What does The Joint Commission look for during a life safety survey?

THE DIRECT ANSWER

During a life safety survey, Joint Commission surveyors verify that the building's fire and life safety protections actually work as designed: building and fire protection features are maintained, the Statement of Conditions is accurate, ILSM are in place where needed, and staff know what to do when the alarm sounds. They inspect, they test, and they interview — paper alone doesn't pass.

THE BUILDING ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENT OF CONDITIONS

- Surveyors start with your building's documented life safety profile. Under LS.01.01.01, the organization must assess Life Safety Code compliance and maintain an accurate e-Statement of Conditions (e-SOC).

WHAT GETS INSPECTED AND TESTED

- Means of egress — corridors, stairwells, and exit paths clear, properly lit, with compliant door hardware and latching
- Fire and smoke barriers — walls, doors, and dampers intact; penetrations properly firestopped
- Fire alarm and detection — panel status, device coverage, testing records
- Suppression systems — sprinklers unobstructed and inspected, standpipes and extinguishers in place and serviced
- Emergency power — generator testing logs, transfer switch operation
- Medical gas and vacuum systems — where applicable, with maintenance records

FIELD QUESTION

How is a life safety survey different from the EOC survey?

Under Accreditation 360 (effective 2026), both live in the restructured physical-environment evaluation. Life safety focuses on the building's fire protection features and Code compliance; EOC covers the broader management of safety, security, hazmat, equipment, and utilities.

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