

University of North Florida  
Building Code Administration Program

Department of Environmental Health & Safety  
Division of Administrative & Finance  
*(A University of Florida/University of North Florida Joint Venture)*

**OBJECTIVE**

This policy is written to establish and implement a building code administration program (program) at the University of North Florida (UNF) and protect the public's life, health, and welfare in UNF's built environment. This Program will be administered by the University of Florida's Environmental Health and Safety Division, Building Code Enforcement Program (UF EH&S). This Program will be coordinated through UNF's Department of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S). This protection shall be provided through the currently adopted Building Codes in the Florida State Statutes and the application of the performance based standards contained within. The Program shall be administered through review of plans and specifications and on-site construction inspections as required ensuring compliance with adopted codes and standards.

**AUTHORITY**

A building code program is mandated by Florida State Statute 240.209, 553.80(6) and F.A.C. Rule 6C-14020(2).

**POLICY**

Florida law and regulations require that all new building construction and modifications to existing buildings be reviewed and inspected for compliance with adopted building codes and standards. The policy requires all University entities charged with building construction, repair, or modifications on University owned property to submit construction plans and specifications for review by the University's Building Code Administrator (BCA). Construction may not begin until a building permit has been issued for said project.

Minor repairs or maintenance projects may occur without a building permit provided they do not violate any provisions of the technical building codes and they are approved by the BCA, or authorized representative.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **UF Division of Environmental Health and Safety:**

UF EH&S shall appoint a qualified building code administrator (BCA) to manage the building code inspection program at UNF. The BCA shall be certified by the Council of American Building Officials and licensed by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation as a Building Code Official (BCO). The BCA shall employ qualified inspectors and plan reviewers to administer the building inspection program at UNF.

The BCA will review plans and specifications for compliance with adopted codes and standards. After reviewing these documents, comments and code references will be returned to the UNF project manager and/or architect, as appropriate. A "letter of code compliance" will be issued upon resolution of all outstanding comments. All changes to the project must be approved by the BCA. All proposed change orders shall be submitted to the BCA by the architect at the time of issuance. The BCA will communicate all review comments to the project manager and/or architect in a timely manner. Costs associated with any change order are not required and do not affect approval by the BCA.

The BCA will issue building permits to the contractor upon satisfactory completion of the application process, review and approval of all necessary documents

The UNF Building Code Inspector shall perform timely construction inspections at the request of the appropriate contractor in accordance with the adopted Building Codes. The inspector shall be granted permission to perform any additional inspections, as necessary, to ensure compliance with code requirements and project documents.

Prior to occupancy of a new building or re-occupancy of a renovated building, the BCA shall issue a certificate of occupancy or completion, as appropriate. The certificate of occupancy will state that the building has been constructed in accordance with the building code requirements at the time of permit issuance. The State Fire Marshal and other UNF entities must inspect and certify the building is substantially complete prior to occupancy of the structure.

### **Design Professionals:**

Design professionals shall be responsible for the design of the project in accordance with the appropriate codes and standards listed in the currently adopted Building Codes and State Statutes.

The BCA will provide project review of the design documents at the following times: schematic design, advanced design, 50%, 100%, and final bid construction documents. A "letter of code compliance", stating that the building plans comply with current code requirements, will be issued if all outstanding comments have been resolved.

All changes to the project must be approved by the BCA. All proposed change orders shall be submitted to the BCA by the architect at the time of issuance. The BCA will communicate all review comments to the project manager and/or architect in a timely manner. Costs associated with the change order are not required and do not affect approval by the BCA.

If the level of work requires the involvement of a design professional as described in Chapter 471 and Chapter 481 of the Florida Statutes, the specifications and each page of the construction documents must be signed and sealed by the appropriate architect and engineer of record.

#### **General Contractor/Construction Manager:**

The general contractor or construction manager (GC/CM) shall apply for the building permit. The GC/CM shall be responsible for code compliance and permit documents. At the time of permit application, a list of all subcontractors along with appropriate license numbers and copies of their Worker's Compensation Insurance certificates and, if available, a "letter of code compliance" from the BCA indicating the plans have been reviewed. If a "letter of code compliance" has not been issued by the BCA, three copies of the signed and sealed (if required) final bid construction documents and specifications must accompany the application. A building permit will be issued after review and approval of the BCA. One of the submitted sets of plans and specifications will be returned to the contractor with the building permit and shall be stamped by the BCA stating "Reviewed for Code Compliance". The contractor shall protect and keep these documents on site and shall make them available for the BCA, inspector, architect and UNF officials.

