

K-12 School Construction Plan Review Guidance

Public or private schools (K-12) within Benton or Franklin counties that are planning on construction or remodel projects must have their plans reviewed and approved by the Benton-Franklin Health District. This review ensures that potential hazards which might affect student health or safety are addressed prior to student occupancy. Most projects require three approval steps:

1. Site Review Application and Site Hazard Assessment (all applications are available on [our website](#). Click the project type in the table below for the list of required applications)
2. School construction plans and specifications review
3. On-site pre-occupancy inspection

The type of projects that may be reviewed by the Benton-Franklin Health Department are outlined in the table below. **Follow these guidelines to ensure a quick and complete review of your project:**

Project Type (more than one may apply)	Contact BFHD's School EH&S Program For:		
	Site Hazard Review	Construction Plan Review	Pre-Occupancy Inspection
New school buildings School remodel/addition School relocation <i>Includes projects going through OSPI "D Process"</i>	Before going out to bid. Submit when plans are at 50% completion <i>Before completing D-5 submittal</i>	Before going out to bid. Submit when plans are at 50% completion <i>Before completing D-7 submittal</i>	At least 2 weeks prior to proposed occupancy
Purchase/lease of new property	Before purchasing/leasing the property	(Refer to specific project type)	
HVAC, lighting, or plumbing upgrades	N/A	Before purchasing any new systems or equipment.	At least 2 weeks before intended use of impacted rooms/equipment
Upgrades to shop, art, science room equipment and/or other specialty spaces	N/A	Before purchasing new systems/equipment. Contact BFHD for requirements.	
Adding or relocating a portable	Before purchasing the portable	Before purchasing the portable. Submit when plans are at 90-100% complete.	No pre-opening required. <i>Must submit Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application</i>
Adding or relocating a playground	Before purchasing any playground equipment	Before purchasing playground equipment	At least 2 weeks before intended use
Remodeling a playground	N/A	Before purchasing any new equipment	

Remember: It is the school's responsibility to submit plans and request inspections. The building department DOES NOT automatically forward plans or requests for pre-occupancy inspections.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is the School EH&S review different from a building department review?

Our review complements a building department review. We consider a school's proposed curriculum and determine appropriate health and safety requirements; the building department ensures the correct design and construction of those items. For example, school health and safety regulations require a fume hood for a science classroom conducting chemistry experiments. The building department will review the proposed hood to ensure the design and installation meet applicable building codes. We also review some items not requiring building department approval (e.g., playground equipment).

What plans and specification books should I submit for plan review?

A complete set of electronic plans (permit sets and blueprints) with specification books will need to be submitted. Plans can be sent through our e-mail at contactusschoolsafety@bfhd.wa.gov as direct attachments or through a secured drop box. Arrangements can also be made to accept electronic plans via thumb drive if necessary. We do not accept paper drawings/plans.

If applying through SCAP, a set of preliminary (50%) plans as well as a set of final plans will need to be submitted electronically for sign-off on the D-5 and D-7 forms.

What applications need to be filled out?

A list of all our applications is available on our website [here](#). Every project is required to submit a General Construction and Modification Plan Review Application. Most projects, except remodels, will require a Site Review Application and Site Hazard Assessment form. All projects will also need to submit a Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application prior to scheduling a pre-occupancy with their inspector. Specialty areas, such as portables and playgrounds, will also require their own application.

Feel free to reach out to us at contactusschoolsafety@bfhd.wa.gov for more information on how to submit a plan review packet.

Our school is undergoing a minor remodel. How do we know if we need to submit a plan review?

Most minor remodels will still require review from BFHD. The following are examples of common remodels that must be submitted for review:

- Changes to HVAC, lighting, or plumbing systems
- Changes to teaching areas/classrooms
- Changes to science, CTE, or art classroom equipment
- Changes to playground equipment
- Any project that requires a new building permit to be pulled
- Any project that is funded by OSPI's SCAP program

If you have questions on whether your project requires a review or not, please reach out to our team.

What if our project includes construction or remodel of one or more food service areas?

Construction or remodel of food service areas will require its own set of applications. While a new construction's main cafeteria is covered in the cost of the new construction plan review, any additional areas (e.g. student store, coffee shops, concessions stands, student culinary kitchens, etc.) will be billed for separately.

For each food area, you will need to submit all relevant food service applications and forms (found at our website [here](#)) as well as equipment specifications and a detailed floor plan. For additional information on what is required with a food service area review, you can contact the food safety team at contactusfoodsafety@bfhd.wa.gov.

How long does a plan review take?

New construction building review takes an average of 60 days for the inspectors to review and issue approval. This process may take longer if there are significant issues with the plan, or if there is a delay in response to any inspector questions or comments.

Smaller projects such as minor remodels often take less time to complete. However, it is important to submit your plans with time constraints in mind to prevent missing any deadlines. Additionally, the earlier BFHD is involved in the construction process, the easier it is to identify any noncompliant design features prior to installation.

How much will the plan review cost?

Total cost is dependent on the scope and type of the project. New construction buildings are charged based on whether it is an elementary, middle, or high school, or a combined school. Remodels are charged an hourly rate, so total hours billed will be dependent on how comprehensive the remodel is. All our fees are available for review [here](#).

Site reviews and pre-occupancy inspections have their own costs. Site reviews are charged hourly, while pre-occupancy inspections have a flat rate. The charge for the pre-occupancy inspection covers two on-site visits, in case more than one physical review of the site is needed.

What if we want an on-site consultation visit prior to when construction is completed?

This is something we are happy to accommodate. The flat rate for the pre-occupancy inspection covers two on-site visits, and it is understandable to want to have your construction progress reviewed when there is still plenty of time to make adjustments. You may reach out to your assigned inspector at any point during the construction process to schedule a consultation visit.

Project Type Application Guide

New School Buildings, School Remodel/Addition, School Relocation

- Site Review Application
- Site Hazard Assessment Form
- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*
- All relevant specialty area applications

Purchase/Lease of New Property

- Site Review Application
- Site Hazard Assessment Form
- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*
- All relevant specialty area applications

Remodels – Upgrades to HVAC, Lighting, or Plumbing; Upgrades to Shop, Art, Science Room Equipment and/or Other Specialty Spaces

- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*
- All relevant specialty area applications

Adding or Relocating a Portable

- Site Review Application
- Site Hazard Assessment Form
- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Portable Addition Plan Review Application
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*

Note: on-site pre-occupancy inspection may not be required as long as all conditions within Section 4 of the application are met

Adding or Relocating a Playground

- Site Review Application
- Site Hazard Assessment Form
- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Playground Plan Review Application
- CPSI Sign-Off Form
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*

Remodeling a Playground

- General Construction & Modification Plan Review Application
- Playground Plan Review Application
- CPSI Sign-Off Form
- Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application*

***Note:** the Pre-Occupancy Inspection Application should be filled out and submitted 2 weeks prior to when the on-site pre-occupancy inspection is desired to take place.