

Great Achievements Come One Step at a Time

A snapshot of the process for
community health centers
to achieve Joint Commission
Ambulatory Care Accreditation
and PCMH Certification



1 Connect with our Ambulatory Business Development team

To get started, simply call Kristen Witalka at 630-792-5292 to learn more about the process and discuss your Ambulatory Accreditation and PCMH Certification needs.

2 Select an accreditation champion and implement an accreditation compliance committee if needed

Many health centers find it helpful to select someone to champion the accreditation process. An accreditation compliance committee can also be helpful in considering your survey readiness. Be sure to include leadership and educate all staff about the accreditation and certification process.

3 Submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to HRSA

The NOI is an online submission form located in your electronic handbook. It gets submitted to HRSA for approval prior to applying for The Joint Commission's accreditation and certification process. The Joint Commission receives notice of your NOI status and will communicate it to you once your project officer has reviewed it.

4 Begin Reviewing the Requirements

Request free 90 day access to our online standards manual (E-dition).

- First select the appropriate setting type, so you can view standards that are relevant to the patient care you provide
- Review the “Required Written Documentation” chapter
- Identify your focus areas for preparation and potential target survey month

For more information on
Joint Commission Ambulatory
Care Accreditation, please
call (630) 792-5286 or visit
us at [jointcommission.org/
AHCprogram](http://jointcommission.org/AHCprogram).



5 Assess Your Readiness

When reviewing the standards, make a list to determine:

- Requirements that are applicable
- Areas of compliance and non-compliance
- If and where policies/procedures might need to be changed
- If you need any help interpreting or meeting the standards, visit www.jointcommission.org/standards

If you are also applying for PCMH Certification, be sure to review the following documents in addition to the standards:

- Self-Assessment tool
- Question and Answer guide

6 Submit The Joint Commission’s Application

You will be sent an online application once we receive your approved NOI status.

- Our team will set up a secure account page for your organization on Joint Commission Connect, your personalized extranet site
- Access the site with your login and password to complete your application
- Indicate your survey ready date, which can be up to 12 months from the time you apply, as well as 15 blackout dates to avoid scheduling an on-site event
- Submit your application when complete. No deposit is due upon submission of your application.

Help is here. Upon submitting the application, you will be assigned a dedicated point-of-contact to assist you with the application and everything after. Find your account executive, Brittnay Hull, on your extranet site.

7 Review & Address Any Identified Gap Areas

Perform mock surveys along with patient and system tracers in order to assess any gaps. Establish a timeline to implement any changes needed to comply with all the standards by the time of your on-site survey.

8 Access Resources & Prepare for Your On-Site Survey

Access your organization’s extranet site to view the Survey Activity Guide which provides all the details of the surveyor(s) onsite agenda. You can also access multiple free resources to you, including:

- Leading Practice Library
- BoosterPaks
- Teleconference webinars

9 Prepare for Your Technical Assistance Visit

Begin preparing for your Technical Assistance (TA) visit if you requested it. Joint Commission Resources (JCR) will contact you about scheduling your 2 day on-site consultation visit. It is typically recommended that health centers have their TA visit 3-4 months in advance of The Joint Commission’s on-site survey, although you can select your preferred date for the TA visit.

10 Participate in Your First Joint Commission Survey

Meet your Joint Commission surveyor(s) and undergo the comprehensive on-site survey. A preliminary, written accreditation report will be made available to you at the end of the survey.

11 Complete Any Post-Survey Follow Up

If further changes are requested:

- Resolve the performance improvement actions
- Report back to your Account Executive within the requested time period, usually about 60 days

12 Celebrate/Publicize Your Accomplishment

When you’ve attained “The Gold Seal of Approval”—let the world know!

- Visit www.jointcommission.org/publicity_kit for tips on promoting your accreditation and certification
- View your listing at www.qualitycheck.org as a Joint Commission-accredited and certified organization
- Don’t forget to report your new status to your liability insurer to see if you qualify for reduced rates

13 Maintain Survey Readiness

Take advantage of many resources to maintain your compliance with Joint Commission requirements.

- Use the Focused Standards Assessment process to continuously improve your organization’s performance in the years between surveys
- Notify your Account Executive of any major changes in your organization
- Check your extranet site periodically for any updates to Joint Commission standards or processes