



APPROVED: The Joint Commission Continues to Reduce Requirements

Requirements Reduced in Most Accreditation Programs

Last year, The Joint Commission reviewed all its hospital accreditation requirements, identified those above and beyond the US Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation (CoPs), and reduced those requirements for hospitals, as well as related requirements across accreditation programs (see the November 2022 and January 2023 issues of *Perspectives* for more information about this project). The second phase of this project reviewed requirements in The Joint Commission’s other accreditation programs that are above and beyond CoPs. The continued work on this initiative will further help health care organizations by eliminating requirements that do not add value to accreditation surveys so that the organizations and surveyors can focus on strategies and structures that support quality and safety.

The Joint Commission has completed the second part of this review and has reduced and revised requirements for **ambulatory care** organizations, **behavioral health care and human services** organizations, **critical access hospitals**, **home care** organizations, **hospitals**, **laboratories**, **nursing care centers**, and **office-based surgery practices**. These reductions and revisions will be **effective August 27, 2023**.

The review included elements of performance (EPs) that met all the following criteria:

- The EP does not support a CMS CoP or state regulation.
- The EP has been in effect for more than three years.
- The EP has been scored five times or less during full triennial surveys between 2017 and 2019 (the three years prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency).

Joint Commission staff reviewed each of the selected EPs and reported the possible reasons the scoring was low, including the following:

- Organizations are compliant with the requirement because they have adopted it as a standardized practice.
- The EP is redundant to another requirement.
- Compliance with the EP is difficult to assess objectively and consistently during surveys.

This phase of the review resulted in deleting or consolidating EPs across most accreditation programs, as well as making minor revisions to some EPs to make them more effective. See the following table for the number of affected EPs for each accreditation program.

| Accreditation Program | Deleted or Consolidated EP(s) | Revised EP(s) |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Ambulatory Care | 31 | 13 |
| Behavioral Health Care and Human Services | 20 | 5 |
| Critical Access Hospital | 23 | 6 |
| Home Care | 24 | 7 |
| Hospital | 7 | 4 |
| Laboratory and Point-of-Care Testing | 64 | 32 |
| Nursing Care Center | 19 | 3 |
| Office-Based Surgery Practice | 22 | 11 |

The deleted and revised requirements are posted on the [Prepublication Standards](#) page of The Joint Commission's website and will publish online in the fall interim 2023 E-edition® update to the *Comprehensive Manual for Ambulatory Care (CAMAC)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care and Human Services (CAMBHC)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Critical Access Hospitals (CAMCAH)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Home Care (CAMHC)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals (CAMH)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Laboratory and Point-of-Care Testing (CAMLAB)*, *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Nursing Care Centers (CAMNCC)*, and *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Office-Based Surgery Practices (CAMOBS)*. For those who purchase them, the fall 2023 *CAMBHC* and *CAMH* hard-copy update service and 2024 hard-copy accreditation manuals will include these revisions.

For questions regarding these requirements, please contact the [Department of Standards and Survey Methods](#). 