

Behavioral Health Care Accreditation



An Overview of the Accreditation Process



The Value of Joint Commission Accreditation



The Joint Commission Past and Present

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission is the nation's leader in accreditation, with more than 65 years experience across the full spectrum of health organizations. The Joint Commission is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization accrediting or certifying over 21,000 health care organizations or programs.

Beginning in 1969, The Joint Commission established the Behavioral Health Care Accreditation Program to encourage safe, high quality care, treatment or services to individuals receiving mental health or addiction treatment services. Joint Commission accreditation is a widely recognized standard for quality services. Today, The Joint Commission accredits over 3,000 behavioral health organizations across the U.S. in a wide variety of settings.

The Joint Commission and its Gold Seal of Approval® are a widely recognized benchmark representing the most comprehensive evaluation process in behavioral and physical health care. The Joint Commission’s role in behavioral health care and human services is well established and nationally renowned. Joint Commission accreditation benefits your organization by:

Giving you a competitive advantage

Achieving Joint Commission accreditation is a statement to the community and the people you serve that your organization is committed to providing care, treatment, or services of the highest quality. It helps set you apart from other behavioral health organizations and provides a mark of distinction.

Assisting recognition from insurers, associations, and other third parties

Many payors, regulatory agencies, and managed care contractors require Joint Commission accreditation for reimbursement, certification or licensure, and as a key element of their participation agreements. Others recognize Joint Commission accreditation in lieu of their own surveys, reducing duplicate events.

Improving liability insurance coverage

By enhancing risk management efforts, accreditation may improve access to, or reduce the cost of liability insurance coverage. Find a list of liability insurers that recognize Joint Commission accreditation at www.jointcommission.org/BHCins/

Helping organize and strengthen your improvement efforts

Accreditation encompasses state-of-the-art performance improvement concepts that help you provide and continuously improve your process of care, treatment or services.

Enhancing staff education

The accreditation process is designed to be educational. Joint Commission surveyors offer suggestions for approaches and strategies that may help your organization better meet the accreditation requirements and provide state-of-the-art operations.

TYPES OF SETTINGS ACCREDITED

Below is an example of some of the programs and settings accredited under The Joint Commission’s Behavioral Health Care accreditation program.

- Addictions services/programs
- Behavioral health homes
- Community mental health centers
- Corrections services/programs
- Crisis stabilization (24-hour acute care)
- Day programs (intensive outpatient services, adult day care, partial hospitalization programs, etc.)
- Eating disorder treatment
- Foster care (traditional and therapeutic)
- Group homes
- Mental health rehabilitation (community support) services
- Opioid treatment programs
- Outdoor behavioral health programs
- Outpatient programs
- Prevention/health promotion services
- Services that support recovery and resilience
- Technology-based (online) services
- Therapeutic schools (Day or 24-hour)
- Transitional/supervised/supportive living

Don't see your setting or services? We can help. Call 630-792-5771.



Application Fees

The cost of accreditation is based on the on-site survey fee, plus an annual fee each year. The annual fee for an organization is determined based on the organization's size and complexity. Additionally, organizations are billed an on-site survey fee after the survey has been performed. The on-site survey fee is designed to cover the costs of performing a survey; it is due upon receipt.



Billing Process

The Joint Commission accreditation cycle is 3 years and the cost of accreditation is divided over this 3-year period. Generally, customers can expect to pay 60% of the accreditation fee for the first year (on-site survey fee plus annual fee), 20% the second year (annual fee), and 20% the third year (annual fee).



Application & Deposit

The application is submitted with a \$1,700 deposit, which is applied toward your accreditation fee. It can be paid by check or credit card via mail, phone or online. This deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable.

To calculate your accreditation fees, please request the behavioral health care accreditation fees worksheet from us at (630) 792-5771 or BHC@jointcommission.org; or call the Pricing Unit at (630) 792-5115.

Eligibility for Accreditation

Any behavioral health care organization may apply for Joint Commission accreditation under the standards in the *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care (CAMBHC)* if the following requirements are met:

- For organizations providing foster care, the organization has a minimum of three foster homes with two homes caring for at least one individual.
- For organizations providing methadone detoxification, at least three individuals have been treated.
- For all other organizations, three individuals, with at least two active at the time of the initial on-site survey, have been provided care, treatment or services.

Not sure you meet eligibility requirements?

We can help. Call 630-792-5771.

