COVID-19 Webinar for Ambulatory Health Care Accreditation

Q&A With The Joint Commission

April 12, 2022
Today’s Panel of Speakers

**Diane M. Cullen**, MSN, MBA, RN, CIC  
Associate Director  
Standards Interpretation Group  
The Joint Commission

**Herman A. McKenzie**, MBA, CHSP  
Director of Engineering  
Physical Environment Department  
The Joint Commission

**Dana Dunn**, MBA, RN, CNOR, CASC  
Field Director  
Surveyor Management & Development  
The Joint Commission

**Maura Naddy**, MSN, RNC-OB, CJCP  
Senior Associate Director  
SIG Operations and Quality Assurance  
The Joint Commission

**Elizabeth Even**, MSN, RN, CEN  
Associate Director  
Clinical Standards Interpretation  
The Joint Commission

**Kelley Person**  
Associate Director  
Accreditation and Certification Operations  
The Joint Commission
Environment of Care and Life Safety
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the air exchange requirements for procedure rooms and scope cabinets?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the guidelines regarding COVID-19 testing and ventilation?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the requirements for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment?
Vaccination Information
Required Documents

1. Overall COVID vaccination rate of eligible staff, excluding exempted staff
2. A list of all staff, including positions/titles, including COVID Vaccination status
3. All policies regarding health care staff COVID vaccinations
   • Policies for COVID Vaccination exemptions
   • Policies for COVID Vaccination Requirements
   • Policies for mitigation of unvaccinated staff
4. List of newly hired staff in last 60 days
Compliance Timelines
Timelines for **Original 25 States, DC and Territories**

- **1/27/2022 – 2/27/2022**
  - Establish and implement policies and procedures
  - **All staff have at least one dose of vaccine**
- **2/28/2022 – 3/27/2022**
  - Establish and implement policies and procedures
  - **Staff must be 100% Vaccinated***
Timelines for **Additional 24 States**

- **2/14/2022 – 3/14/2022**
  - Establish and implement policies and procedures
  - **All staff have at least one dose of vaccine**
- **3/15/2022 – 4/13/2022**
  - Establish and implement policies and procedures
  - **Staff must be 100% Vaccinated**
Timelines for Texas

• **2/22/2022 – 3/20/2022**
  • Establish and implement policies and procedures
  • **All staff have at least one dose of vaccine**

• **3/21/2022 Forward**
  • Establish and implement policies and procedures
  • **Staff must be 100% vaccinated**
Current FAQ’s

The following is a list of related FAQs:

COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Applicable Entities
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Applicable Staff
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - CMS Definition of 'Fully Vaccinated'
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Exemptions
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Good Faith Efforts
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Required Documents, Policies and Procedures
COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Determination of Compliance
CMS 1135 Waivers
The Department of Health and Human Services released a statement on 01/14/22 stating the PHE was extended.

The renewal effective date is Sunday 01/16/22 and will last for 90 days.

This is the eighth extension of the PHE.

1135 Waivers will remain in effect during the declared PHE.
Looking for more information on CMS 1135 Waivers?

Accredited organizations can learn more by visiting Resources and Tools > Tools > Learn More in their Joint Commission Connect® extranet site.
Recovery and The Joint Commission
Frequent questions you’ve submitted

• Will I have an Onsite or Offsite (virtual) survey?
• How or when will we get a survey?
• What type of instruction have you provided to your surveyors?
• What will that survey process look like, any differences?
• What will the surveyors focus on?
Onsite survey activity

Onsite survey activity has been ongoing with close monitoring of the rise of COVID-19 and impacts on survey activity.

Organizations should continue to monitor the Notification of Scheduled Events section of the Joint Commission Connect page for notification of the scheduled survey.

We are aware that some surveys are past their due dates, CMS is also aware – we will conduct those surveys when we are able to do so.

We are prioritizing initial and past due organizations.
Offsite (virtual) survey

**Offsite (virtual) survey**—we are conducting offsite surveys for Disease Specific Care (DSC), free-standing Behavioral Health Care (BHC) programs, telehealth and sleep centers.

- We continue to monitor COVID/variant cases and retain the ability to expand to more offsite surveys for other programs if necessary; however, our primary focus is onsite surveys when possible.

What is an offsite survey?

- Utilization of Secure Zoom technology for the survey and facility review accessed through the agenda on the Extranet
- Use of a secure SharePoint site for document upload to review pre-survey
- Discussions via webcam (Zoom)
- Review of processes and physical environment via mobile webcam (Zoom)
How do you determine where to conduct onsite surveys?

Community Prevalence Dashboard

- Number of COVID-19 cases are lower with less impact to organizations
- Cases/thousand population and new cases within the county
- Determination that Joint Commission staff can travel to areas safely and find appropriate accommodations

https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/research/operations-support-research/
What instructions have been provided to our surveyors?

