

COVID-19 Webinar for Ambulatory Health Care Accreditation

# Q&A With The Joint Commission

April 15, 2021



# Today's Panel

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# Recovery and The Joint Commission

# Your questions

You have asked several questions about our survey process during COVID-19:

- How or when will we get a survey?
- What type of instruction have you provided your surveyors?
- What will that survey process look like, any differences?
- What will the surveyors focus on?

# When and how will survey activity resume?

- Survey activity has been ongoing. We are transitioning from off-site/virtual surveys back to onsite surveys
- As of March 15, 2021, account executives are no longer contacting organizations regarding the scheduling of an on-site event. Organizations should monitor the Notification of Scheduled Events section of the Joint Commission Connect page for notification
- We are aware that surveys are past their due dates, CMS is also aware – we will conduct those surveys when we are able to do so
- We will prioritize initials and past due organizations

# Offsite (virtual) survey

**Offsite (virtual) survey**– we have been transitioning away from this model since March 15th

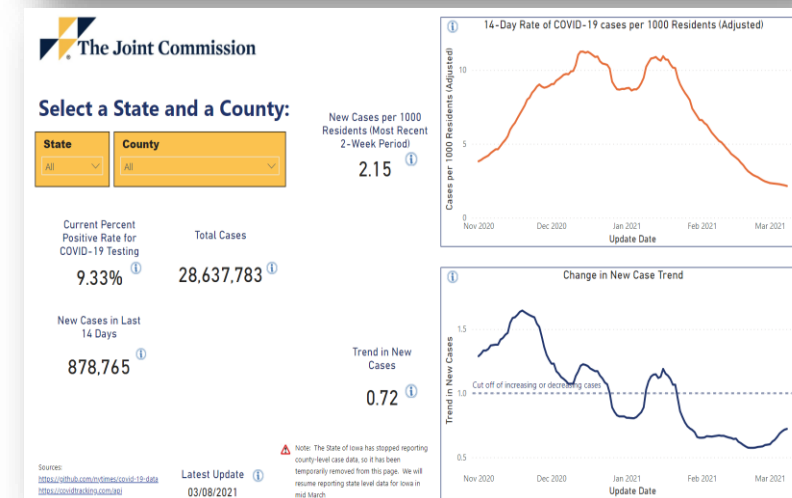
- Surveys will primarily be conducted onsite
- If an offsite event is already in progress, i.e., dry run conducted, the following will be used to conduct the survey:
  - Secure Zoom technology for the survey and facility review
  - Use of a secure SharePoint site for document upload to review pre-survey

# 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 our staff can travel to area safely and find appropriate accommodations

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of The Joint Commission website with a search bar and a 'Login' button. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Resources > Research > Operations Support Research'. The main content area features a section for 'Operations Support Research' with a description: 'Analysis and interpretation of data to inform and support Joint Commission programs and services.' To the right is a 'Research' menu with options for 'Operations Support Research', 'Evaluation Research', and 'Health Services Research'. Below this is the 'COVID Community Prevalence Dashboard' section, which includes a brief description of the dashboard's purpose and a 'View community COVID rates' button.



<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



# 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
- **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 or patient homes

# 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.

# Additional questions

For onsite surveys, should staff/surveyors be vaccinated?

- The Joint Commission does not require surveyors receive a COVID-19 vaccine, although it is encouraged
- Many surveyors are vaccinated

Can we provide additional avoid dates?

- We would ask that you do not provide additional avoid dates due to the difficulty in scheduling surveys – avoid dates already submitted will be honored to the extent we can do so.

