I. Title

*Above Ceiling Work Policy for Healthcare Buildings*

II. Scope

Applicable to UTMB Health’s real estate portfolio facilities designated as “healthcare” or “ambulatory healthcare” as per NFPA 101: *Life Safety Code*’s occupancy definition.

III. Policy

Installation, repair, and inspection activities performed above the ceiling level in (UTMB) healthcare facilities shall comply with NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code*, 2012 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 who has been certified on the project. To facilitate a timely work flow, UTMB employees are allowed to have an electronic copy of an approved ACW permit on a mobile device.

Installation, inspection, and repair personnel are certified per the certification provisions of this Policy.

BOF maintains a database of all ACW certified staff.

**Note:** This certification is required for all personnel installing new systems and services as well as for repair related activity.

Personnel performing routine visual or investigative inspections where only one ceiling tile is removed and no work is being performed are not required to obtain an ACW permit, but should be certified.

Any personnel that is found to be performing ACW without an approved permit 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.

Work that is required to be performed in the event of an emergency will need to be recorded on an ACW permit when the emergency work has been completed.

IV. Procedures

A. Personnel performing ACW within the UTMB healthcare facilities undergo a standard certification process prior to conducting any such activity.
B. The certification process will take place in a group class session that will occur as scheduled or requested. Upon successful completion of the referenced education, the applicant’s information will be entered into the ACW Permit Database where it will be kept on file.

C. 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.

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

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

F. The Authorizing Representative inputs the project information into the ACW database and requests approval from the ACW database administrator and Maintenance Customer Service Managers.

G. 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.

H. Any pre-existing conditions found above the ceiling are noted on an Above Ceiling Work Permit and must be communicated to BOF Maintenance for corrective action. It is the responsibility of the department having authority over the work to convey pre-existing condition deficiencies to BOF for correcting these items.

I. 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 should be obtained and the deficiencies corrected accordingly by BOF.

J. In the event that the ACW work is required in or near patients the requestor must contact the office of Environmental Services (x-24040) prior to work to ensure that proper cleaning of the area will be completed before patients are allowed to occupy the area.

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

L. Upon completion of the ACW the individual responsible for the work completes an inspection of area to ensure compliance. If area is compliant, the certified personnel signs 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.
M. A new permit request will not be approved if the Authorizing Representative has permits that have gone past the expected completion date by **14 days**. If there are circumstances that prevent an inspection from meeting the expected completion date, the ACW Database manager will review a new permit request for approval until the inspection can be completed.

N. 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.

O. The completed printed copy of the ACW Permit should be kept with the project documentation. The electronic version will be maintained by BOF.

Healthcare Buildings List
- 007- Clinical Sciences
- 009- John Sealy Annex
- 011- McCullough Building
- 016- TDCJ Hospital
- 047- Waverly Smith Pavilion
- 056- University Hospital Clinics
- 063- University Eye Center
- 064- Trauma Center
- 080- UTMB- League City Campus
- 087- Primary Care Pavilion
- 090- John Sealy Hospital
- 091- John Sealy Annex (North)
- 124- Jennie Sealy Hospital
- 127- Clinical Services Wing
- 700- UTMB- Angleton Danbury Campus

V. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures
01.38 Healthcare Epidemiology Policies and Procedures- Hospital Construction, Renovation, and Demolition
BOF Standard Operating Procedures- Risk Assessment Interim Life Safety Measures Policy

VI. Additional References

VII. Dates Approved or Amended

| Originated: 10/14/2010 |
| Reviewed with Changes | Reviewed without Changes |
| 02/22/2017 |

VIII. Contact Information
Environmental Health and Safety
(409) 747-4191