construction Industry Communication #25

**From:** Amit Ghosh, Chief Building Official  
**Re:** Residential Sales Office Building Permit and Time-Limited/  
Final Occupancy Procedures  
**Date:** May 15, 2017

**Requirements:** A Residential Sales Office requires similar building and Certificate of Occupancy permitting processes as those of new, single-family dwellings, PLUS a Time-Limited Certificate of Occupancy (TLO).

**Background:** In order to more effectively monitor permits and issue Time-Limited and Final Certificates of Occupancy, the Columbus Department of Building and Zoning Services (BZS) has implemented procedures regarding the construction and use of single-family dwelling units as a Residential Sales Office.

BZS defines a Residential Sales Office as:

- One or more single-family dwelling units constructed to function as a sales office for the purpose of display and selling individual dwelling units, OR
- One or more dwelling units having a garage constructed as an office space wherein business is conducted, OR
- One or more dwelling units used for the representation of a style of house to be purchased and requires either interior and/or exterior modifications made to the dwelling unit or site to make-ready for the sale of the dwelling unit.

**Memorandum:** A building permit, similar to the standard new home building permit, with applicable fees, will be issued for the construction of a Residential Sales Office. At the same time, the applicant will also purchase a Time-Limited Occupancy (TLO) in accordance with the current Fee Schedule, which is valid for one (1) year, in accordance with the Columbus Zoning Code.

At the time of application, the applicant has the option to purchase additional 1-year TLO certificates, not to exceed a total of five (5) years.

When construction is complete, in compliance with the approved plans and passes inspection(s), a Time-Limited Occupancy Certificate will be issued, indicating the dwelling is permitted to be used as a Residential Sales Office for the yearly increments specified and purchased by the applicant.

A notice will be entered into BZS's computer system at the time of TLO issuance to alert the Chief Building Official that the TLO will expire 90 days prior to the end of the period specified (purchased) by the applicant. This will enable the CBO to notify the owner that they have one of two (2) options to proceed:

An alteration permit may be obtained to complete the work necessary to convert the Residential Sales Office to a single-family home as the TLO will expire on a given date and the dwelling can no longer be occupied as a sales office.

OR

The Residential Sales Office permit can be renewed under the existing building permit for ONE additional period of up to five (5) years maximum. At the time of application, the applicant will pay the appropriate TLO fee for the yearly TLO increments specified (up to five years maximum).

When the Residential Sales Office is no longer needed, alteration permits (structural, electrical and/or mechanical) will be required to convert the office to a garage and/or make other modifications to the interior or exterior. Work may include removing all additional electric, removing heat runs to the garage used as the sales office and the installation of garage doors, sidewalks and/or driveways, etc. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for a dwelling unit, all work must pass inspection(s) and receive final approval by the BZS inspectors.