#### **University Construction/Maintenance Services:**

Any university department providing construction/maintenance services shall obtain a permit when required by the currently adopted building codes and shall be responsible for building/life safety code compliance on their projects.

At the time of application for the permit, the department shall provide three sets of signed and sealed (if required) plans and specifications that fully indicate the nature and character of the work, a list of all subcontractors (if any) with their valid state license numbers and copies of their Worker's Compensation Insurance certificates and, if available, a "letter of code compliance" from the

BCA. A building permit will be issued after submittals have been reviewed and approved by the BCA.

### **Board of Appeals:**

The Vice President for Administration & Finance at the University of Florida shall appoint a Building Code Board of Appeals. This Board shall consist of seven (7) persons appointed for a term of four (4) years or less. One or more alternate members may be appointed. A vote by an alternate appointee would only be registered when one of the seven primary members did not vote. The Board members should have knowledge of the building trades. At least one person from each of the following areas should be appointed to the board: registered architect, professional engineer, general contractor, University Housing, Physical Facilities and Facilities Planning. One of the required members shall be appointed by the Vice President for Administration & Finance at the University of North Florida. The BCA shall serve as secretary to the Board. Terms shall be staggered such that no more than 1/3 of the board members are appointed at any one time.

### **PROCEDURES**

Note: Refer to permit processing flowcharts on pages 9 and 10 of this section.

- 1) Architects, engineers and UNF design professionals shall prepare documents in accordance with the requirements of the currently adopted Florida Building Codes and State Statutes. Plans shall be drawn to scale with sufficient detail and clarity to indicate the nature and character of the work.
- 2) The project manager or architect shall forward three sets of signed and sealed construction documents to the BCA for review.
- 3) The BCA shall review the construction documents for code compliance and return comments to the project manager and/or architect, or issue a "letter of code compliance" to the project manager and/or architect in charge of the project.
- 4) The contractor or project manager shall apply for the building permit by submitting appropriate documents as required by the currently adopted Building Codes and State Statutes.
- 5) The BCA will review the permit application documents and issue a building permit if the information is acceptable and complete. The contractor shall review the permit documents and comply with any supplemental instructions and applicable codes.

6) General contractors (or university departments acting in the capacity of a contractor under the exceptions noted in the Florida Statutes) shall be responsible for scheduling inspections with the UNF Building Code Inspector at various intervals as required per the currently adopted Building Codes.

Prior to concealment of any building, fire, mechanical, electrical or plumbing systems, the contractor shall request an inspection at least 24 hours in advance of the next work day. Requests shall be made online via CitizenServe Permitting Software. Instructions for scheduling inspections can be found at the [Online Inspection Request Instructions](#) tab. Inspections shall be performed, as appropriate, the inspection reports indicating approvals or necessary corrections to the contractor will be provided in the CitizenServe permit file. Subsequent construction involving any corrections may not proceed until the previous inspection has been completed and approved.

7) At project completion and after all required inspections have been approved and documented, the BCA will issue the appropriate certificate of completion or certificate of occupancy at the written request of the permit holder. The request shall be on company letterhead and include the project name, building number or location and permit number. The request shall also indicate that the project has been completed per the permit documents and all cited code deficiencies and violations have been corrected.

### **STATE FIRE MARSHAL INSPECTIONS**

UNF EH&S shall coordinate the State Fire Marshal inspections in accordance with the requirements of State Fire Marshall's office.

- 1) **State Fire Marshal (SFM) Inspections:** Most major projects typically require two SFM inspections.
  - a) The intermediate inspection shall occur prior to the placement of any hard surface finishes, such as drywall, plaster, or hard ceilings that would obscure any fire sprinkler piping and related products.
  - b) A final inspection is required prior to building occupancy. In order for a final inspection to occur, the following items must be complete:
    - i. The fire alarm system is completely installed, tested, tagged, and certified in accordance with NFPA 72 requirements.
    - ii. The fire sprinkler system is complete and has been hydrostatically tested, flushed and tagged in accordance with NFPA 13, NFPA 13R, or NFPA 13D.

- iii. The fire pump installation is complete and the pump has been certified in accordance with NFPA 20 requirements
- iv. All emergency and exit lights have been installed and tested.
- v. All fire doors, required exit hardware, magnetic door locks and latching hardware have been installed and are in proper working order.
- vi. All required emergency signage shall be installed.
- vii. All portable fire extinguishers, pre-engineered fire suppression systems, and kitchen hoods have been installed and inspected by the installing subcontractor.

