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**PROCEDURE: APPROVAL PROCESS FOR “DSA-SS/CC” ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUILDING CODE PROVISIONS**

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**Disciplines:** Structural**History:** Issued 09/15/21

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Division of the State Architect (DSA) documents referenced within this publication are available on the [DSA Forms](#) or [DSA Publications](#) webpages.

**PURPOSE**

This procedure describes the DSA requirements for the submission of a project under the alternative community college building Code provisions permitted by Education Code Sections 81052 and 81053. These alternative building code amendments are depicted by the acronym “SS/CC” under the heading “DSA” in the matrix adoption tables preceding each chapter in the California Building Code (CBC), Title 24, Part 1 and the California Existing Building Code (CEBC), Title 24, Part 10. Projects approved utilizing these alternative requirements are referred to as “DSA-SS/CC” projects.

In order for the alternative DSA-SS/CC amendments to be used as a basis for design, the community college chancellor must specifically request exemption from the Field Act (DSA-SS) amendments to the CBC upon project submittal, as described in the procedure below. Plan review will proceed in accordance with DSA-SS amendments unless an exemption request is received at the time of project submittal.

**BACKGROUND**

Senate Bill 588 (2008) changed the Education Code (Section 81053) to permit community colleges to request design of construction projects to be based on new alternative DSA-SS/CC code requirements that are different from the Field Act, DSA-SS, code requirements. The intent of the legislation was to provide for the same level of occupant life safety but accept a greater chance of property damage in the event of a major earthquake. These alternative provisions were first included in and became effective with the adoption of the 2010 CBC on January 1, 2011.

Matrix adoption tables precede each chapter in the CBC and CEBC. The matrix adoption tables indicate which amendments are applicable to the design requirements of various State agencies. Adopting agencies each have a column in the matrix adoption table. Under the DSA heading there are two subcategories for structural: SS and SS/CC. These acronyms stand for “Structural Safety” and “Structural Safety/Community Colleges” respectively.

The DSA-SS/CC amendments provide alternative structural design code provisions in Part 2, CBC, and Part 10, CEBC, of Title 24, California Code of Regulations. The DSA-SS/CC design provisions provide no other alternatives to any other requirements in Title 24, such as, DSA testing and inspection requirements, construction oversight, Access Compliance review and Fire Life Safety review.

**PROCEDURE****1. ALTERNATIVE CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE AMENDMENTS**

The applicable building standards for projects utilizing the alternative community college (DSA-SS/CC) provisions are defined in Section 1.9.2.2.2 of Title 24, Part 2 and 10. In general, these include all the same Parts and Chapters as required for DSA-SS projects with the exception of Part 2 Chapters 16, 19, 21, and 22 and portions of Chapter 23 and portions of Part 10. The specific sections in each Chapter that are applicable to the DSA-SS/CC provisions are delineated in the matrix adoption tables at the beginning of each Chapter. The following

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provides guidance on where to locate the DSA-SS/CC provisions which differ from DSA-SS provisions:

**1.1** The structural requirements of Part 2 Chapters 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, and Part 10. (Part 2 Chapters 17A and 18A are adopted for both DSA-SS/CC and DSA-SS projects)

**1.2** Amendments applicable to DSA-SS/CC projects are grouped at the end of CBC Chapters 16, 19, 21 and 22 in Sections entitled “Additional Requirements for Community Colleges [DSA-SS/CC]”

**1.3** All other amendments applicable to DSA-SS/CC projects are preceded by “[DSA-SS/CC]” at the beginning of the amended Section.

### 2. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Submittal requirements for DSA-SS/CC projects are identical to the requirements for DSA-SS projects except that a letter from the chancellor of the community college requesting the alternative process must be included in the submittal package. The letter shall be substantially in conformance with the template in the Appendix below.

#### 2.1 Mixed Code Requirements

Each individual DSA application submittal shall contain only DSA-SS or DSA-SS/CC compliant scope but not both. If a DSA application submittal includes scope having both DSA-SS and DSA-SS/CC code-based design, the submittal must be divided into separate DSA applications, each representing the separate specific codes utilized.