Applying For Accreditation

Application

This electronic document provides us with essential information about your organization, including: ownership, demographics, and types and volume of services/programs provided, which helps us plan your survey. Your Joint Commission application for accreditation is housed on a secure organization-specific extranet site called Joint Commission Connect® that is found at www.jointcommission.org.

Requesting an Application

To request an application:

- Phone: 630-792-5771 or email: BHC@jointcommission.org

Accessing and Submitting the Application

After your request is processed, you will receive an email providing log-in information to access the application. (See 1 next page). When completing the application for accreditation, you should identify all of the services/programs that you provide and the location of each site. It is important that all these are listed so The Joint Commission can determine which accreditation requirements apply to your organization and assign appropriate surveyor(s) for an appropriate number of days.

Once complete, submit the application with a \$1,700 deposit, which is applied toward your cost of accreditation. Submitting the application without the deposit will delay the scheduling of your on-site survey.

Accreditation Preparation & Support

The Joint Commission wants you to succeed with your accreditation. To help you prepare, The Joint Commission offers a variety of hands-on support and technical resources.

Joint Commission Connect®

Joint Commission Connect is a personal extranet site, dedicated to supporting your organization.

1 Here your organization can access the application, make fee payments, and maintain accreditation expectations throughout your ongoing relationship with The Joint Commission.

2 Account Executive Listing

Once you obtain access to Joint Commission Connect, you will be assigned a behavioral health care Account Executive who will:

- Be the primary contact between your organization and The Joint Commission
- Coordinate the planning and scheduling of your on-site survey
- Cover policies, procedures, accreditation issues or services, and inquiries throughout the accreditation process
- Update changes to your demographic information including address, contact name(s), services, etc.
- Support your post-survey activities.

3 Survey Activity Guide

Accessible via Joint Commission Connect, the Survey Activity Guide is dedicated to preparing you for the on-site visit and includes:

– Survey Activity Details

A thorough, detailed description of the events that comprise a typical 2-day on-site review.

– Sample Survey Agenda

A helpful, hour-by-hour outline of the survey, showing you what to expect, whom to have available and what you'll need throughout the on-site visit.

– Ready-to-Go List

A list of specific documents and information you'll need for the surveyor planning sessions on day one of your survey.

The screenshot displays the Joint Commission Connect interface for ABC Behavioral Health Care. At the top, the site name and logo are visible, along with the organization's address: ABC Behavioral Health Care, 11 Main St., Anytown, USA, HCO 0000. A navigation bar includes a link to 'Accreditation Home'. Below this, a 'WHAT'S DUE' table lists 'Measure of Success' due on 11/27/2012. A 'NEW REPORTS' section lists 'Award Letters' and 'Accreditation Reports' with dates 7/30/2012 and 7/30/2012 respectively. A notification banner for 'Coming in November - PPR changes to FSA' is present. The main content area is titled 'Accreditation Tools' and is divided into three sections: 'Continuous Compliance Tools' (with a red circle '2' next to it), 'Application for Accreditation' (with a red circle '1' next to it), and 'Pre-Survey' (with a red circle '3' next to it). The 'Continuous Compliance Tools' section lists items like 'Periodic Performance Review (PPR)', 'e-Statement of Conditions', 'Complaint Response', 'Self-Report Sentinel Event', 'Sentinel Event Activities', 'E-dition', 'Standards BoosterPaks™', 'Laboratory Tools', and 'Perspectives'. The 'Application for Accreditation' section lists 'General Application for Accreditation', 'Laboratory Application for Accreditation', and 'Quality Check Service Profile'. The 'Pre-Survey' section lists 'Survey Planning Tools' and 'Survey Activity Guide'. A sidebar on the left provides contact information for the 'Your Accreditation Account Executive', Laura O'Keefe, including phone number (630) 792-5233, email lo'keefe@jointcommission.org, and office hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. CT). A 'Quicklinks' section at the bottom left includes a link for 'Official Email'.

