



# Prefabricated Booths and Pods

## *Fire Prevention Division/Building Division Interpretations and Procedures*

<b>Index Number:</b>	IBC-2023-001
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<b>Code:</b>	2018 IBC, BCC, IFC
<b>Section:</b>	IBC 603; IFC 903.2.11.7, 907.5.2.1, & 907.5.2.3

### Background and Intent

With the current trend of office buildings using more densely occupied, open office floor plans, the availability of private spaces for phone calls or meetings is reduced. To accommodate this, several companies have produced small, stand-alone pods or booths designed to provide a private area for single users or small groups. The installation of these booths creates several concerns with fire and life safety. The following policy outlines the city's requirements to install these elements while maintaining a safe environment.

### A Building Permit is Required

Per BCC 23.05.090, any partition over 5 feet, 9 inches requires a building permit. In addition to typical construction details, the submittal documents must include a floor plan indicating the locations of all booths being installed. This will be reviewed to ensure that egress paths and accessible routes are not obstructed.

Separate permits will be required for any modifications to the electrical system, fire alarm system or sprinkler system.

### Secure the Booth

The submittal document must include information to show how the booth will be securely fastened to a floor or wall. If the manufacturer does not provide standard fastening details, then an engineer may be required to design the attachment.

## Fire Sprinkler Systems

In a sprinklered building, sprinkler coverage is required inside the booth. Installation of booths must not interfere with clearances of existing sprinkler heads.

Exceptions:

1. Booth installations that meet the requirements of Section 9.2.10, NFPA 13, 2022 Edition and the following:
  - a. Where multiple booths are proposed, the booths are separated by a distance of 18 inches from one another.
  - b. The clearance between the top of the booth(s) and ceiling sprinklers is a minimum of 18 inches.
  - c. Per Section 9.2.10.2 of NFPA 2022 Edition, the area of any booth does not exceed 24 square feet. The area is to be the interior area of the booth, excluding the area of the enclosing walls.
2. Booth installations where the top of the booth has louvers that open automatically on the activation of the fire alarm or with the loss of power.
3. Where the booth has an applicable testing report accompanied by full-scale fire testing report showing that ceiling sprinklers control a fire originating from inside the booth, as allowed by ICC-ES Acceptance Criteria 519 section 6.8 D.

## Fire Alarm Systems

In buildings equipped with a fire alarm, the audibility requirements of IFC 907.5.2.1 must be met. Where strobes are provided in a building, visible notification in accordance with IFC 905.2.3 must be maintained. All areas within the booth must be in the line of sight of a strobe device. The installation of the booth shall not obscure the sight line of the strobe from any location on the floor. Please show this on the floor plan.

## Combustible Materials and Finishes

Some prefabricated booths are constructed of combustible materials, including manufactured lumber and foam plastic insulation. IBC Section 603 limits combustible materials in Type I and II construction, and Section 803 limits the flame spread and smoke development of finishes. The booth must comply with the IBC sections above based on construction type and occupancy group.

**Exception:** In Type I and II construction the combustible material limitations of IBC Section 603 will not apply to individual booths meeting all of the following conditions:

1. Each individual booth is less than 48 inches x 48 inches.
2. The exterior material of the booth must meet the flame spread index and smoke-developed index for the class of materials required by Chapter 8 of the IBC.

## Accessibility

The code requires that all elements and spaces be accessible to individuals with disabilities. If the prefabricated booth is not accessible to a person in a wheelchair, an accessible space must be provided on the same floor that would allow for a similar environment for a private phone call or meeting.

## Listed Accredited Testing Lab

If the booth contains any electrical components, the unit must have a listing from an accredited testing laboratory recognized by Washington State Labor and Industries. If no listing is provided for the electrical, all wiring inside the booth will need to be exposed and inspected under a separate electrical permit.

Signature Gregg Schrader Date: 02/28/2023  
Gregg Schrader, PE, SE, Building Official

Signature Travis Ripley Date: 03/09/2023  
Travis Ripley, Fire Marshal

Attachments

Supersedes: IBC-2019-002