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| Guideline for Approval in Principle (AIP) – Renovation and Extension |
| Health service establishment |

# Guideline for AIP application for alterations or extensions to a registered health service establishment

## When must an application for an AIP be made?

The proprietor of a registered health service establishment must apply for an AIP when they propose to undertake alterations or extensions to the registered premises.

It is an offence under section 115 of *the Health Services Act 1988* (the Act) for work to commence before an AIP has been granted and the Secretary to the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary or Delegate has issued a Certificate of AIP.

Prior to submitting an application for AIP, it is recommended that you telephone the Private Hospitals Unit on (03) 9096 8873 to discuss the project.

## What is assessed for an application for AIP?

The Department of Health and Human Services (the department) assesses an application for AIP using criteria detailed in the Act. These criteria include:

* financial capacity of the proprietor;
* fitness and propriety of the proprietor;
* suitability of the design having regards to the type of facility;
* suitability of the location of the land or premises having regard to availability of other community services and the safety and amenity of the environment;
* security of tenure; and
  + the applicant’s involvement in other health services.

## How to complete an AIP application

### 1. Schedule 2 form and prescribed fee

Applicants are required to complete Schedule 2 - Application for approval in principle of a health service establishment (available for download from [Private Hospitals - forms](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/forms-checklists-guides)) and include the information outlined below.

The application must include the prescribed fee as indicated on the Private Hospitals website - [Private Hospitals - fees](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/registration-fees). Cheques or money orders should be made payable to “Department of Health and Human Services.

The department also requests other information and documents in order to assess an AIP application in accordance with the mandatory criteria detailed in section 71 of the Act.

### 2. Written description of the project

Applicants must provide a written description of the proposed renovation or refurbishment works.

### 3. Alteration to bed numbers or type of health service offered

If the proposed works will result in a change in health services, please provide:

* Details of all clinical specialities proposed including the type and level of clinical service (i.e. acuity) to be provided.
* The proposed model of care for these clinical specialities.
* The number of beds that will be added or removed as a result of the works.

If the proposed works are to be staged, provide written details of the proposed stages. Please be advised, you may be charged a fee for the architects time to attend an AIP inspection if your project has more than 3 stages.

### 4. Suitability of the design having regard to the type of facility

The suitability of the design of the facility will be assessed against *The* *Health Services (Health Service Establishments) Regulations 2013* (the Regulations) with particular reference to the Australasian Health Facilities Guidelines (AusHFG) and the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

In July 2018, the regulations were revised to include mandatory compliance with the AusHFG).

All new building proposals are assessed for compliance by a member of a panel of architects appointed by the department. The architectural assessment takes approximately ten working days and proprietors are notified in writing of any variances from the regulations, the AusHFG and the BCA which may require alterations to the plans prior to the AIP application progressing to the delegate.

Applicants must submit:

* A copy of schematic design floor plan, drawn to a scale of 1:100 showing; the floor area of each room, name of each room and equipment, fittings, and furnishings.
* A copy of site plans drawn to a scale of 1:200 or 1:500. Please show the ambulance bay on the site plan.
* If the development includes an operating suite or procedure rooms, provide detail of the ‘clean’ and ‘dirty’ instrument flow, and staff and patient access to/from the clinical zone.
* Proposed floor finishes at 1:100 scale.
* Proposed detailed fit out plan at 1: 50 scale for major rooms (applicants can use generic Room Layout Sheets from the AusHFG).

Departures from the AusHFG, including fixtures and fittings, are to be noted on the Schedule of Accommodation. Any design that departs from the AusHFG will not be approved unless clear patient and/or service benefits can be justified.

### 5. Schedule of Accommodation

The Schedule of Accommodation lists the type, number and size of rooms and spaces required in the private hospital or day procedure centre. Please refer to the AusHFG and list **all rooms** in the Health Planning Units for the type of clinical services being provided; include the total floor area of each proposed room.

### 6. Time frame

Provide an estimated time frame for the duration of construction of the proposed health service establishment including:

* proposed construction start date;
* project stages; and
  + the date construction is due to finish.

