

Annual renewal and 5year Webinar 2/10/26

Can the fees for renewal applications be paid through the portal, correct?

-Yes

- Once logged in, click on the “Pending Invoices” tab.
- Select the invoices you wish to pay by credit card.
- Click the “Pay By Credit Card” button on the right.
 - Note that there is a fee generated by Epay. This fee goes only to Epay—IBHE does not collect that fee.

What was the email we can connect with?

- pbvs_apps@ibhe.org

- An analyst is assigned to respond to emails from this email box M-F, except on holidays.
- Bear in mind analysts schedules can be 7-3, 7:30-3:30, or 8-4. Questions emailed later in the afternoon may not be addressed until the next morning.

What is the difference between annual renewal and 5 years renewal?

- Annual Renewal = yearly check-in (Years 1–4).

-5-Year Renewal = full reapproval of the entire school (Year 5)

- Schedule of applications:
 - Initial approval: Permit of Approval and New Program of Study applications
 - Year 1: Annual
 - Year 2: Annual
 - Year 3: Annual
 - Year 4: Annual
 - Year 5: 5th Year Renewal.

If the 5th year renewal is due this year, is the annual renewal is also due?

-No

What is the regulations of part-time students?

- PBVS regulations do not differentiate between part-time and full-time students. Schools may define those terms internally, but all PBVS compliance requirements apply equally to every enrolled student.

How short is the wait time now from submission to review and approval of an application?

-3-6months

Is there any funding or grant may apply for the vocational school?

- The IBHE doesn't offer or provide grants for vocational schools or vocational school students.

How does the surety bond work?

- The PBVS surety bond refunds unearned tuition to students, or entities who pay on behalf of a student, if a school closes or fails to deliver instruction.
- The bond must always equal the highest amount of prepaid tuition held at any time (minimum \$10,000).
- Schools must maintain the bond continuously or risk immediate revocation.

How do programs that don't charge a fee address refunds?

Refund policy disclosure

Refund policies must be included in enrollment agreements and in consumer disclosure materials (catalog, handbook, etc.).

The rules require an explanation of:

- Tuition
- Cancellation policies
- Refund policies

Even if the refund amount would always be \$0, the rule still requires the *policy* to be present.

Can the IBHE change disclosure to be lined up with the calendar year. Much easier to keep track of, in my opinion.

- The state of IL operates on a FY calendar. Additionally, not all entities operate on a calendar year.

Can schools ask students to sign a Non-disparagement clause in the enrollment agreement, basically stating students cannot post negative reviews for the school on social media? This is in addition to the statement on complaints being directed to IBHE that is already on the enrollment agreement.

-No, as that is a violation of the students' First Amendment rights. There are laws protecting the entity if the posted commentary appears to be false. Please consult with your own counsel to make those determinations.

The audit of our financial documents must be conducted during the fiscal year of a 5-year renewal, correct?

- Yes, your externally prepared financial statements must reflect the fiscal year immediately preceding your 5-year renewal. They are not required to be audited.

Are these financial reports for the entire institution or for the specific IBHE approved program?

- Under 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1095.40 (Criteria for Evaluation of the Application for a Permit of Approval), IBHE reviews the full institution's capacity to operate, including:

- Governance
- Financial viability
- Ability to deliver programs
- Stability of operations

If we are occupying a portion of a building in which other offices are located, do we need to submit the floor plan for the entire building or just our office space?

- Just their space, unless students and staff have access to other public spaces in the facility.

- IBHE needs to see a floor plan that clearly identifies:

- Your school's instructional areas
- Your administrative/office areas
- Any student-accessible spaces your school controls (labs, classrooms, reception area, etc.)
- Accessible entrances/exits used by your school
- Restrooms available to your students (you may indicate "shared/common restroom")
- A floorplan can be hand drawn, but room dimensions should be indicated for each space

We have extension sites. We have to provide pictures of the classroom space at the extension sites? And statement of assurance for each extension site?

-Yes, schools must provide classroom photos AND a Statement of Assurance for each extension site.

-Each extension site is considered its own approved instructional location, and IBHE requires full documentation for every site, including facility evidence and compliance assurances.

