



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Health Service Regulation
Construction Section**

2705 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2705
<https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/index.html>

**CONSTRUCTION PROJECT
PLAN SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW GUIDE
4/2025**



CONSTRUCTION PROJECT PLAN SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW GUIDE

General Information

Prior to starting construction or remodeling work, owners of facilities licensed by the N.C. Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR), and county and municipal jails and detention centers must submit plans and specifications to the Construction Section for review and approval. This guide provides helpful information to facility owners, architects, engineers and others who are in the process of submitting construction plans to the Construction Section for review and approval.

The Construction Section must review and approve construction and remodeling plans for the following facility types:

- hospitals
- nursing homes
- ambulatory surgical facilities
- psychiatric hospitals
- adult and family care homes
- intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID)
- mental health 24-hour residential facilities
- hospice inpatient or residential care facilities
- abortion clinics
- county and municipal jails and detention centers

At the request of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Service Division of Social Services (DSS), the Construction Section reviews plans for the construction and remodeling of children's foster care camps, residential child-care facilities and residential maternity homes licensed by DSS.

Repair and maintenance projects are not required to be submitted for review. When is a Construction Section Plan Review Required? has more information concerning whether a Construction Section plan review is required.

Some projects may require a Certificate of Need (CON). If you are not sure whether your project needs a CON, please contact the DHSR Certificate of Need Section at 919-855- 3873. Construction projects Exempt from CON Review or needing No CON Review as determined by the CON Section most likely are not exempt from Construction Section plan review. If you are in doubt whether a CON Exempt or CON No Review construction project needs a Construction Section plan review, please contact the Construction Section.

The Construction Section Help Desk architect or engineer can assist you with any question you may have concerning the plan review of a construction or remodeling project at your facility. Call the Construction Section's main number at (919) 855- 3893 and ask for the Help Desk architect or engineer.

Plan Submittal and Fee Payment

Plans and specifications should be sent to:

N.C.DHSR
Construction Section
2705 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2705

Plans and specification sent via Federal Express and United Parcel Service should be sent to:

N.C.DHSR
Construction Section
1800 Umstead Drive
Dorothea Dix Campus
Raleigh, NC 27603

Prior to the start of plan review, owners must pay a plan review fee for certain DHSR and DSS licensed facilities. A plan review fee must be paid for the following types of institutional and residential projects:

- hospitals
- nursing homes
- ambulatory surgical facilities
- psychiatric hospitals
- adult care homes
- family care homes
- ICF/IID group homes
- one to nine bed group homes
- other residential projects with more than nine beds
- DSS licensed children's foster care camps, residential child-care facilities, residential maternity homes

A plan review fee is not required for the following facility types:

- hospice inpatient or residential care facilities
- abortion clinics,
- county and municipal jails and detention centers.

The plan review fee schedule is located at [Information Regarding Division of Health Service Regulation Fees for Construction Projects](#).

If you have a question concerning a Construction Section plan review fee, please contact the Construction Section at 919-855-3893.

Please do not submit your plan review fee payment with your plans. After you submit plans for review, you will be sent an acknowledgement letter, fee invoice and fee schedule via **email to the email address shown on the documents sent to our office.** Once you receive the invoice, send a check or money order to the Construction Section for the plan review fee.

Checks and money orders shall be made payable to:
N.C. Division of Health Service Regulation

Checks and money orders shall be sent to:
N.C. DHSR Construction Section
2705 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2705

The reference line of the acknowledgement letter will contain the project number (example: RE: Project No. HL-8888). To expedite the review of your project, please indicate this project number on all correspondence and plans submitted to the Construction Section.

Submit one or two copies of plans and specifications to the Construction Section. If the North Carolina Department of Insurance (N.C. DOI), the Commercial Plan Review Section is required to do a plan review of your construction project, you are to submit copies of plans and specification directly to NC DOI. County and municipal jail and detention center construction projects are always required to be reviewed by N.C. DOI. Information concerning N.C. DOI plan review can be found online at <https://www.ncosfm.gov/codes/commercial-plan-review>.

Your submittal cover letter should be accompanied with our [Construction Project Plan Submittal Form](#) which should include a detailed project description or a functional program (hospital projects). This is especially important for renovation projects. **Also, a [Construction Project Plan Submittal Form](#) MUST be submitted with every set of plans and/or correspondences sent for the project.**

Please contact your local Code Enforcement Official for the local government plan review requirements.

Drawing Information and Color Code Standard

The DHSR Construction Section has a [Drawing Information and Color Code Standard](#) that should be used by your design professional during the preparation of drawings. Use of these Standards will help decrease review time. Your design professional may use his/her own color code standard but must provide a complete color code key for all colors used on your design professional's drawings.

North Carolina Administrative Code

All construction plans submitted for the construction and remodeling of facilities must comply with the requirements of the North Carolina Administrative Code or state rules for the facility type being constructed or remodeled. The state rules are available online at: <https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/testrules.htm>

For a particular facility type, other codes and standards may be adopted by reference in the state rules. Please check the state rules for your facility type to determine which codes and standards are applicable.

Consultations

On large complex projects, the facility owner can request a consultation with the Construction Section prior to plan submittal. Sometimes, the Construction Section architect and engineer will begin a review and request a consultation with the facility owner and their design professional. At these consultations, the Construction Section provides technical assistance to the facility owner and their design professional. The Construction Section does not conduct sit-down reviews. If you have a large complex project and you are interested in a consultation, please contact the Construction Section and ask to speak with the Help Desk architect or engineer. If your project is in plan review, please contact the Construction Section architect or engineer assigned to the project.

Plan Review Process

After you submit plans for review, you will be sent an acknowledgement letter, fee invoice and fee schedule via email. The acknowledgement letter will indicate when you may expect your review to be completed. Plan review turn around time varies depending on the number and size of projects currently under review.

The general review process is listed below:

- After the review fee is paid, the project is assigned to a Construction Section (CS) architect and engineer for review. Projects with an engineering scope of work are assigned only to a CS engineer.
- The CS architect or engineer will verify whether a CON is required and/or has been issued for the project. If a CON has not been issued for a project requiring a CON, the CS architect or engineer will contact you and place the project on-hold until the CON has been issued.
- The state rules for some facility types require the submittal of preliminary drawings prior to the submittal of construction documents and specifications. Please check the state rules for your facility type at <https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/testrules.htm> to determine whether preliminary plans should be submitted.
- After the CS architect and engineer review the project, you will be sent a review letter. Depending on the schedule of the CS architect and engineer, you may be sent either one review letter with comments from both the CS architect and engineer or two separate letters.

- When required by General Statutes, construction documents and specifications submitted to the Construction Section shall bear the North Carolina seal of a registered design professional. These seals must comply with the requirements of the North Carolina Board of Architecture and the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors.
- If schematic design and design development drawings are sent in for review prior to construction documents, the CS architect and/or engineer will send you a review letter approving the drawings with or without comments to the next level of submittal.
- When your design professionals' responses to construction document reviews have been accepted, and revised drawings approved by the Construction Section, you will be sent a letter approving the construction documents and specifications for construction. The Construction Section final approval letter will include a list of documentation that will be required upon completion of construction.
- Any changes made during construction affecting compliance with the state rules for your facility type must be submitted to and approved by the Construction Section.
- Based on the state rules for your facility type, Construction Section approval of construction documents may expire one year after the date of approval unless a building permit for the construction has been obtained. If your approval has expired, you will be required to submit construction documents and specifications complying with current regulations and codes and may be required to pay an additional plan review fee.