

## Construction Separation Guidance

February, 2024

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is responsible for plan review and construction inspections of buildings throughout Kansas that fall under K.S.A 31-133.

The following codes/interpretations are to be utilized by field inspectors when determining compliance with construction separation in buildings undergoing a construction project while the building is occupied.

### Non-Healthcare Facilities: IBC/IFC 2006

Code Study: IBC and IFC both require the means of egress, exits, existing structural elements, fire protection devices and sanitary safeguards be always maintained, during remodeling, alterations, or additions to any building or structure that is occupied. Additionally, hot work is to be segregated by noncombustible partitions that prevent the passage of sparks, slag, and heat.

### Healthcare Facilities: NFPA 101, 2012

Code Study: Chapters 18 and 19 require any area undergoing construction, repair, or improvements to be provided with separation when such operations are considered as having a higher level of hazard than the occupied portion of the building. Separation walls shall have at least a 1-hr fire rating with 45 min rated openings. Non-rated walls are permissible with an automatic sprinkler system.

**OSFM Interpretation:** Where separation is required to protect occupied areas from higher hazard areas:

1 – All temporary barriers must meet or exceed the rating of the existing space impacted.

Example. If the construction barrier replaces a portion of, or is installed in, a corridor that has a 1hr fire rating, the construction barrier must also be 1-hr rated.

2 – All temporary barriers must be made of non-combustible materials.

3 – All temporary barriers must extend from the floor to the hard deck ceiling or roof deck (if drop in tile).

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

1 – Not all projects pose a higher hazard than general occupancy. Many projects involve upgrades to interior finish, windows, doors, etc. and can be safely conducted without separation.

2 – The means of egress must be always maintained. Once a temporary barrier is installed, you should be verifying the integrity of the means of egress from the occupied spaces.

### Code References:

NFPA 101 (2012), 18/19.7.9.2

NFPA 241 (2009), 8.6.2

IFC (2006), 1411.2

IBC (2006), 3302.1

