



Duke Occupational & Environmental Safety Office

Operating Instruction	Author: Steven Stewart	Owner: Fire & Life Safety
Subject: Duke University Health System Facility Decorations	Approved By: Matthew Stiegel	Date Effective: 04/2021
	Revision Dates: 04/2021	

Purpose

This document establishes policy and procedures and assigns responsibilities and requirements to ensure a comprehensive decorations operational instruction exists for Duke University Health System facilities. It applies to all Duke University Health System facilities and employees. Additional information may be found in the Duke University Safety Manual: Fire Protection chapter: https://www.safety.duke.edu/sites/default/files/IV_1FireProtection.pdf

Definitions

Decorative Materials: Decorative materials include, but are not limited to: curtains, draperies, fabrics, streamers, bulletin boards, artwork, posters, photographs, paintings, etc.

Suspended: Suspended means hanging, taped, tacked or attached in any manner that any portion of the item can be easily lifted away from the wall, creating an air gap.

Compliance Requirements:

All fully-sprinklered occupancy types (in-patient, out-patient, and business areas)

Curtains and all other fabric decorations shall comply with NFPA 701.

Patient privacy curtains or curtains used in a similar fashion in non-patient care areas shall have a 70% open weave that extends at least 18 inches from the bottom of the sprinkler deflector.

All manufacturer recommendations for laundering shall be adhered to in order to maintain the fire-retardant properties.

Curtains shall be repaired or replaced in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.

EXCEPTION: Curtains used for shower/bath areas are not required to be NFPA 701 compliant.

EXCEPTION: Curtains and draperies at windows in patient sleeping rooms are not required to be NFPA 701 compliant.

EXCEPTION: Draperies and curtains outside of patient care areas are not required to be NFPA 701 compliant provided ALL the following conditions are met:

The individual drapery or curtain panel area does not exceed 48 square feet.

Total area of drapery and curtain panels per room or area does not exceed 20% of the aggregate area of the wall on which they are located.

The smoke compartment in which the draperies or curtains are located is protected by sprinklers.

Prohibited Conditions

Explosive, highly flammable, combustible fibers, or any other materials which pose an unusually high hazard (e.g. foam board)

Three-dimensional items attached to a wall or door.

Items cannot be suspended from a ceiling.

Anything covering or obstructing exits, access to/from, visibility of any fire/life safety fixture or system component (e.g., EXIT signs, exit doors, exit access doors, door handles, fire alarm pull stations, fire extinguishers, strobe lights, etc.) in any manner.

Easels or similar displays ("pop up," free standing banners).

Decorations cannot be attached to fire-rated doors with one exception listed below:

Informational room signage: permitted if it does not exceed 5% of the total surface area of the door (typically 8 ½" x 11"), firmly attached to the door with adhesive only.

Business Occupancy and Out-patient Clinics that are fully-sprinklered

Combustible decorative materials shall be limited to 10% of the wall or ceiling face to which they are affixed.

Business Occupancy and Out-patient Clinics that are not fully-sprinklered

Combustible decorative materials shall be limited to such quantities that fire propagation is considered negligible.

Hospitals and Ambulatory Surgical Centers that are fully-sprinklered

Combustible decorations shall be attached in such a manner that they are not suspended.

Combustible decorations on non-fire-rated doors shall not interfere with the operation or required latching.

Combustible decorations in all corridors that are not within a patient care unit shall not exceed 10% of the wall or ceiling area to which they are affixed.

Within a patient care unit, combustible decorations shall not exceed 30% of the wall, ceiling, or non-fire-rated door areas inside any room or space of a smoke compartment.

Combustible decorations shall not exceed 50% of the wall, ceiling, or door areas inside patient sleeping rooms having a capacity not exceeding four persons in a smoke compartment.

Compliance Strategies

The amount of non-combustible decorations is not limited or restricted.

Foam board shall not be used.

Specially manufactured products that meet Class A interior finish requirements may be available as a substitute for combustible decorations.

Decorations purchased should meet the characteristic of being flame-retardant.

Consider using a common network drive for informational notices instead of a physical bulletin board (e.g., "Electronic Bulletin Board").

Decorative items including paper shall not extend past the perimeter of the bulletin board or approved wall area and shall be fastened securely to prevent air gaps.

In lieu of curtains, use metal Venetian style blinds or other non-combustible window coverings.

Metal frames with a tempered glass front may be used to encase items that are otherwise combustible.

Holiday and Theme Party Decorations

Refer to the Duke University Safety Manual: Fire Protection chapter for detailed information.
https://www.safety.duke.edu/sites/default/files/IV_1FireProtection.pdf