Standards Interpretation Group (SIG)

This group functions as a standards “help desk.” Contact SIG for information about interpreting and applying any behavioral health accreditation requirements including Performance Improvement, Life Safety Code, or Care, Treatment or Services. This resource is available through the Joint Commission website at www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/jcfaq.aspx



Your On-site Survey

The Joint Commission's accreditation process helps organizations improve the safety and quality of care, treatment or services. The process begins with an on-site survey that assesses compliance with Joint Commission accreditation requirements. Typically, on-site surveys are conducted by one surveyor for two to four days, and involve the following:

- 'Tracing' the individual served's experience – looking at programs and services provided by various staff and departments within the organization, as well as 'hand-offs' between them
- On-site observations and interviews with staff, individuals served, and families (where appropriate)
- Review of documents provided by the organization
- Assessment of the safety of the physical facility, if applicable

Scheduling your First Survey

Your first Joint Commission accreditation survey needs to be scheduled within twelve months from the time we receive your application for accreditation. In the application, you'll indicate the date you will be ready for your initial on-site survey. The Joint Commission will then schedule the survey as soon thereafter as possible.

You can also indicate 15 dates that you would not like the survey to be conducted. Your account executive will work with you to schedule your survey, and you will have at least 30 days notice of the exact date that the surveyor(s) will be there.

Please note that the accreditation award will always be for a three-year term.

Early Survey Option

The Early Survey Policy allows an organization new to Joint Commission accreditation to enter the accreditation process in two stages. Available for new organizations and for those already established, the Early Survey Option is different than a normal, full survey in that this option consists of two on-site visits. For an organization not yet providing care, treatment or services, this option makes it possible to set up the business operations on a foundation of compliance with administrative and organizational requirements before the first individuals are served. For an established organization it provides accreditation with more intensive consultation/education during the first of two surveyor visits.

“Bottom line, Joint Commission accreditation helps us attract referrals who might not look at us otherwise. The Gold Seal gives us instant credibility. We have facilities in different parts of the country, and when families choose a location, they know that each program provides the same high quality care no matter where it is located.”

Joint Commission Customer



Your Surveyors: Behavioral Health Care Professionals

Joint Commission Behavioral Health Care field surveyors are behavioral health care professionals who understand the day-to-day issues that confront you and have the hands-on expertise to help you resolve them. The Behavioral Health Care surveyor cadre is composed of psychologists, social workers, behavioral health care nurses, and administrators with experience in behavioral health care. Each surveyor conducts approximately 12 - 15 site visits per year. This extensive experience helps them collect and share good practices across organizations.

The Joint Commission ensures surveyor consistency by providing several weeks of initial training and supervision followed by yearly continuing education to keep surveyors up-to-date on advances in quality-related performance evaluation. A rigorous training process and certification examination must be successfully completed before becoming a Joint Commission behavioral health surveyor. This ongoing training and supervision helps ensure that your on-site survey is an educational process, not just a compliance exercise.

The Joint Commission evaluates its surveyors' performance continually throughout the year. Many Joint Commission surveyors are also currently practicing in the behavioral health care field and thus appreciate your organization's mission as well as understand your perspective of the accreditation experience.

Tracer Methodology

The Tracer Method is a key component of every on-site survey. It uses the individual's care, treatment or service experience as the basis from which to assess compliance with applicable accreditation requirements. The surveyor(s) will follow the individual's experience with care, treatment or services throughout the organization. Tracers allow the surveyor(s) to identify performance issues in one or more of the steps of the care, treatment or service process.

SAFER® Matrix

Your post-survey findings will be plotted on our proprietary SAFER matrix, which allows you to easily identify their risk level and how systemic the issues were found to be across your organization.

“I am always impressed by the experience, patience, and thoroughness of our surveyors. With The Joint Commission as a partner, I feel like we have a wise mentor prodding us to do better, to think more clearly, and to be more efficient.”

Joint Commission Customer

Accreditation Requirements

The Joint Commission’s *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care (CAMBHC)* is the place to begin when preparing for accreditation. This manual is an excellent tool to help your group become organized and established. Available online, the manual has a filtering tool so you can easily determine which accreditation requirements apply to your organization’s unique setting(s), program(s), service(s), and population(s). It is comprised of the following chapters, which are found in alphabetical order.

