

# HEALTH FACILITIES

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE:**

As part of the requirements for a health facility to receive a license from the State of New Hampshire, it must meet the local health regulations of the town in which it is located. Local health officer approval is required as a part of the licensing for all new or changed facilities, as defined by RSA 151. Health care facilities are required to complete an approval form and have it signed by the local health officer. The goal is to certify that the facility has complied with any local health codes, including an operating sewage hookup or non-failed septic system, a viable non-contaminated water supply, and any other applicable town sanitary or health issues.

## **ROLE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER:**

- Respond and review the requirements any health facility that makes a request. Check the town records to confirm they have met all water, sewage and health codes.
- Certify that the facility complies with all applicable health, sewage and water regulations for the city/town that you represent.
- Certify that the facility does NOT require health, sewage and water approval of this facility/establishment (e.g. facility is on municipal water and sewer).
  - If needed, inspect the facility to determine what utilities exist.
  - If a facility uses a private water supply, ask for documentation that the water supply has been tested in accordance with RSA 485 and Env-Dw 313.01 and 314.01, or if a public water supply, a copy of a water bill will suffice as proof of a public water supply.
  - If a facility is on a septic system, ask for documentation of when the system was last serviced, or if on a public waste water system, a copy of a sewage bill.
  - If needed, document the number of beds/clients (i.e. inpatient facility)
  - If needed, document any other facility requirements on the inspection form.
  - Sign and date the form.

## **ROLE OF OTHERS:**

- The manager of the health care facility shall contact the local health officer, schedule an inspection date, and provide the inspection form.
- The NH DHHS Health Care Facilities Licensing section shall provide support to the local health officer. See contact information at the end of this form or call (603) 271-9499.

## **RELATED LAWS AND RULES:**

- RSA 151. [Residential Care and Health Facility Licensing](#)
- Chapter He-P 800. [RESIDENTIAL AND HEALTH CARE FACILITY RULES](#)

## INSPECTION TOOLS NEEDED:

- The correct approval form, provided by the applicant (see link to form on next page).
- A pen and a camera to document any conditions

Provided below is an example of a form to certify a laboratory facility:

<b>HEALTH OFFICER</b>	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT _____ COMPLIES WITH ALL APPLICABLE HEALTH, SEWAGE AND WATER REGULATIONS FOR THE CITY/TOWN OF _____.	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT _____ DOES NOT REQUIRE HEALTH, SEWAGE AND WATER APPROVAL OF THIS FACILITY/ESTABLISHMENT.	
NUMBER OF BEDS/CLIENTS: _____	NUMBER OF ESRD* STATIONS: _____ N/A: _____
DATE: _____	SIGNATURE: _____ (NAME AND TITLE OF HEALTH OFFICIAL)

\* ESRD = End Stage Renal Dialysis

Inspection forms for various facilities can be reviewed at the link below:

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oos/bhfa/forms.htm>

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## THE LICENSING PROCESS:

An inspection and approval is required for all new facilities; all additions to currently licensed facilities; any increase in the number of beds in a residential facility; a change in ownership of the facility; and a change in the type of services provided.

Health officer approval is designated by the completion and signing of the local approval form. By signing the form, the health officer certifies that the facility conforms to applicable local rules, regulations and ordinances having to do with health. Life and safety issues are the responsibility of the local fire department.

The DHHS' Health Facilities Administration-Licensing (HFA-L) provides the application forms to the proposed provider. The provider contacts the local building, zoning, health and fire officials for approval of the proposed or modified facility. Once the health approval is completed, as well as all other application requirements, HFA-L will inspect the facility. If the facility is in compliance with all requirements, HFA-L will license the facility.

If a facility does not meet local health standards, the health officer should not sign the form. Without a signed form, the state will not issue a license. Health officers should note in their records or log that an inspection was made, keep a copy of the signed form in their files, and whether approval was granted or not granted.

Examples of the facilities, that must contact the local health officer for an inspection, include:

## **INPATIENT OR RESIDENTIAL HEALTH FACILITIES:**

1. General Hospitals
2. Special Hospitals (i.e. psychiatric rehabilitation)
3. Nursing Facilities
4. Supported Residential Care Facilities providing less than 24-hour health care services such as nursing care, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.
5. Residential Care Homes
6. Residential Treatment and Rehabilitation Facilities
7. Hospice Homes
8. Community Residences, which are homes for persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities monitored by the Division of Community Based Care Services.
9. Educational Health Centers, which are school infirmaries for 'residential' schools from elementary through colleges that provide health care services to students.

## **OUTPATIENT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES:**

1. Home Health Care Agencies - These are business occupancy only and contain a small office. Local zoning is often the only issue since clients are not usually seen on-site.
2. Outpatient rehabilitation clinics, drop-in or walk-in care centers, emergency medical care centers, and community health clinics. These may also include disease prevention, screening or health promotion clinics, which could be held at that location or in other available, public spaces.
3. Ambulatory Surgical Centers
4. Dialysis Centers
5. Birthing Centers, which provide pre-natal, obstetrical and peri-natal care to mothers and their infants.
6. Adult Day Care Centers, which provide supervision and assistance with activities of daily living in a social setting to disabled and infirm persons who need these services while their caregivers are at work
7. Laboratories and facilities that perform on-site testing (e.g. substance abuse, pregnancy testing, TB skin tests, etc.)
8. Collecting Stations, which are facilities where specimens are collected for testing at a laboratory. Finger-stick glucoses and urine dipstick testing only are allowed at this site.
9. Freestanding Hospital Emergency Facilities, which provide emergency room services in areas where hospital emergency facilities are not available (longer than 30 minutes away).

For more information contact:

Department of Health and Human Services  
**Health Facilities Administration – Licensing**  
129 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
(800) 852-3345, ext. 9499, or (603) 271-9499  
<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/oos/bhfa/index.htm>