## **2. Scheduling of SFM Inspections:**

### a. SFM Inspections:

i. The University project manager shall FAX the SFM inspection request (on a EH&S inspection request form) to EH&S at 904-620-2025 to schedule the inspection, or email at *dendicot@unf.edu*.

ii. Both the SFM inspections and pump tests should be scheduled at least 2 weeks prior to the desired date of inspection. The contractor is not permitted to schedule any SFM inspections directly with the SFM.

### b. Hydrostatic testing of fire sprinkler piping:

i. The project superintendent (or his representative) shall schedule all hydrostatic tests of both above and below ground piping by FAX to EH&S at 904-620-2025 at least 24 hours in advance of the next work day.

ii. Underground piping shall be tested at 200 psi for 2 hours.

iii. Above ground piping shall be tested at 200 psi or 50 psi above normal operating pressure whichever is greater for 2 hours with no visible leakage and 0 psi. loss on the test gauge.

iv. Properly filled out test papers are required at the conclusion of the test. It is the responsibility of the contractor to maintain the test papers until they are given to the SFM at the time of the final inspection.

**3. Authority Having Jurisdiction:** The authority having jurisdiction for fire related issues is the SFM. All life safety issues shall be referred to EH&S directly. If desired and approved by the project manager communication directly

with the SFM shall be done in writing and EH&S shall be copied on all correspondence.

**4. Project Changes:** All changes to the project must be approved by either EH&S or the SFM. EH&S has been authorized to review all project changes and determine if they must be submitted to the SFM for final approval. All proposed change orders shall be submitted to EH&S by the architect at the time of issuance. EH&S will communicate all review comments to the project manager in a timely manner. Costs associated with the change order are not required and do not affect approval by EH&S.

**5. OSHA Compliance:** The contractor must strictly follow all OSHA construction safety requirements, especially those sections as they apply to excavations, electrical safety, and scaffolding. EH&S will offer advise to the contractor if request or complaints received, but does not conduct construction site safety inspections.

**6. Job-site Accidents:** EH&S shall be notified of any job-site accidents that result in serious personal injury. Serious personal injury is defined as injury transportation to a hospital. Contact 904-620-2019.

**7. Test and Balance:** Notify EH&S of time and date of Test and Balance inspection at 904-620-2019.

**8. Fume Hoods:** Fume hoods shall be certified by EH&S prior to occupancy. Contact Lab Safety at 904-620-2019.

### **TEMPORARY USE**

Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the General Contractor may obtain temporary use of designated areas of a project for the training of personnel and the installation of owner equipment and furnishings. This use is allowed for owner personnel employed for the express purpose of assisting with move-in and startup operations. The general public or tenants will not be permitted to occupy the building until a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

The Contractor shall submit letters to the BCA and State Fire Marshal requesting a Temporary Use Authorization of designated areas of the project. The letters shall be on company letterhead and include the project name and number, the permit number, a description and floor plan depicting the areas for temporary use, reason for the request (i.e. install owner equipment or fixtures, employee training, etc.) and a date when the areas will be ready for inspection.

Upon request from the Contractor, the BCA will inspect the designated areas of the building to determine if they are safe to occupy under the temporary use

authorization. The General Contractor must also obtain approval from the State Fire Marshal.

Upon inspection approvals, the BCA will authorize the use of the designated areas, pending any special requirements issued by UNF EH&S and/or the State Fire Marshal.

**Note: The BCA can order vacation of unauthorized areas and electrical power may be disconnected.**

### **CORRECTION NOTICES**

1) Correction notices are issued when code violations are found and a return trip by the inspector is required to verify corrections. If code violations are still present when the inspector returns, the contractor can be assessed a re-inspection fee of fifty dollars. Additional notices can incur fees of \$50.00 per occurrence. Payments for re-inspection fees must be payable to UNF and be received by EH&S prior to scheduling a follow up inspection. Contractors will be responsible for payment of re-inspection fees via company check.

2) Notices issued by inspectors will describe specifically what work is deficient. If there are too many items to list in a timely and efficient manner, the inspector may indicate the job is incomplete and not ready for inspection. **Incomplete work is considered a code violation.** Consideration will be given for unavoidable delays or climatic conditions.

3) Contractors must schedule re-inspections in the same manner as regular inspections.

### **FAILURE TO OBTAIN A PERMIT**

Work can commence only after a building permit has been *issued* by the BCA, or upon authorization of the BCA. If work is initiated prior to a building permit being issued, a “stop work” order may be issued and a permit fee of up to 0.5% of the construction cost may be assessed.

### **STOP WORK ORDERS**

A Stop Work order will be issued by the BCA for any work that is contrary to building/life safety codes and constitutes a dangerous or unsafe condition. Work shall be suspended immediately upon issuance of a stop work order. Work may proceed only after approval of the BCA.





