



# Compartmentalized Office Tenant Spaces

## *Building Division Interpretations and Procedures*

<b>Index Number:</b>	IBC-17-005
<b>Issue Date:</b>	12/18/19
<b>Code:</b>	2015 IBC
<b>Section:</b>	1006

### Background & Intent

When an office tenant space is located near the end of a corridor and two means of egress are required, exit separation within the tenant space may be difficult or impossible to achieve. To mitigate this situation, the City of Bellevue accepts the installation of a one-hour rated compartmentation wall within a single tenant space. This serves to reduce the occupant load of each of the spaces to the point that only one means of egress is required from each of the individual compartmentalized spaces.

Compartmentalization eliminates the need for separation of the exits or exit access doorways, while achieving equivalency to the intent and the literal code language. Equivalency is established by reducing the risk of smoke and fire spreading quickly throughout the space and by providing independent exiting from each of the compartments.

### Conditions of Approval

This approved alternate design treats a single office tenant as if it were actually two independent tenants when all of the following criteria are met:

- The wall used to compartmentalize the space is a listed one-hour rated *fire partition* assembly extending from the floor to the suspended ceiling, framed ceiling, or underside of the structure above if a ceiling is not provided. The wall must be braced as required for any partition wall, and snug fit, similar to a typical tenant separation wall between identical occupancies. A smoke seal is not required at the top of the wall. The wall must extend horizontally to provide a complete separation of the compartmentalized spaces.
- Doors in the compartmentalization wall are 20-minute rated assemblies with closers and lever-style latches. Doors must be provided with approved automatic hold-open devices, released by smoke detectors located on each side of the door. Doors in compartmentalization walls are

considered convenience doors and are not allowed as part of the exit access system. All required maneuvering clearances must be provided at doors.

- All penetrations and openings in the compartmentation wall, other than doors, are fire rated as required for a *fire partition*. The total area of the glazing in fire-protection rated window assemblies is limited to 25 percent of the compartmentation wall within any room.
- Each compartment has independent exiting without traveling through the adjacent compartmentalized space. The occupant load for each compartmentalized space is required to be determined in accordance with IBC Section 1004.

For questions concerning required permits, contact Development Services (425-452-4121) between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday (Wednesday, 10 to 4).

Signature Gregg Schrader

Gregg Schrader, PE, SE, Building Official

Date: 12/18/2019

Attachments

**Supersedes:** IBC-06-001