



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Health Care Quality
Office of Health Facilities Licensing & Certification
261 Chapman Road, Suite 200
Stockton Building
Newark, Delaware 19702
(302) 292-3930

Blueprint Plan Review & Approvals Process

The Office of Health Facilities Licensing & Certification (OHFLC) utilizes the Guidelines for Design and Construction of Hospitals, Guidelines for Design and Construction of Outpatient Facilities and the Guidelines for Design and Construction of Residential Health, Care, and Support Facilities (2018 edition) developed by The Facility Guidelines Institute as the standard for new construction, renovation (including change of usage) of Health Care Facilities in Delaware.

A renovation is defined as the strengthening or upgrading of building elements, materials, equipment, or fixtures that does not result in a reconfiguration of the building spaces within; Or Any reconfiguration of a space that affects an exit, a corridor, or any component of a means of egress; Or Work that changes the current designated purpose or occupancy classification of a building space.

Use of the word “shall” in the Guidelines, means “must.” OHFLC cannot provide you with copies of the Guidelines. You may purchase copies by calling 1.800.242.2626 or you can go to the following website: www.fgiguilines.org

OHFLC plan review and approval governs construction that impacts upon or dictates the quality of service provided by healthcare facilities. The OHFLC defers to the local government in matters of zoning, parking, environmental issues (such as drainage) and access. In addition, the OHFLC recognizes the authority of the Fire Marshal to determine compliance with the State Fire Prevention Regulations and the Life Safety Code.

Please read and follow these instructions completely. Contact the OHFLC with questions.

There is a 3 step submission process:

- I. Obtain OHFLC Project Code:
 - Someone who owns or manages the business must contact the OHFLC at (302.292.3930) to discuss the intended construction or renovation. A project code will be issued at this time.
 - The architect, engineer or project manager must have this project code when (s)he contacts the OHFLC about blueprints and construction.
 - This project code becomes void one year after it is issued.

- II. Submit Application & Required Approvals

- A. Complete “Application for Blueprint Review”.
- B. ALL Medicare certified facilities, or those seeking Medicare certification, must submit proof that blueprints have been reviewed and approved by the CMS Life Safety Code designee in the State Fire Marshal’s office. **There will be no exceptions.** Submit plans for review in the county where the facility will be located.

New Castle County – Renee Hayes 302.323.5375

Kent County – David Wilson 302.739.4394

Sussex County – Dennett Pridgeon 302.856.5298

- C. State licensed only facilities must submit approval from the Fire Marshal’s having jurisdiction.
- D. Submit plans to Doug Lodge (302-741-8640) of the Office of Engineering for technical review and approval.
- E. Upon receipt of the application and plan approvals, the OHFLC will review the application.

III. Schedule and prepare OHFLC Blueprint presentation:

- OHFLC does not accept blueprints dropped off or mailed for review.
- You are required to prepare a presentation in accordance with the Submission Memo and the floor plan.
 - The Seal or registration number of the Delaware licensed architect or engineer involved in the blueprint design.
 - The floor plan must include dimensions and clearance.
- Please contact Shabana Ehsani to set up an appointment for the blueprint presentation.
- **Without receiving a blueprint review approval from the OHFLC, no construction or renovation work is allowed.**
 - ❖ **Hospitals failing to complete the plan review process and receive approval prior to construction or renovation shall be subject to a \$5,000 fine for each project.**

1. What do I need to do to prepare for the presentation?

You will be expected to utilize the appropriate sections of the 2018 Edition Guidelines for Design and Construction of Hospitals and Outpatient Facilities or the Guidelines for Design and Construction of Residential Health, Care, and Support Facilities to develop a presentation document that addresses **each** guideline and refers to the blueprint by section, room number or page. Include room dimensions, room numbers, and any details that explain how each particular guideline is met. If a particular guideline does not apply to the project, state N/A – do not merely skip the guideline. “Compliant” or “meets” are unacceptable responses.

2. How do I know which sections of the Guidelines apply?

The OHFLC uses the classifications within the table of contents to determine what standards to use when reviewing the plans. The following sections are mandatory for every project. Please be concise and use outlining when appropriate.

- ✓ Chapter 1.1-3 Renovation (when appropriate)
- ✓ Chapter 1.2-2: Functional Program
- ✓ Chapter 1.4: Equipment Requirements
- ✓ A Safety Risk Assessment, Chapter 1.2-4
- ✓ The section (common elements and type) that applies to your project

If you are unable to find any specialty section that applies, please contact the OHFLC to discuss your concern.

3. Do I have to document the information repeatedly? There are sections of the Guidelines that overlap.

No, you may cross reference. If your project has unique criteria, you may cross reference any of the common elements, service areas, administration, construction standards, etc., that are redundant.

4. What if the project is only a renovation of existing space?

All construction and renovation must meet current Facility Guidelines Institute standards.

5. What if the project is only cosmetic?

Changes that are repainting, changing carpeting or other cosmetic changes do not require blueprint approval. Changing the function of an area, moving walls or entranceways is never considered cosmetic. Removing or adding cabinetry, alterations to plumbing and/or alterations to HVAC require authorization from the OHFLC to be classified as cosmetic.

6. Do all projects require a blueprint presentation?

No. Some projects may be “registered” with the OHFLC and not require a blueprint presentation. The OHFLC must authorize a project to be “registered” in order to avoid the blueprint submission and approval process. When registering a project, you will be given a project code. **You must notify the OHFLC when the project is completed.**

7. What do I do if I cannot meet the building and construction requirements or I feel that my design is more practical?

All projects must be compliant with all of the FGI and regulatory requirements. The OHFLC will not grant waivers.

8. How soon will I have my plan approval?

If your presentation is complete and there are no outstanding issues, you will walk away from the meeting with a letter of approval.

The Blueprint Approval letter and the OHFLC Project Code will become void one year after issue if construction has not begun and/or project updates have not been submitted to the OHFLC.

9. Who else do I have to contact before beginning construction or renovation?

You will need to contact the municipality where you are doing the construction. Each municipality has its own requirements for the construction, building codes, zoning, and plumbing and electrical.

You may also be required to obtain approval from other offices within state government for evaluation of compliance with other regulations. (i.e. The Food Code, Radiation Control, Board of Pharmacy)

10. Do I have to do anything else?

One final thing...after construction is complete but before occupancy, you will need to arrange for a post construction walk-through.

11. What is a post construction walk-through?

The OHFLC must complete an onsite inspection after your project is completed and before use. Please note that building and renovating of healthcare facilities requires compliance with codes such as NFPA 99 and NFPA 101, and you will be expected to produce the following reports and certifications at the time of the walk-through:

- ✓ HVAC Balancing
- ✓ Fire Marshal approval
- ✓ Certificate of Occupancy
- ✓ Medical Gas Certification (when using medical gases)
- ✓ Evidence of inspection and approval of the Delaware Radiation Control office.

Thank you for your attention and we look forward to meeting with you. The OHFLC encourages ongoing communication regarding the construction, renovation process and approvals.