#### 2.2 Changing Code Requirements

Once plan review has started it is not permitted to change the building code provisions (DSA-SS vs. DSA-SS/CC) used as a basis for design. The application would have to be withdrawn in accordance with the provisions of Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-319 and a new application submitted.

**Exception:** When approved by the DSA Regional Manager, a change in the building code provisions may be permitted and additional fees collected for a revised design during the plan review phase of the project. The change in building code provisions must be applied to the entire scope of the application. Mixing of code provisions shall not be permitted.

#### 2.3 Construction Documents

Drawings shall include, as a minimum, the following statement on the architectural general notes adjacent to adopted codes and on the structural design criteria:

“This project has been designed to be in compliance with the alternative DSA-SS/CC community college provisions of the California Building Code.”

### 3. PROJECT TRACKING

DSA will record in the “notes” section of the Application screen of eTracker receipt of the letter described in Section 2 above acknowledging use of the alternative DSA-SS/CC provisions.

### 4. PLAN APPROVAL

The DSA approval letter for DSA-SS/CC projects will include a special paragraph acknowledging use of the alternative provisions and addressing future alterations and additions as described in Section 7 below. The paragraph shall state the following:

“Buildings constructed in accordance with the approved documents will meet the minimum required safety standard of the alternative DSA-SS/CC community college provisions of the California Building Code (as permitted by Section 81053 of the Education Code). Future

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alterations and additions to this scope will be limited to the alternative DSA-SS/CC community college provisions.”

### **5. DSA CONSTRUCTION OVERSIGHT**

All construction oversight requirements are identical for DSA-SS and DSA-SS/CC projects. DSA review and approval of construction change documents for DSA-SS/CC projects will be the DSA-SS/CC Code provisions.

### **6. PROJECT CERTIFICATION**

The DSA construction certification letter for DSA-SS/CC projects will state the following:

“This project is in compliance with California State regulations as to the safety of design and construction of public schools, utilizing the alternative DSA-SS/CC Community College provisions of the California Building Code in accordance with Education Code Section 81053, and for the accommodation of persons with disabilities.”

### **7. FUTURE ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS**

Once a structure is certified by DSA as compliant with DSA-SS/CC requirements, all future alterations and additions will be limited to DSA-SS/CC approval and certification. The building or structure can be rehabilitated to full DSA-SS compliance in accordance with the provisions of Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-307.

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A DSA Procedure documents a process or series of steps that DSA staff and/or external stakeholders must complete in order to fulfill one or more administrative requirements of DSA's review and approval of plans and specifications and construction oversight programs.

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**APPENDIX**

**Example Letter Requesting Alternative DSA-SS/CC Review and Approval for a Community College Project**

[Date]

[Recipient Name]  
Division of the State Architect  
[Address]  
[City], CA [Zip]

**Regarding: [Project name and description of scope]**

I hereby request that the subject project be reviewed and approved by DSA in accordance with the alternative DSA-SS/CC community college provisions in the California Building Standards Code per Education Code Section 81053. I understand that Senate Bill 588 (2008) changed the Education Code (Ed. Code section 81053) to permit community colleges to request the design of construction projects to utilize an alternative structural code different from the usual structural code requirements of the California Building Standards Code. The intent of the legislation was to provide for the same level of occupant life safety but accept a greater chance of property damage in the event of a major earthquake, as compared to community college projects which are designed in accordance with the usual structural code requirements. The alternative structural code developed has been identified as the “Alternative DSA-SS/CC Community College Provisions”. I also understand that DSA plan approval, and construction certification of any future alterations, modernizations or additions to the subject building(s) will be limited to the alternative DSA-SS/CC building code provisions. An upgrade to DSA-SS certification can only be accomplished by rehabilitating the building(s) in accordance with Title 24, Part 1, Section 4-307.

Sincerely,  
[Chancellor’s name]  
[Name of community college]