ACCREDITATION MANUAL CHAPTERS	
Care, Treatment, and Services	Addresses the screening/assessment of individuals served and the planning and delivery of care, treatment or services provided, as well as monitoring and determining outcomes of care, treatment or services provided.
Emergency Management	Address an organization’s plans and readiness to face emergency situations.
Environment of Care, Treatment or Services	Measure how well a safe, functional and effective environment is being maintained for both individuals served and staff in the organization’s facilities, if applicable.
Human Resources Management	Processes for staff management including competency assessment.
Infection Prevention and Control	Addresses how the behavioral health provider identifies and reduces the risk of acquiring and spreading infections among individuals served.
Information Management	How well the behavioral health care provider obtains, manages and uses information to provide, coordinate and integrate care, treatment or services.
Leadership	Reviews structure and relationships of leadership, the maintenance of a culture of safety, quality and operational performance.
Life Safety	These requirements apply to organizations providing a 24 hour care living environment and apply only to the buildings in which individuals served sleep/live.
Medication Management	Address medication use processes including prescribing/ ordering; preparation and dispensing (pharmacy); administration and monitoring of effect, as applicable
Performance Improvement	Focuses on how well an organization designs processes; measures its performance; assesses its performance; and, ultimately, improves its performance.
Record of Care	This chapter contains requirements related to the components of a complete clinical/case record.
Rights of the Individual	Informed consent, receiving information, participating in decision making, and services provided to respect the rights of the individual served.
Waived Testing	Waived tests refer to the least complex tests, approved for home use or listed in the CLIA regulations as having a low risk for incorrect results. Covers policies, staff competency, quality control and record keeping.

Accessing the Accreditation Requirements

Joint Commission standards for behavioral health care settings are available in both print and electronic format and can be accessed through a variety of means.

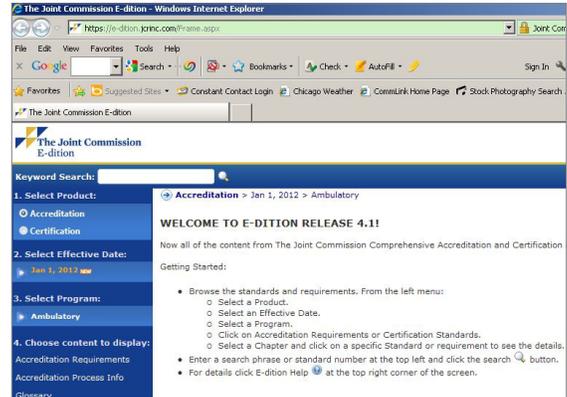
E-DITION (ELECTRONIC ACCREDITATION MANUAL)

Attributes

- Web-based accreditation manual accessed electronically
- Filters applicable standards by selection of setting (e.g., mental health facility, foster care, substance use, etc.)

How to Access

- Request a 90-day trial at:
<http://pages.jointcommission.org/BHCE.html>
- One free license sent upon receipt of application and deposit



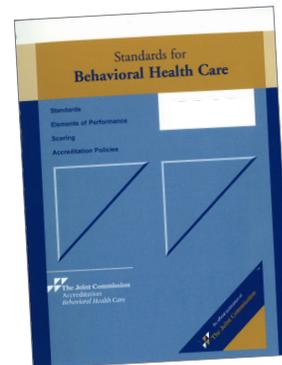
CAMBHC (PRINTED ACCREDITATION MANUAL)

Attributes

- Standards for all Behavioral Health Care settings/ programs/populations
- Applicability grid determines which standards apply to your unique organization

How to Access

- Purchase at: www.jcinc.com/2019-accreditation-standards-books/



Want to view the standards? Request a free 90-day trial at <http://pages.jointcommission.org/BHCE.html>

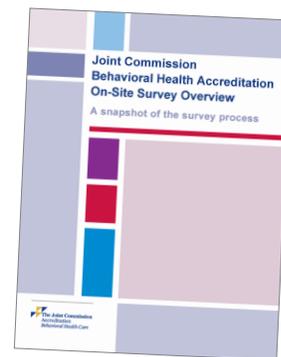
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ON-SITE SURVEY

Attributes

- Handy guide for the on-site survey process and post-survey activities
- Features a sample survey agenda and a guide to the next steps after you have been accredited

How to Access

- Download the document at www.jointcommission.org/BHCS under "The Accreditation Process"