# Environment of Care and Life Safety

# Pre-Submitted Questions

When do you consider an O<sub>2</sub> tank empty? 700#, 1000# or as soon as it is in the red on the gauge?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Joint Commission requires positive air flow in ORs. COVID recommendations say we should have negative airflow to reduce possible viral load being pushed out into facility. Any recommendations on this subject?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Are centers required to document the anesthesia machine number in the patient record, if so, where should this be documented? In the OR record? or the Anesthesia record?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

We have purchased a Recirculator II HEPA for our facilities -- does that meet standards?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If we have unused exam rooms with equipment that needs repairs (such as an exam chair with a tear in the material), do we need to label the room as storage or you do have other guidance for unused equipment not in budget to repair yet?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Please review annual evaluation of emergency preparedness and what types of issues should we document?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Does The Joint Commission require Construction Infection Control Risk Assessments for Ambulatory settings? Is the completed and approved Construction Infection Control Risk Assessment required to be visually displayed? How long do we keep documentation records for?

# Infection Control Practices

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Where can I find COVID-19 updates that apply to my setting?

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

When can we consider ending processes that were put into place for the COVID-19 public health emergency such as screening people entering the building and other processes put into place by the organization?

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>



# Pre-Submitted Questions

When can we stop pre-procedural COVID-19 testing and if a patient has received their complete COVID-19 vaccination series, do they still need to have pre-procedure COVID-19 testing?

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If a patient has not been tested for COVID-19 and does not have any signs or symptoms, how should the room be cleaned after the patient leaves?

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Should sleep centers consider using disposable airflow monitors during the COVID-19 pandemic?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do staff need to wear a N95 during colonoscopy if the patient has tested negative for COVID-19 and quarantined for 72 hours?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Should organizations still consider reprocessing N95 masks?

## **Resources:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How would The Joint Commission expect to see COVID-19 documented in the Infection Control Plan?

# CMS 1135 Waivers

# Pre-Submitted Questions

When does the 1135 Waiver expire?



# Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension

The Department of Health and Human Services released a statement on Thursday, 01/07/21 stating the PHE was extended

