



In Kansas, many of our education buildings were built prior to 1950. Unfortunately, this means many of these buildings were constructed prior to the large fires and subsequent lessons learned that make up the foundations of the current fire codes. Additionally, as new information and technology becomes available, the fire codes continue to update the minimum level of fire safety that is required for all occupancies.

This disconnect between when the buildings were built and the current fire code requirements has become an issue particularly in regards to corridor separation.

Summary of Code Requirements

NFPA 101, 1991 Edition: (Effective May 1993 – February 2011)

11-3.6.1 Every interior corridor shall be constructed of fire barriers having not less than 20 minute fire resistance rating.

Exception 1: All spaces normally occupied by students have at least one door opening directly to the outside.

Exception 2: Buildings protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system and walls and ceilings resist the passage of smoke.

IFC, 2012 Edition: (Effective February 2011)

1018.1 Construction. Corridors shall be fire-resistance rated in accordance with Table 1017.1

Table 1017.1 for Group E: Without Sprinkler System: 1 hr / With Sprinkler System: No rating

Exception 1: Where each room that is used for instruction has at least one door directly to the exterior and rooms for assembly have at least one-half of the required means of egress doors opening directly to the exterior.

KSFM ENFORCEMENT

If your corridor does not comply with the minimum required corridor separation, you will be cited for that deficiency. You will continue to be cited for the deficiency during every subsequent inspection until the corridor is corrected to meet the minimum requirements.

FACILITY OPTIONS

- 1.) Provide a properly rated corridor that meets the minimum fire resistance rating, or
- 2.) Provide alternative protection as a compensatory measure such as interconnected smoke detection throughout all affected non-compliant corridors, or
- 3.) *Provide a letter from a Kansas licensed architect or engineer stating that the current corridor does not lessen the health, life and fire safety requirements.

* The ability to provide a letter from a Kansas licensed architect or engineer stems from the International Fire Code, Sections 104.7.2 and 104.8 which states "Whenever there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provisions of the code, the fire code official shall have the authority to grant modifications for individual cases".

Letter Requirements:

- Letter must be stamped and sealed by a Kansas licensed architect or engineer
- Letter must be kept on-site
- The facility must obtain a new letter every 5 years
- The letter must provide information regarding how compliance with the code is impractical
- The letter must state "The current rating of the corridors does not lessen the health, life and fire safety requirements for any occupant within the building"

IMPORTANT: If a facility chooses to provide a letter, the letter will only be acceptable until the facility undergoes a major renovation or remodel. The facility will be required to come up to full compliance with the NEW section of the code at that time.