Preparation Timeline: Organizations Requesting a First Survey

	JOINT COMMISSION ACTIVITY	YOUR ACTIVITY
Upon receipt of your request for an application.	Email message sent with access to the electronic application for accreditation.	Staff member(s) with knowledge of your organization’s services/programs, sites, and volume should complete and return the application for accreditation with a \$1,700 non-refundable/non-transferable deposit for initial survey.
Upon receipt of your application for accreditation and deposit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are assigned an Account Executive. – You will receive a complimentary copy of E-dition, our online accreditation manual. – You are given access to a complimentary 6-month online subscription to <i>Perspectives</i>, the official newsletter of The Joint Commission. 	<p>Work with your account executive to schedule your survey. It should be within 12 months of your application submission date.</p> <p>Log on and gain familiarity with your “Joint Commission Connect” extranet site, and review the “Survey Activity Guide” posted there for in-depth information on what happens during an on-site survey.</p>
30 days before the On-Site Survey	Verification of survey dates and name(s) of surveyor(s) are communicated.	Call your Account Executive promptly if you have questions.
On-site Survey	Surveyor(s) arrive for your on-site survey. At the conclusion of the survey, you receive a copy of the summary report, which details the preliminary findings during the on-site survey.	During the survey, staff should be available as outlined on the survey agenda (See the Survey Activity Guide posted on your “Joint Commission Connect” website).
2 – 10 days after survey	Your final report detailing your survey findings and your organization’s accreditation decision is posted on your organization’s extranet site. An email is sent to alert you that the final report has been posted. The invoice for the on-site fee is posted.	Review any findings and make plans for corrections (submitting an Evidence of Standards Compliance report) within the specified time ranges, usually 60 days.

JOINT COMMISSION ACTIVITY		YOUR ACTIVITY
Within 45 or 60 days after final report is posted	The Joint Commission reviews any Evidence of Standards Compliance reports you submitted.	For any accreditation requirements scored as partial or non-compliant, you submit your Evidence of Standards Compliance to The Joint Commission, which identifies the action(s) taken and, if indicated, the measure(s) of success you will track over the next four months to show compliance is sustained.
Monthly	Each accredited organization receives an electronic copy of <i>Perspectives</i> , which is the official source for updates to standards, policies, and procedures.	Staff should review all changes featured in <i>Perspectives</i> to keep abreast of changes and developments in the accreditation requirements and survey process.
Annually	Invoice for annual fee is posted in January to organization’s secured extranet site.	Organization updates data contained in its application for accreditation.
Annually (except for a year in which an on-site survey is conducted)		<p>The Focused Standards Assessment form should be completed by the organization and submitted to The Joint Commission.</p> <p>Complimentary consultation with the Joint Commission’s Standards Interpretation Group is available. Staff should review the updates to act on new and modified standards and elements of performance, scoring guidelines, policies, and procedures.</p>
Within 30 days of any significant organizational changes (as defined in the <i>CAMBHC</i>)	An update form for this purpose can be found on the organization’s extranet site, or email the information to your account executive. A decision about appropriate follow-up will be made based upon the type and extent of the change.	The organization must notify The Joint Commission (via letter, fax, or e-mail) of any significant change in the organization (as defined in the “Official Accreditation Policies and Procedures” chapter in the accreditation manual).

Telephone and Website Directory

Getting Started

- How to get started
- Overall behavioral health accreditation information
- Free webinars
- Cost worksheet/price quotes
- Free trial of the standards
- Requesting an application

CONTACT: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ACCREDITATION TEAM

Phone: 630-792-5771

Email: BHC@jointcommission.org

Website: www.jointcommission.org/BHC

Also, visit these pages beginning with www.jointcommission.org

/BHC

General behavioral health accreditation information

/BHCS

Information about preparing for accreditation, including free webinars

/BHCA

Information about maintaining behavioral health accreditation

/BHH

Information about Behavioral Health Home Certification

/BHCins

List of liability insurers offering discounts to accredited organizations



Managing the Accreditation Process

- Completing my application
- Scheduling a survey date
- Specific issues related to ongoing accreditation

CONTACT: YOUR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Phone: 630-792-3007

Standards

- Interpreting and complying with specific behavioral health care accreditation requirements

CONTACT: THE STANDARDS INTERPRETATION GROUP

Website: www.jointcommission.org/Standards_information/jcfaq.aspx

Manuals, Education, and Training

- Purchasing print accreditation manuals
- Registering for a Joint Commission education program or conference
- Training resources for staff

CONTACT: JOINT COMMISSION RESOURCES (JCR)

Phone: 877-223-6866

Email: jrcustomerservice@pbd.com

Website: www.jcrinc.com

Fees

- Accreditation fee questions
- How to handle my application deposit

CONTACT: THE JOINT COMMISSION PRICING UNIT

Phone: 630-792-5115

Email: pricingunit@jointcommission.org