The Joint Commission

COVID-19 Webinar for Home Care Accreditation

Q&A With The Joint Commission

September 14, 2021

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General Questions

Pre-Submitted Questions

Are we able to hold off on doing aide supervisory visits because of the pandemic -- less traffic going into the patient's home?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Do we need to provide 2020 QAPI reports when the surveyor arrives?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you provide an update regarding telehealth face-to-face encounters?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you provide recommendations for hospice volunteer involvement in office versus patient contact?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

How long can we continue to do telephonic assessments in place of in-person patient assessments to generate POCs and MD orders etc.?

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Recovery and The Joint Commission

Your questions

You have had several questions about our return to survey:

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

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When and how will survey activity resume?

- Survey activity is being conducted in low-risk areas – including Home Care
- Low risk criteria
  - Number of COVID-19 cases are lower and less impact to organizations
  - the # cases/thousand population and new cases within the county
  - Determination that our staff can travel to that area safely and find appropriate accommodations.
- **The AE will no longer contact organizations regarding the scheduling of an on-site event.** Organizations should continue to monitor the Notification of Scheduled Events section of the Joint Commission Connect page for notification on the first day of survey.
- 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.
- Prioritized initials and past due organizations. We will also be looking for organizations due in the next few months that meet the low-risk criteria and are currently ready for survey.

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The Joint Commission is requiring staff (surveyors) that interact with organizations to be fully vaccinated by October 18, 2021

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What instructions have been provided to our field staff ?

- Do not travel if you are sick
- Do not travel if you have been in close contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients
- When traveling they are required to wear a mask/face covering
- **Required to wear a mask on survey and follow the organizations' guidelines. The organization will provide the PPE to the surveyor as required by their policy.**
- Practice physical distancing
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Follow CDC guidelines

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What has changed about the on-site survey process?

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

- **Practicing safe social distancing:** Limit the number of individuals in group sessions, minimize the number of staff who accompany a surveyor during tracer activities. Drive in separate vehicles to home visits. Interviewing patients and staff by telephone or virtual home visits.

- **Wearing personal protective equipment:** The surveyors are required to wear face masks, we are asking that organizations provide masks and/or other PPE to surveyors based on the organization's policy.

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What has changed about the on-site survey process?

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

- **Utilization of enhanced technology:** The goal is to maximize technology to support social distancing. This may be accomplished through screen sharing, or projection to review EMR and interviewing patients and staff.
- Surveyors will NOT Enter at risk or confirmed COVID-19 homes.
- Surveyor will have limited physical review of high risk and aerosol generating procedures
- Surveyor can consider using a simulation and/or distant review of certain activities/procedures.

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Offsite (Virtual) Survey

- **Offsite (virtual) survey**– may be scheduled for some organizations who meet eligibility criteria
- Offsite event is a combination of:
    - Secure Zoom technology for the survey and facility review
    - Use of a secure SharePoint site for document upload to review pre-survey
- A dry run test of technology will be conducted prior to the event
- Most offsite events will have a follow-up onsite event.

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What will be the focus of survey activities?

During the opening conference, the surveyor 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.

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Additional information

- 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.

- If an onsite survey is not possible in your area, your AE will contact your organization to determine whether the survey can be conducted off site with an onsite evaluation taking place for those who meet the follow-up requirement.

