



Informal Interpretation Report Number 6730



Date April 27, 2011

Edition 2007

Section 1004.1.1

Question:

Is it the intent of the FBC to use actual seating counts in lieu of sq footage calculations for sanctuary seating. We currently have folding chairs (approx. 160) and with a new addition may accommodate up to 238 approx. total. Is there any other code or ordinance that over-rides 1004.7 and insists on area calculations only (ie: FFPC)? The current sanctuary is not fire sprinklered and is Type 2 construction. The hope is to not fire sprinkler. The area calculations put the occupancy load for all spaces around 590 persons. Threshold, also. Thank-you.JG

Answer

No, unless the seating is FIXED. If an area has fixed seating then that falls under 1004.1. FIXED SEATING is defined in the FFPC as "Seating that is secured to the building structure."

FOLDING CHAIRS are not considered fixed seating therefore Section 1004.1.1 applies. Since you have removable seating (as stated) then the code requires the minimum occupant load to be determined by the square footage method.

Commentary:

Without fixed seating the use of the space is not limited.

Notice:

The Building Officials Association of Florida, in cooperation with the Florida Building Commission, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, ICC, and industry and professional experts offer this interpretation of the Florida Building Code in the interest of consistency in their application statewide. This interpretation is informal, non-binding and subject to acceptance and approval by the local building official.