### 7. Planning permit

A planning permit gives permission from a local council to develop or use land for a particular purpose.

The planning permit must be submitted with the AIP application to assist the department assess the suitability of the location of the proposed health service establishment.

Note: If a planning permit is not required, please provide a letter stating this from the relevant local council.

### 8. Financial capacity

The Act requires the Secretary to ensure that a proposed proprietor of a private hospital or day procedure centre has the financial capacity to undertake the new development and to operate the facility.

Please arrange for an appropriately qualified independent certified practicing accountant (CPA) or associate chartered accountant (ACA) to review the proposed proprietor’s financial situation and its capacity to develop the private hospital or day procedure centre and complete the relevant form.

Complete the Statement by an Independent ACA or CPA (available for download from [Private Hospitals - forms](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/forms-checklists-guides)). Any disclaimer, qualification or reservation to this statement must be attached.

You may also be asked to submit additional information to demonstrate financial viability.

This may include;

* evidence of financial support and ability to meet loan repayments.
* financial plan/operating budget plan, including repayments schedule.
* medical practice insurance and or general business insurance.

### 9. Accuracy of information

It is an offence under section 151 of the Act to provide false or misleading information for the purposes of complying with the Act.

## What happens after an application is made?

### Maximum time frame for processing applications

The Secretary (or Delegate) has 60 days after receiving an application (comprising the scheduled form and prescribed fee) to inform the applicant of a decision. If the Secretary (or Delegate) requests the applicant to provide additional information, a decision must be made within 28 days of receipt of the information last requested or within the 60-day period, whichever is later. Applicants should keep these timeframes in mind when submitting an application for assessment.

Note: The department will endeavour to make a decision on complete AIP applications within 30 days.

### Certificate of AIP granted

After considering the application, the Secretary (or Delegate) may grant the application and issue a Certificate of AIP. The AIP may be granted with conditions.

### Site visit following renovation of the private hospital or day procedure centre

The applicant should contact the Private Hospitals Unit two to four weeks prior to the completion of construction to arrange a site visit. The Occupancy Permit must be received by the department prior to the site visit taking place.

At this visit all relevant certification of compliance with all relevant statutory authority and standards requirements must be submitted.

NOTE: If the Certificate of Occupancy is not provided to the department, the scheduled site visit will not take place and a new appointment will have to be made.

You may also request a pre-AIP Inspection to review progress of works and identify any regulatory issues prior to arranging the more formal final site visit once construction has been completed. The Architect Panel’s time for pre-AIP Inspections is charged to the facility. The final AIP site (one only) visit is paid for by the department.

At both visits, the Unit will inspect the premises to ensure compliance with the AusHFG and the Regulations. At the final AIP inspection any works, that do not comply with the AusHFG or the Regulations, may be required to be made compliant prior to registration of the facility.

Please complete the AIP Site Inspection Checklist which provides a list of compliance certificates that may be required. This document can be downloaded from the [Private Hospitals website](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/forms-checklists-guides).

### What if the plans change during construction or another person wants to take over?

Construction must be conducted in accordance with the Certificate of AIP and the planning permit. Should it become necessary to deviate from the approved plans or transfer the Certificate to another person, an application for variation of AIP must be submitted. Please refer to the relevant variation of AIP guidelines on the [Private Hospitals website](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals/registration-fees).

### When can I use the premises?

If the alterations or extensions do not result in a change in the total number of registered beds and/or a change in the prescribed services provided at the private hospital or day procedure centre, a letter advising that the premises are ‘approved to occupy’ will be provided to the applicant if the site visit confirms that the works have been completed in accordance with the AIP.

### Do I need a variation of registration?

If the alterations or extensions result in a change in the total number of registered beds and/or a change in the prescribed services provided at the health service establishment, the proprietor must apply to the Secretary to vary the registration of the health service establishment. Guidelines for variation of registration of health service establishment centres are available on [Private Hospitals website](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/private-hospitals).

### Send the completed forms

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