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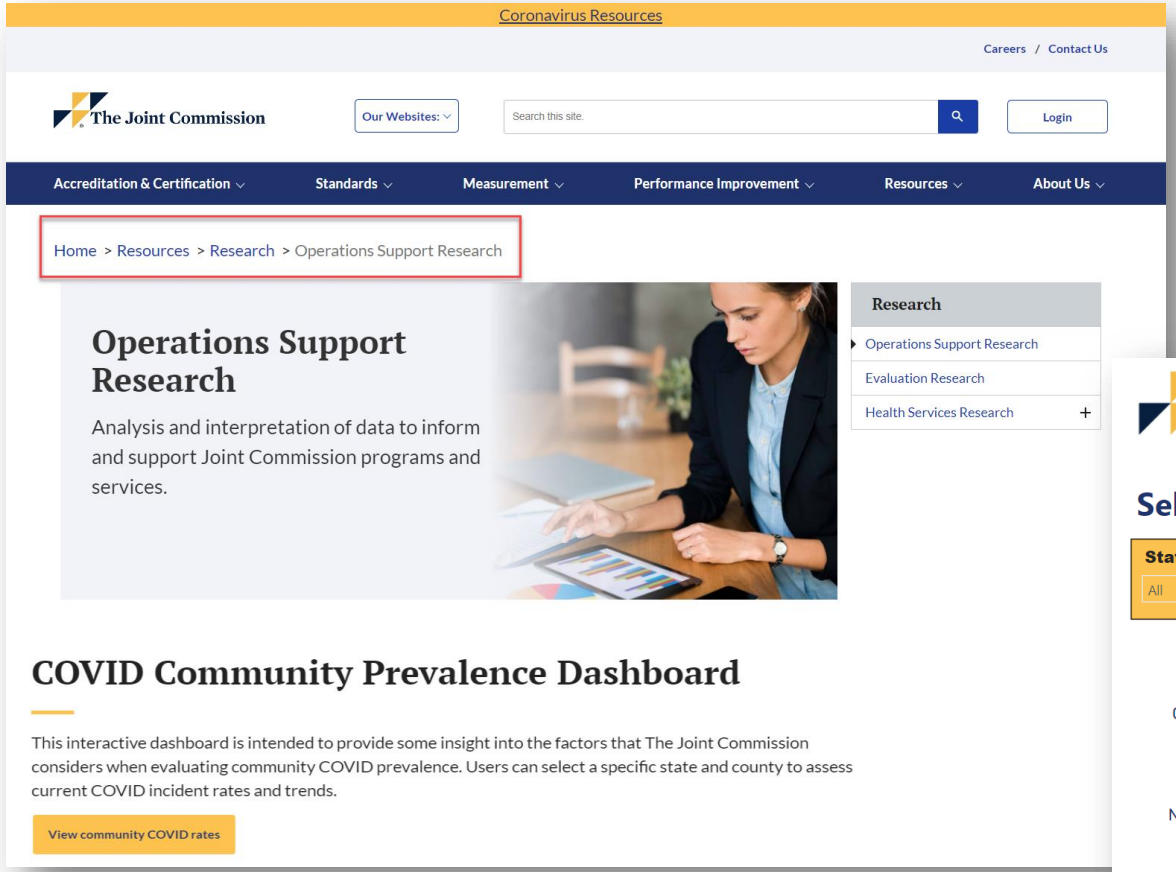
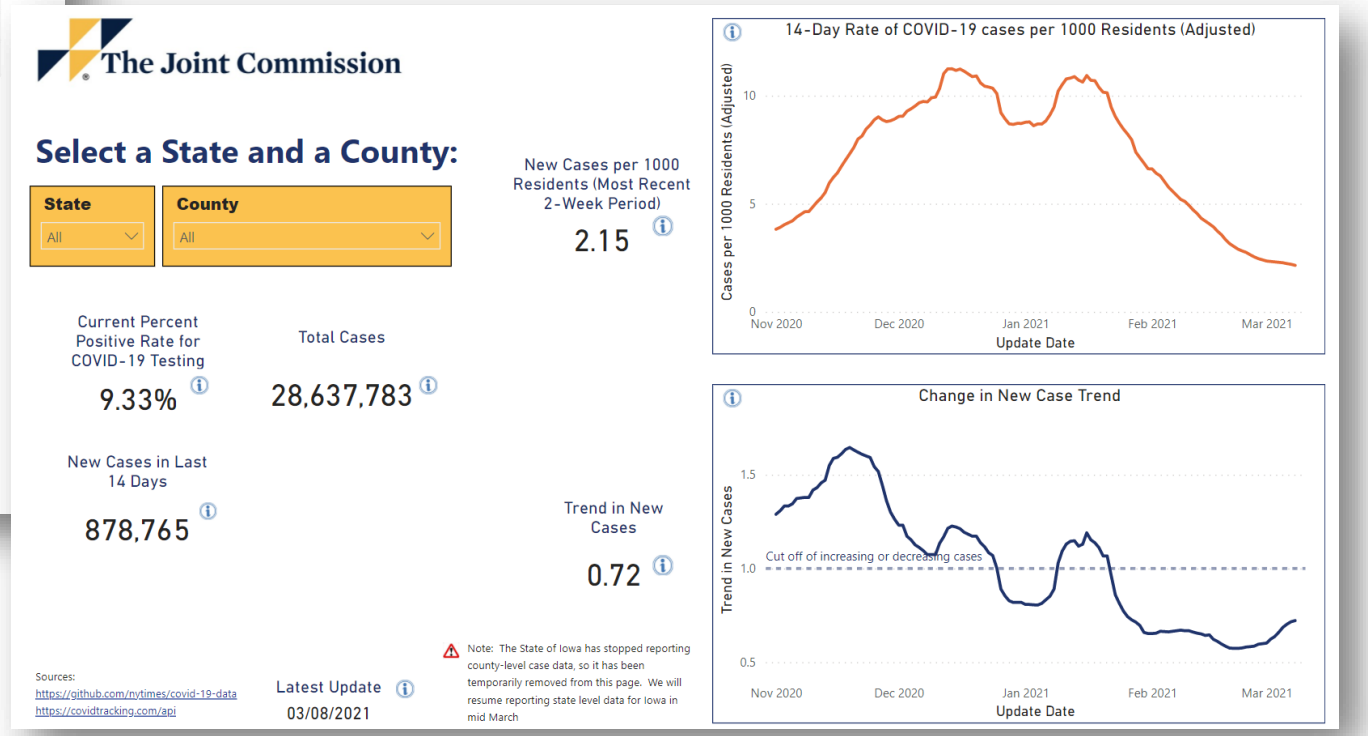
Community Prevalence Dashboard