The renewal effective date is Thursday 01/21/21 and will last for 90 days

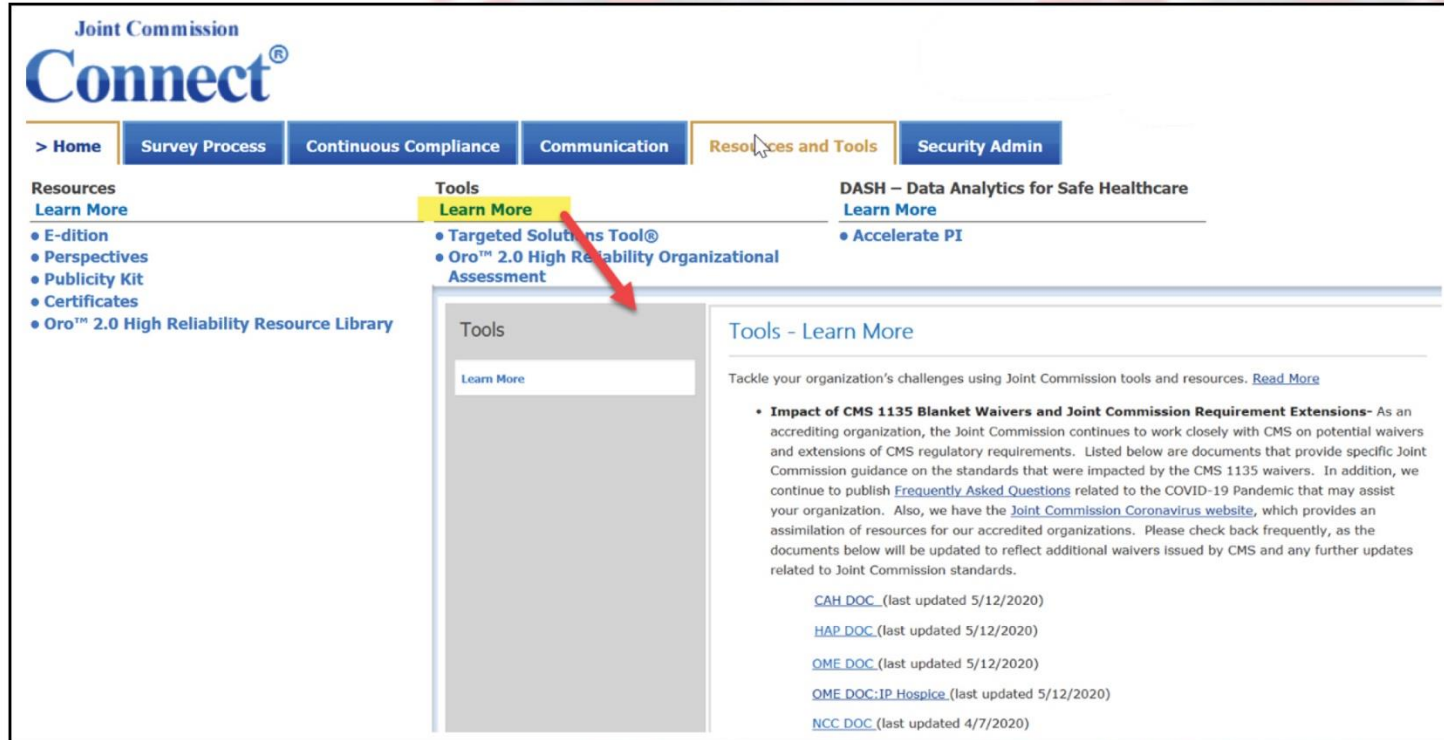
This is the fourth extension of the PHE

★ 1135 Waivers will remain in effect during the declared PHE

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Does waiver apply to ambulatory health care centers; directed towards emergency and EOC drill inspection requirements - do we need to conduct the quarterly drills?

# Looking for more information on CMS 1135 Waivers?



The screenshot shows the Joint Commission Connect website interface. The navigation menu includes: > Home, Survey Process, Continuous Compliance, Communication, Resources and Tools (highlighted), and Security Admin. Under Resources, there is a 'Learn More' link and a list of items: E-dition, Perspectives, Publicity Kit, Certificates, and Oro™ 2.0 High Reliability Resource Library. Under Tools, there is a 'Learn More' link (highlighted with a red arrow) and a list of items: Targeted Solutions Tool@ and Oro™ 2.0 High Reliability Organizational Assessment. Under DASH – Data Analytics for Safe Healthcare, there is a 'Learn More' link and a list of items: Accelerate PI. The main content area shows a 'Tools - Learn More' section with the text: 'Tackle your organization's challenges using Joint Commission tools and resources. [Read More](#)'. Below this is a bullet point: '• Impact of CMS 1135 Blanket Waivers and Joint Commission Requirement Extensions- As an accrediting organization, the Joint Commission continues to work closely with CMS on potential waivers and extensions of CMS regulatory requirements. Listed below are documents that provide specific Joint Commission guidance on the standards that were impacted by the CMS 1135 waivers. In addition, we continue to publish [Frequently Asked Questions](#) related to the COVID-19 Pandemic that may assist your organization. Also, we have the [Joint Commission Coronavirus website](#), which provides an assimilation of resources for our accredited organizations. Please check back frequently, as the documents below will be updated to reflect additional waivers issued by CMS and any further updates related to Joint Commission standards.' Below the text are five links: [CAH.DOC](#) (last updated 5/12/2020), [HAP.DOC](#) (last updated 5/12/2020), [OME.DOC](#) (last updated 5/12/2020), [OME.DOC:IP Hospice](#) (last updated 5/12/2020), and [NCC.DOC](#) (last updated 4/7/2020).

Accredited organizations can learn more by visiting **Resources and Tools > Tools > Learn More** in their *Joint Commission Connect*® extranet site.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will we be surveyed if we're still using 1135 waivers?

Time for a few  
more questions

# Resources

- COVID Resources

- <https://www.jointcommission.org/covid-19/>

- Standards Interpretation

- <https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/>

# Thank You

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

