

**Health Facility Engineering Section**  
**Division of Health Facilities & Services - Bureau of Health Systems**  
**Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)**

**Project Approval Process Overview**

The Health Facility Engineering Section (HFES) reviews the design and construction of healthcare facilities to ensure that safe, efficient, and effective delivery of healthcare is supported.

**What's Covered:**

A construction permit must be obtained prior to initiating a construction project involving new construction, additions, modernizations, or conversions of a healthcare facility involving minimum expenditures as follows:

- Hospitals: \$1,000,000.00
- Freestanding Surgical Outpatient Facilities (FSOF): \$ 50,000.00
- Nursing Homes: \$ 25,000.00
- Homes For the Aged (HFA): All
- Hospice: All

A construction permit is issued for hospitals, FSOF, nursing homes, and End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) facilities based on submittal of contract documents that substantially comply with the Minimum Design Standards for Health Care Facilities in Michigan.

A construction permit is issued for HFA and hospice facilities based on submittal of contract documents that substantially comply with the licensing rules for those facilities.

Note that plan review is recommended for all projects, even if a construction permit is not required.

The Health Facility Engineering Section must also conduct an opening survey for all construction projects involving new construction, additions, modernizations, or conversions of a hospital, FSOF, nursing home, HFA, hospice, and ESRD facility regardless of cost.

Equipment replacement or replacement/repair of finishes are normally excluded from permit and survey requirements.

**Facility Protection:**

All required patient/resident functions shall be protected from all demolition, construction, and renovation activities during each phase of the project. This includes control of dust, excessive noise/vibration, and leaks. All necessary means of egress and handicap access routes must be maintained throughout the work. And all essential mechanical/electrical systems within the facility shall be kept operational.

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**Related Documents:**

- Application for Plan Review
- General Information Regarding the Application for Plan Review
- Recommendations for Developing an Operational Narrative for Health Care Facilities
- Recommendations for the Submissions of Plans and Specifications for Health Care Facilities
- Healthcare Facility Projects: Project Planning to Opening Survey Recommendations
- 1998 or 2007 Minimum Design Standards for Health Care Facilities in Michigan

**The Plan Review process:**

- Designer/owner makes the first submittal
- Project is logged in and assigned
- Plan review comments are issued (typically in about 2 weeks) to the designated contact persons on the plan review application form
- Subsequent submittal is made that includes responses to plan review comments and revised/completed project documents and are reviewed again (in about 2 weeks).
- This is repeated until substantial resolution of all plan review comments has been obtained at which time a construction permit is issued
- For new facilities, the project sponsor should contact the appropriate licensing agency 60 – 90 days prior to anticipated patient/resident use
- Opening survey is requested and scheduled with our office 15 – 30 days out from being ready for patient/resident use
- All relevant documentation is submitted to us 5 working days ahead of the opening survey
- Upon successful opening survey and resolution of any required items this office will issue approval for patient/resident use
- For new facilities, we will recommend occupancy to the appropriate licensing agency only upon full compliance with all comments from our opening survey

**First submittal must include:**

- Completed application form
- Payment to the “State of Michigan” (see form for the calculation of the correct amount)
- Operational Narrative
- Infection Control Risk Assessment
- Certificate of Need approval letter if applicable
- Bound/full sized drawings and specifications (recommend submitting as early as possible in the design process and after owner has approved the schematic design)

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**Subsequent submittals must include:**

- Revised/completed plans and specifications
- Individualized responses to each of our plan review comments.

**Opening Survey:**

- The purpose of the opening survey is to allow HFES to confirm that the project (or each phase of the project) is fully ready to support patient/resident care (not just completion of the contract), therefore it should be scheduled accordingly
- Licensing agency contact information and a list of required opening survey documentation are provided with the construction permit
- A field report will be provided from the opening survey that identifies all items that must be completed and which need to be resolved prior to occupancy approval being issued