

FAQ:

Can I convert my garage into living space? Do I need a permit to make this change?

Background:

The parking of vehicles is considered a use of a property. Per [A-301.1.5](#), a use registration permit is required for every new use commenced on any land or in any structure or any change to any existing use (eliminating or relocating the parking).

Answer:

A zoning permit is required to remove or relocate a parking space and convert a garage into living space.

An existing, legal parking space can only be removed if the parking space is not required by the zoning code. If the conversion of a garage into living space does not eliminate a required parking space or if the space is required and you are proposing to relocate it to a lawful location, a by-right permit can be issued.

A building permit will also be required for the conversion of this space into living space. The proposed alterations will need to comply with the International Existing Building Code and any local modifications. The code may require updates to make the space energy efficient as well as life safety upgrades.

Additional Notes:

- The number of required parking spaces is determined based on the zoning district and the use of the property. Refer to Tables [14-802-1](#), [14-802-2](#) and [14-802-3](#) for the parking requirements of the residential, commercial and industrial districts. If the property is located within a special purpose district or an overlay, those provisions are located within [14-404](#) through [14-408](#) and [14-500](#), respectively.

Questions?

Call 311 or (215) 686-8686 (if outside Philadelphia) or submit a permit-related question online via <https://form.jotform.com/81494420572154>.

Disclaimer:

This interpretation, policy or code application is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code application to specific projects may vary. There may be other ways to comply with the Code. If so, you are not required to use this method. You may want to investigate other options or consult with a professional identifying an equally code compliant solution.

L&I Permit and License Center

1401 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Municipal Services Building, Public Service Concourse
Open 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Offices close at noon on the last Wednesday of each month.