



## **Wis BHS CODE INTERPRETATION PROCEDURES**

1. Any facility owner, designer, contractor, local authority, or other interested party may request a written interpretation of codes as applied in plan reviews, construction inspections and surveys by the healthcare life safety surveyors in the Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Quality Assurance (DQA), and Bureau of Health Services (BHS). The application of Interpretations is limited to those healthcare facilities that the engineers of BHS are the authorized state authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) to perform plan reviews, inspections, or surveys (hospitals, dialysis units, ambulatory care, community based residential facilities, and any occupancy that is physically attached to a hospital).
2. Simple questions should be initially addressed to the BHS engineer who is assigned to the facility in question. If a verbal interpretation can not be provided or if the requester disagrees with the interpretation that is given, the written request for a formal interpretation may be made.
3. Persons that request a review should complete sections 1-4 of the BHS Code Interpretation form. The requester is responsible for clearly articulating the specific question, citing the code reference(s) that apply, and providing their own interpretation. The form should be e-mailed to the BHS engineer who is assigned to the facility in question.
4. Each month the BHS engineers meet to discuss code questions that have arisen to ensure there is uniformity in interpretation. If enough information is available and there is consensus of opinion the Interpretation request is updated to reflect the agreed upon BHS opinion.
5. If additional research is needed or revision needed in the text of the interpretation, it will be updated after the meeting. A copy will be e-mailed to each BHS engineer for prompt review within 1 week to confirm agreement.
6. Once full agreement of the BHS engineers has been reached, the Interpretation will be processed by the DHS Wisconsin Fire Authority to assign an ID number and approval date, provide an informational copy to the DHS nursing home engineers, and start the process of placing the Interpretation on the DQA Engineering Website.
7. All Interpretations will contain this disclaimer: The codes, standards, and conditions used to formulate this position are subject to change. The BHS reserves the right to revise any and all positions. Nothing in this position can be construed as a waiver or variance. This position does not supersede or waive plan review authority as defined in HFS 124, 131, or 134.