

March 9, 2020

Dear Customers,

As you may be aware, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has recently published some guidance to State Survey Agencies and Accrediting Organizations regarding the current outbreak of COVID-19. The Joint Commission leadership and CMS have reached an agreement on how to conduct surveys during the outbreak of COVID-19.

Currently, we are **still conducting surveys in most places** and will continue to do so until it is no longer safe for our employees. A key factor in this determination is the degree of community spread. Please note:

- We have cancelled surveys in Seattle, WA indefinitely, because of the evidence of sustained community spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- We will continue to survey in areas where there is no evidence of sustained community spread.
- In those areas in which a state of emergency has been declared, we will not survey health care organizations in circumstances that would prevent the organization from deriving the full benefit of the survey.
- Our surveys will have an intensified focus on infection control processes and emergency management planning.
- We are using the same approach in our international programs and have suspended travel to countries with sustained community spread. At present, these include China, South Korea, Iran, Italy, Japan, France, Germany, and Spain.

This is clearly a rapidly evolving situation. We will continue to adjust our policies in accordance with the principles noted above.

The Joint Commission is available to help accredited organizations develop an appropriate response to this threat. We will provide regular updates, but please feel free to contact your account executive with specific questions about managing the novel COVID-19 threat. Account executives can connect customers with the appropriate infection prevention resources.

Additional information is available on the [CDC](#) or [WHO](#) websites.

Sincerely,

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