

# The Joint Commission Staffing Certification News

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## Executive Director

*The current economy has caused most of us to carefully consider how we're allocating our resources. When it comes to Joint Commission certification, it's all about value.*

*Achieving Joint Commission certification may result in reduced insurance premiums and increasingly, open the door to concrete business opportunities. Many health care organizations require Joint Commission certification for the health care staffing firms they contract with. We know of more than 100 organizations throughout the country that either require Joint Commission certification for the staffing firms they contract with, or at least inquire whether those firms are considering Joint Commission certification.*

*Joint Commission Health Care Staffing Services Certification means more than just the certificate hanging on the wall of your office. It's a quality indicator for health care organizations that are also watching their bottom line. What better way for your clients to know they're getting the most out of their investment?*

*As always, we appreciate your continued relationship with The Joint Commission. Our goal is to increase the value we provide to you. Contact me at (630) 792-5285 or [msacco@jointcommission.org](mailto:msacco@jointcommission.org).*

Michele M. Sacco, M.S.



## Midpoint check-up offers opportunity for interactive discussion

As of January 1, 2009, all staffing firms that had an initial or recertification review in 2008 or after also will undergo a midpoint evaluation of their performance measurement activities. This



evaluation will be conducted by a Joint Commission reviewer via conference call. The purpose of the call is to offer staffing firms the opportunity to ask questions about their performance measurement activities and other certification topics with a Joint Commission reviewer.

The call will focus on the staffing firm's performance with respect to:

- The three standardized measures (monthly data)
- The firm's analysis of its performance, or Performance Measure Data Report, which became available as part of the Certification Measure Information Process in October 2008
- The firm's ongoing approach to performance improvement, or PI Plan

No negative outcomes will occur as a result of this intracycle event, unless the

reviewer identifies that the staffing firm has not conducted performance measurement and improvement activities since the time of its most recent certification review. The call will be held as close as possible to the staffing firm's one-year certification anniversary. The reviewer will get in touch with the person identified as the intracycle conference call contact to schedule the call.

**Submitting your CMIP data**  
Beginning April 1, for staffing firms with anniversary dates of July 2009 or later, the chief executive officer and primary certification contact will receive an e-mail reminder from The Joint Commission three months prior to their firm's anniversary date. Staffing firms will have 30 days to enter any missing monthly data points for the three measures; complete the PM Data Report for each measure; and review their PI Plan for any updates.

Once the information is entered or updated, firms should use the submission checklist section to submit the CMIP tool to The Joint Commission for the intracycle event. Staffing firms that do not submit the tool on time will receive an e-mail reminder to submit the tool or risk a change in their certification decision.

### From the field

"Joint Commission certification is extremely important for our customers, our field professionals and our internal processes. Our existing customer hospitals, as well as potential ones, are confident that our internal processes are well managed, thorough and compliant. However, the greatest value has come from within—a transformation in our company culture. We see the fruits of our efforts showing up in Workers Compensation injury rates, clinical incidence rates, compliance audit scores and many other vital metrics. We can trace our reputation for quality directly back to the measures and programs formally adopted back in 2005 while preparing for our initial review."

Neil Brady, president and chief executive officer  
The Quest Group, Frisco, Texas

## 2009 CPRs are at your fingertips

The 2009 Certification Participation Requirements are available on The Joint Commission Resources Web Site at <http://www.jcrinc.com/Joint-Commission-Requirements/Health-Care-Staffing-Services/>. Or, access the list from The Joint Commission Web Site. On the home page, mouse over the Certification tab, and click on Health Care Staffing Services. At the bottom of the page, click on Joint Commission Health Care Staffing Requirements. Then, click on Certification Participa-

tion Requirements and 2009 CPRs for HCSS (11/08). The 2009 CPRs were also published in the November 2008 issue of *The Joint Commission Perspectives*.

Please note: The CPRs published in the *2009 Health Care Staffing Services Certification Manual* and October 2008 Update (pages CPR-1 - CPR-8) are incorrect. These publications were printed before the revised 2009 CPRs were approved by The Joint Commission's Accreditation Committee.

## HCSS certification: Reviewers' views

Read what Joint Commission Health Care Staffing Services Certification reviewers Patricia Mounce, R.N., M.S., and JoEllen Ryan, R.N., M.S., say about certification.

*Why did you become a reviewer?*

**Mounce:** To contribute to the quality of patient care, one staffing firm at a time.

*How should staffing firms prepare for the certification review?*

**Mounce:** Appoint a dedicated person to coordinate the certification process, set a timeline, and demonstrate compliance with each standard.

**Ryan:** Use all of The Joint Commission resources that are available to you, especially your account representative and the Standards Interpretation Group.

*What advice would you give staffing firms that are worried about the review process?*

**Mounce:** Eliminate the fear of the review. The goal of the review process is to create a positive experience where learning occurs bilaterally without fear.

**Ryan:** Don't worry. I find that most staffing firms are already performing the proper practices, but just not documenting them.

*Why is certification important for staffing firms to achieve?*

**Ryan:** Certification gives a baseline of quality and opens up dialogue with their clients to try to provide the best patient care possible. It also helps ensure that consistent processes are in place to help meet client needs.

## TakeNote

### List of certified staffing firms on Quality Check

A list of Joint Commission certified health care staffing firms is available at [www.qualitycheck.org](http://www.qualitycheck.org) as a Microsoft Excel file and an Adobe PDF file. The list is updated twice each month, and includes the staffing firm's name, mailing address, certification decision and decision date. To access the list, click on the certified organizations tab and then on the preferred format.

### Look for us

- Staffing Industry Executive Forum, Miami Beach, Fla., March 17-19
- National Association of Physician Recruiters/National Association of Locum Tenens Organizations, Las Vegas, Nev., April 15-18
- South Carolina Hospital Association Roundtable, Myrtle Beach, S.C., May 13-15
- Staffing Industry Analysts Healthcare Staffing Summit, Washington, D.C., Sept. 15-17
- Staffing World, Orlando, Fla., Oct. 20-23

### Informational briefings

The Joint Commission's Health Care Staffing Services Certification program is hosting complimentary briefings for staffing firms that are not yet certified. Attendees can speak directly with industry experts and Joint Commission staff. Attendees also receive a complimentary copy of the *2009 Health Care Staffing Services Certification Manual*. Visit [www.jointcommission.org/hcsbriefings.htm](http://www.jointcommission.org/hcsbriefings.htm) for dates and locations.

### Contact us

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### Ask the expert

**Q:** Do personnel files need to be separated into two files—with one containing personal health information and the other containing general demographic information?

**A:** Health care staffing firms can decide for themselves how to maintain personnel files. The primary consideration is the firm's ability to protect the information. This can be done by restricting access to authorized individuals only. In larger firms there may be several staff members who need access to general demographic information contained in the personnel record. However, access to personal health information is usually limited to just a few individuals. If a firm uses electronic files, it is easy to restrict access to different parts of personnel files by making them password-protected. If your firm uses paper files, it is more difficult to restrict access. That is why many staffing firms choose to separate paper personnel files into two separate records. Whatever method your firm chooses to maintain personnel records, your reviewer may ask you how you arrived at that decision and how that method provides the necessary privacy protection for your firm's staff.