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| **Approval in Principle (AIP)  Renovations or Extensions Guidelines** |
| Health service establishment  OFFICIAL |

## 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 (the Secretary or Delegate) has issued a Certificate of AIP.

## What is assessed for an application for AIP?

The Department of Health (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

* Once the Department has received the completed Schedule 2 application form an invoice can be requested for the prescribed fee. Applications forms can be found at <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>. **All payments must be made electronically** (refer to Private Hospitals – fees <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/fees-for-private-health-service-establishments> for the current prescribed fee).
* The department also requests other information and documents to assess an AIP application in accordance with the mandatory criteria detailed in **section 71 of the Act.**

### 2. Written description of the project

Applications must be accompanied by a clear written description of the proposed alterations/extensions or refurbishment (dot point form is preferred).

If the proposed works are to be staged, provide written details of the proposed staged 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 the type, level (acuity) and staffing model for each service type or procedure (i.e., who will attend the patients).

Please confirm the number of beds that will be added or removed as a result of the proposed works.

### 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).

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

All 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 and the AusHFG which may require alterations to the drawings prior to the AIP application progressing to the delegate for review.

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.
* NOTE - 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. Designs that depart from the AusHFG will not be approved unless clear patient and/or service benefits are justified**.**

### 5. Schedule of Accommodation

The Schedule of Accommodation lists the type, number and size of rooms and spaces required in the health service establishment. Please refer to the AusHFG and list all rooms as recommended for the type of clinical services being provided and include the total floor area of each proposed room.

Any designs that depart from the AusHFG will not be approved unless clear patient/and or service benefits can be demonstrated and justified. (Available for download from <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>).

### 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 any changes to an existing 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 proprietors of health service establishments have the financial capacity to undertake the proposed alterations or extensions and to continue 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 their capacity to undertake the proposed works and continue to operate the facility.

Complete the Statement by an Independent ACA or CPA (available for download from <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>). Any disclaimer, qualification or reservation to this statement must be attached.

### 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 applying for assessment.

Note: **The department will endeavour to decide 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 construction of the private hospital or day procedure centre

The applicant should contact the Department 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.**

The Department will inspect the premises to ensure compliance with the AusHFG and the Regulations. At the final 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 <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>.

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**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 <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>

**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 <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>

### Send the completed forms Please send the completed forms by email to the Private Hospitals & Day Procedure Centres Unit at [privatehospitals@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:privatehospitals@health.vic.gov.au)

To receive this publication in an accessible format, email the [Private Hospitals & Day Procedure Centres Unit](mailto:privatehospitals@dhhs.vic.gov.au) at <privatehospitals@dhhs.vic.gov.au>  
  
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Available at [Forms, checklists and guidelines for private health service establishments](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/private-health-service-establishments/forms-checklists-and-guidelines-for-private-health-service>