What are Interim Life Safety Measures (ILSM) in healthcare?

THE DIRECT ANSWER

Interim Life Safety Measures (ILSM) are the documented, compensatory actions a healthcare facility takes when construction activity or a Life Safety Code deficiency temporarily degrades the building's normal fire and life safety protections. Think of ILSM as the bridge between "the building isn't fully protected right now" and "patients, staff, and visitors are still safe" — a formal set of extra precautions that stays in force until full protection is restored.

WHAT "INTERIM" REALLY MEANS

- A hospital's life safety systems — compartmentation, egress, fire alarm, detection, suppression — are designed to work as an integrated whole. When construction opens up a smoke barrier, or a deficiency takes a sprinkler zone offline, that integration breaks.

ILSM VS. THE FIRE SAFETY PLAN VS. ICRA

- Your fire safety plan is the permanent program — RACE/PASS, alarm response, evacuation. ILSM is the temporary overlay on that plan for a specific degradation. ICRA is the parallel program protecting against infection risk from the same construction.

FIELD QUESTION

Are ILSM a Joint Commission requirement or a best practice?

A requirement — standard LS.01.02.01, with elements of performance surveyors score directly.

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Caution: codes, editions, and targets vary by facility and authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). Figures marked as common practice are facility targets, not code requirements. Confirm against your AHJ and the current code text before acting.