CHAPTER 5
GENERAL BUILDING HEIGHTS AND AREAS

SECTION 508.4.4
2009 Edition
IBC Interpretation 07-11
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508.4.4 Separation.
Individual occupancies shall be separated from adjacent occupancies in accordance with Table 508.4.

TABLE 508.4
REQUIRED SEPARATION OF OCCUPANCIES (HOURS)

OCCUPANCY	A, E		I-1, I-3, I-4		I-2		R		F-2, S-2, U		B, F-1, M, S-1		H-1		H-2		H-3, H-4, H-5	
	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS	S	NS
B, F-1, M, S-1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	N	N	NP	NP	2	3	1	2

S = Building equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.
NS = Buildings not equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1.
N = No separation requirement.
NP = Not permitted.

REFERENCED SECTION:

508.4.2 Allowable building area.
In each story, the building area shall be such that the sum of the ratios of the actual building area of each separated occupancy divided by the allowable building area of each separated occupancy shall not exceed 1.

508.4.3 Allowable height.
Each separated occupancy shall comply with the building height limitations based on the type of construction of the building in accordance with Section 503.1.

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Q: In accordance with Table 508.4, no separation is required between the occupancies in the occupancy grouping of B, F-1, M, S-1. Are these occupancies considered "separated" for the purpose of allowable height and allowable area?

A: Yes. Although the occupancies are not required to be physically separated, for the purpose of building height and area only, they are still evaluated under the separated option. These are occupancies that share the same level of hazard with respect to fire safety. It is possible, therefore, to have multiple occupancies that comply with the separated use provisions that require no separation between them.

But note that, where code requirements are based on established fire areas, occupancies not separated must be considered as sharing the same fire area.

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