- **Follow the most current CDC guidelines**
- Do not travel if you are sick
- Do not travel if you have been in close contact with individuals with known or suspected COVID-19
- Avoid large crowds
- When traveling wear a mask/face covering
- Practice physical distancing
- Practice good hand hygiene

All Joint Commission Surveyors and Reviewers conducting on-site events are fully vaccinated, as defined by CDC.
What instructions have been provided to our surveyors?

- Review and follow individual state department of health specific travel regulations**
- When onsite wear a medical mask and eye protection is encouraged
- **Follow the organizations’ infection prevention and control policies for entry and use of PPE**
- Do NOT enter at risk or confirmed COVID-19 resident rooms
- Do NOT enter rooms where high-risk procedures performed
- The Joint Commission does not have a routine COVID-19 testing program for surveyors

**Joint Commission surveyors are designated as essential workers**
What has changed about the survey process?

The survey process and its components will remain the same however here are some guidelines for the survey:

• Limiting the number of individuals in group sessions
• The use of audio or videoconferencing could be incorporated to safely expand the number of attendees for sessions
• Use of masks will be a routine practice
• Maximize the use of technology to eliminate the number of people needed to sit directly next to an individual for an extended period of time. (For example, screen sharing or projecting medical records)
• Interviewing patients and staff by telephone
• Driving in separate cars to offsite locations
Survey process - continued

• We will NOT Enter at risk or confirmed COVID-19 rooms or homes.
• We will avoid visiting a unit with any confirmed COVID-19 patients when possible.
• Limited physical review of high risk and aerosol generating procedures
• Consider using a simulation and/or distant review of certain activities/procedures
• Practice social/physical distancing during the survey
• Follow “PPE” and risk reduction strategies as established by the CDC
• Limit attendance at group sessions e.g., opening, briefings, system tracers
• Limiting observers or scribes to avoid additional exposure during the survey
What will be the focus of survey activities?

During the opening conference we will have a discussion with you about the impact of the current pandemic and your organization’s response.

- We will discuss both Infection Control and Emergency Management.
- The focus of our survey will not be the timeframe of the public health emergency but the current situation within your organization.
General Questions
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the most frequent concerns identified when surveying ambulatory sites related to COVID, and what tips/tools have you seen that can resolve such concerns?
April 2022 Perspectives

2021 Most Frequently Cited Higher-Risk \(^*\) Accreditation Requirements

Cited from January 1 through December 31, 2021

Ambulatory Health Care

717 SURVEYS CONDUCTED IN 2021

<table>
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Legend:
- Moderate Risk—Pattern — Widespread
- High Risk—Limited — Pattern — Widespread
- Immediate Threat to Health or Safety
Pre-Submitted Questions

What recommendations can The Joint Commission offer facilities for medication backorders and supply shortages that we are continuing to deal with in the pandemic era? Is it better to keep an expired medication on hand and label it as such then not to have?
We survey to law and regulation

The Joint Commission cannot endorse an organization to utilize or store expired medications as this violates both State and Federal Law. However, if the FDA has identified the product and given an allowance, it would be acceptable.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Will there be new standards specifically dealing with recovery from COVID?
New COVID standards

Joint Commission Perspectives®

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE JOINT COMMISSION

Contents

2 Full-Year 2021 Top Standards Noncompliance Data
Noncompliance data for 2021 are now available.

31 APPROVED: Requirements Revised for Home Health Agencies
Seven elements of performance for Joint Commission’s deemed status of home health agencies for Medicare & Medicaid Services final.
Pre-Submitted Questions

During the survey process, what specific areas of infection control will the surveyors be focused on related to the COVID-19 pandemic?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there any new topics related to infection control in regard to COVID?
Pre-Submitted Questions

As a healthcare facility, is it mandatory for organizations to require masking for all staff members?

When will healthcare workers stop having to wear masks on a daily basis while on healthcare facility property per Joint Commission guidance and recommendations?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Our leadership is considering not following CDC guidance for HCPs (such as resource management and information management staff) to mask in our substantial community transmission county because they work in buildings separate from the health clinic. Thoughts?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the guidance for N95/respirators during COVID-19 as transmission risks decrease? Still advised for all AGPs, such as dental procedures, regardless of immunization status, exposure, etc.?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Is it mandatory to ask for a COVID vaccination or PCR negative if the patient wants to have a procedure?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the current requirements for COVID screening for staff workers and patients having procedures done?

Are proof of vaccines/exemptions/COVID testing required? Are temperature checks upon facility entrance required? Etc.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there clear return to work rules for medical staff that are fully vaccinated but may have been exposed to someone with COVID?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the current CDC updates/guidelines for healthcare personnel providing care to patients in ambulatory settings? In Diagnostic Imaging? In Sleep centers? In Telehealth?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Will there be a requirement for a fourth shot (vaccine)?
Pre-Submitted Questions

It’s not just about COVID anymore so how can Infection Preventionists promote the use of basic respiratory hygiene practices during the flu season when mask mandates are dropped?
Resources

- COVID Resources
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/covid-19/

- Standards Interpretation
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/
Time for additional questions
Thank You

We support your efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and hope to provide helpful resources.