If our office space is in-kind, do we need an agreement or can a letter from the donating organization suffice?

Documentation would need to indicate

- Legal right to occupy the space, and,
- That the facility meets PBVS facility requirements, including safety, accessibility, and instructional adequacy.

Although the rules do not explicitly state the word “lease,” they do require facility plans, liability insurance coverage for the site, and documentation showing the site is approved and safe for instructional use.

Are reviewed financial statements accepted as opposed to audited? Due to cost, our institution has opted for reviewed financial statements by our CPA's. We are not required under Illinois law to have an audit.

- The requirement is externally prepared financial statements. Audits are not required.

For the annual renewal, is a copy of the Certificate of Insurance showing liability coverages sufficient?

- Yes. As long as the document comes from the insurer and shows the appropriate coverage. An invoice would not be an appropriate document.

I'd like to clarify terminology: should we use accredited instead of approved? I was previously advised by an analyst to use approved rather than accredited.

- IBHE is NOT an accreditor. IBHE approval is a state of IL required process. Accreditation is a separate private process that leads to other benefits such as TitleIV eligibility.

Do tuition changes require an application?

-Please submit a PIC (Program institutional Change) application

If our office space is in-kind, do we need an agreement or can a letter from the donating organization suffice?

There should be documentation presented showing the space provided in-kind and the requirements to remain in the space if agreed upon.

Are addenda for Veterans GI Bill funding requiring an application to update Enrollment Agreement?

-Changes to the Enrollment Agreement require a Program Institution Change application.

We do not charge any tuition or fees to students, so we were told we had to still do a Surety bond of \$10,000. Is that still the case?

- Yes, surety bonds are statutorily required. Lack of one or the expiration of a surety bond will result in revocation of the institution's Permit of Approval. There are no exceptions to this mandate.

Can the IBHE change disclosure to be lined up with the calendar year. Much easier to keep track of, in my opinion.

The state of IL operates on a FY calendar. Additionally, not all entities operate on a calendar year.

Can schools ask students to sign a Non-disparagement clause in the enrollment agreement, basically stating students cannot post negative reviews for the school on social media? This is in addition to the statement on complaints being directed to IBHE that is already on the enrollment agreement.

Per agency counsel, this is a violation of free speech. There are laws protecting the entity if the posted commentary appears to be false. Please consult with your own counsel to make those determinations..

Yes i would agree it would be a violation.

Are these financial reports for the entire institution or for the specific IBHE approved program?

The entire institution to include programming.

If we are occupying a portion of a building in which other offices are located, do we need to submit the floor plan for the entire building or just our office space?

Just their space, unless student and staff have access to other public spaces in the facility.

We have extension sites. We have to provide pictures of the classroom space at the extension sites? And statement of assurance for each extension site?

Yes. The renewal is for the complete institution.

For the annual renewal, is a copy of the Certificate of Insurance showing liability coverages sufficient?

Yes. As long as the document comes from the insurer and shows the appropriate coverage. An invoice would not be an appropriate document.

I'd like to clarify terminology: should we use accredited instead of approved? I was previously advised by an analyst to use approved rather than accredited.

IBHE is NOT an accreditor. IBHE approval is a state of IL required process. Accreditation is a separate private process that leads to other benefits such as TitleIV eligibility.

Are reviewed financial statements accepted as apposed to audited? Do to cost, our institution has opted for reviewed financial statements by our CPA's. We are not required under Illinois law to have an audit.

The requirement is externally prepared financial statements.

If our office space is in-kind, do we need an agreement or can a letter from the donating organization suffice?

There should be documentation presented showing the space provided in-kind and the requirements to remain in the space if agreed upon.

Can you discuss the process for the changes in tuition, etc.

Any changes made to the institution and its programs as previously approved, IBHE approval must be sought. This can be done via submission of the Program/Institution Change Application.

Can you point me to the statute that says the tuition change needs submitted and approved by IBHE before the change is incorporated? How long does it take for approval? The other states we work with takes 3-5 days for approval so I want to ensure I am being proactive. Thanks!

Section 1095.120 School Application and Renewal Fees C) i) ii). It can take up to 6 months for review and approval once the Program/Institution Change application is submitted.