

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY CABINET (BSC): PURCHASE OR RELOCATE

PROCESS TO PURCHASE OR RELOCATE A BSC

1. When a researcher purchases a new biological safety cabinet (BSC) or relocates an existing cabinet, he or she must complete the [Request to Purchase or Relocate a BSC](#) form for each cabinet.
2. After the form is received and reviewed by EH&S an environmental control technician will conduct a site visit of the proposed location. The technician will confirm that the proposed location meets biosafety requirements and help the requestor select an appropriate placement of the cabinet.

After the review is complete and the cabinet is approved, EH&S will email the requester a notice of approval.

- If the BSC is being purchased, a copy of the approval notice must be provided to Procurement.
- If relocating or surplusing a BSC, it must first be cleaned by laboratory staff, taking special care to remove sharps and other instruments under the work surface. After clean-out, the BSC must be decontaminated using gaseous paraformaldehyde. Contact EH&S to arrange this process *two weeks prior* to the date of the move or surplus pickup. A sign will then be attached to the BSC indicating it has been decontaminated and is safe to move. (More information about laboratory move out are in the [Lab Safety Manual, Section 10](#)).

LABORATORY CRITERIA FOR INSTALLATION OF BSCs

For a BSC relocation or new purchase to be approved, the proposed laboratory must meet biosafety laboratory design requirements. Cabinets may not be installed in offices, public hallways or common areas. Refer to the **EH&S Laboratory Safety Design Guide: Biosafety Laboratories** for design requirements for biosafety containment levels BSL-1, BSL-2, and BSL-3. Some examples of these requirements include:

- Doors must be lockable.
- If the lab has operable windows, they must be secured closed.
- The lab may not be carpeted or have other pervious surfaces on the floors.
- The room finishes must be easily cleanable.
- The lab must contain a sink suitable for hand washing.
- Food and drink may not be consumed in the lab. The proposed location may not have coffee makers, microwave ovens or other food or drink facilities.

Review the **EH&S Laboratory Safety Design Guide: Biosafety Laboratories** for requirements specific to your lab's biosafety level prior to submitting the request to purchase or relocate. This should help speed the review and approval process. If you do not know your lab's biosafety level, contact EH&S at 206.221.7770.

BSC PLACEMENT

The BSC must be located at least six feet from lab doors, operable windows, supply diffusers and other sources of air movement. If you have space constraints, contact BFS staff for help in assessing placement options.

You should maintain the following minimum amount of clearance around the BSC:

- 12 inches above the top
- 4 inches on sides without utilities
- 6 inches on sides with utilities

Note that Type II A2 cabinets with canopies and Type II B2 cabinets may require more than 12 inches of clearance above the top.

BSCs must be seismically secured once installed. This must be feasible in the proposed location. This work can be done by Facilities Services and requested through [FS Works](#).

Appropriate utilities need to be available for the BSC. This includes power, but may also include vacuum and other gas services. New BSCs require a 20A cap cord outlet.

CANOPY CONNECTIONS

EH&S will recommend a canopy (or thimble connection) above the BSC if chemical use in the BSC indicates that one is needed. This recommendation is based on information provided by the user in the request form. Chemicals used for decontamination, such as small quantities of ethanol, do not typically require a canopy connection. For further information about chemical use in BSCs, see the focus sheet [Chemical Use in Biological Safety Cabinets](#).

If a canopy is not already installed in the proposed location, a design for a new canopy needs to be submitted to EH&S and reviewed prior to BSC approval. For design services, contact UW [Capital Planning and Development](#).

If the BSC purchase or relocation is part of a renovation or construction project and you are working with Capital Planning and Development, please include the project name and number on the request form. This will help EH&S coordinate your request and speed up the review process.

BSC SELECTION AND IDENTIFICATION

Any new BSCs must be on the [EH&S BSC Approved List](#) on the EH&S website. There are no exceptions to these criteria.

For relocations of BSCs within UW, please note the EH&S cabinet number, make and model on the request form. For BSCs moved to the UW from other locations, also include the age and history of the BSC on the request form.

If you do not use biological agents but need product protection for your work, consider using a clean bench instead of a biological safety cabinet.

For questions about procuring or relocating a biological safety cabinet, contact EH&S at 206.616.6261.