Section 8 Health, Safety and Security Policies Subject 8.1 Health and Safety **Policy 8.1.23 Above Ceiling Work Policy for Healthcare Buildings**	10/14/10 -Originated -Reviewed w/ changes -Reviewed w/o changes F.O.A.M -Author

Above Ceiling Work Policy for Healthcare Buildings

Definitions

Above Ceiling Work (ACW): includes the inspection, repair and installation of pipes, conduits, ducts, cables, wires, pneumatic tubes, and similar building services which take place above existing ceiling levels. It does not include construction activities which occur before the permanent ceiling is installed in areas that are being renovated or in buildings under construction. In the latter cases the above ceiling final inspection addresses the issues covered by this Policy.

ACW Certified Staff: personnel that has attended the necessary certification class(es) and has been assigned or contracted to perform work above the ceiling in a UTMB healthcare facility.

Authorizing Representative: UTMB representative that has responsibility for obtaining the ACW Permit and overseeing work performed by ACW Certified Staff. Authorizing Representative signs 'Final Inspection' on permit to signify that all work has been completed to meet applicable codes/standards and that there has not been any damage caused to the ceiling.

Pre-existing conditions: any condition at or above the ceiling level that is found to not be in compliance with UTMB standards and codes. Pre-existing conditions should be reported to FOAM maintenance via a work order request.

Emergency Work: work that is required to be performed in the event of an emergency where it is not feasible to apply for a permit in a timely manner. This work will need to be recorded on a Utility interruption report.

Policy

Installation, repair and inspection activities performed above the ceiling level in (UTMB) healthcare facilities shall comply with NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition, UL Fire Resistance Directory, and **1.38 Hospital Construction, Renovation, and Demolition** with respect to above ceiling work in patient care areas and other infection control risk group areas. Installation and certain inspection and repair activities require an Above Ceiling Work Permit posted at the work location or in the possession of at least one of the installers on the project.

Installation, inspection and repair personnel are certified per the certification

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provisions of this Policy and carry a current UTMB Above Ceiling Work Policy certification card.

FOAM maintains a database of all certified personnel.

Note: This certification is required for all personnel installing new systems and services as well as for personnel performing routine visual inspections or conducting investigative and repair related activity.

Any personnel that is found to be performing AWC without an approved permit or proper fire stopping materials will be asked to immediately close any open ceiling and vacate the premises. The offending personnel's supervisor or departments will be notified and appropriate action should be taken.

Procedure

Personnel performing ACW within the UTMB healthcare facilities undergo a standard certification process prior to conducting any such activity.

The certification process will take place in a group class session that will occur every six months or as needed. Eventually training will be available on-line at the Facilities Operations and Management (FOAM) Website via the Above Ceiling Work Policy link.

Upon successful completion of the referenced education, the applicant's information will be entered into the ACW Database where it will be kept on file. The applicant will be issued an Above Ceiling Work Policy Certification Card by the FOAM Compliance Manager.

The Certification Card is carried by the installing personnel anytime they are performing above ceiling work.

The individual performing the work conducts an inspection of the area and identifies any pre-existing deficient conditions that are present and in need of corrective action in order for the area to be in compliance with applicable building codes, standards and UTMB policies.

The requestor completes the Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA) and receives signed permission to proceed from a member of the Healthcare Epidemiology Department.

Procedure, continued

The requestor completes the Interim Life Safety Measures checklist and if necessary implements necessary measures to ensure proper egress from the area in the event of an emergency.

The manager of the area where the work is planned is notified of the work and timing of the work is coordinated with that area manager.

Any such pre-existing conditions are noted on an Above Ceiling Work Permit and must be corrected prior to beginning any new installation activity or communicated to FOAM Maintenance via a work order.

It is the responsibility of the department having authority over the work to convey pre-existing condition deficiencies to FOAM for any desired assistance in correcting these items.

For inspection and repair activity the corrective measures associated with pre-existing conditions need not be completed prior to said activity, however, an Above Ceiling Work Permit is obtained and the deficiencies corrected accordingly.

In the event that the ACW work is required in or near patients the requestor must contact the office.

Environmental Services prior to work to ensure that proper cleaning of the area will be completed before patients are allowed to occupy the area.

Any post closeout deficiencies discovered in the area will be repaired and charged to the last UTMB Department permitted in that area (FOAM, contractors or Information Technology Services).

Upon completion of the ACW (both the primary work associated with the Permit and any pre-existing conditions identified requiring correction) the individual responsible for the work completes the 'Completion Checklist' and 'Completed by' signature block and date fields on the printed Above Ceiling Work Permit and turns the Permit in to the UTMB Authorizing Representative.

The Permit is considered closed out once the 'Final Inspection' signature block and date fields are completed by the UTMB Authorizing Representative on the printed Permit and the on-line Permit is closed.

Procedure, continued

The completed Above Ceiling Work Permit, both printed copy and electronic versions, are maintained by FOAM.

References

1.38 Healthcare Epidemiology Policies and Procedures- Hospital Construction, Renovation, and Demolition

FOAM Standard Operating Procedures- Risk Assessment Interim Life Safety Measures Policy

NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, 2009 Edition with local amendments
UL Fire Resistance Directory

Contractors Above Ceiling Work Permit
UTMB Employee Above Ceiling Work Permit