https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/research/operations-support-research/

Environment of Care and Life Safety

Pre-Submitted Questions

Does The Joint Commission follow CMS's emergency preparedness testing exemptions during the COVID-19 PHE?

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Infection Control

Pre-Submitted Questions

Have any Infection Control standards changed as we continue to function in the current pandemic?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

During a survey, what is The Joint Commission looking for regarding infection control?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there specific screening requirements for COVID-19 such as in person temperature taking and question screening for staff, or a required checklist that needs to be completed?

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

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\

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Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the return-to-work recommendations for healthcare personnel following a positive COVID-19 test?

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

Return to Work Criteria for Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection (Interim Guidance)

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there a recommended timeframe for COVID-19 testing after a suspected exposure?

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

COVID-19 Exposure in Healthcare Settings

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/exposure-in-healthcare.html

Interim Guidance on Testing Healthcare Personnel for SARS-CoV-2

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-healthcare-personnel.html

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Pre-Submitted Questions

We received several questions regarding best practices or protocols when providing care for home health patients including:

- Can Home Health care agencies accept patients from a hospital while the patient is still COVID-19 positive?
- What is considered best practice when entering the home for the first time?
- When we resume in person training with patients are there any COVID protocols that you can share with our organization, that we can incorporate for PPE disposal and COVID protocols for in home visits?

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

Infection Control Guidance for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus (COVID-19)

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

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Pre-Submitted Questions

How are agencies managing eye protection? We are encountering problems with fogging of goggles and shields.

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Our state has lifted the mask mandate, do hospice agencies still need to wear their mask in the office?

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

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\

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Pre-Submitted Questions

If the clinician or in-office staff are fully vaccinated for COVID-19, does personal protective equipment still need to be worn:

- During home visits
- When in the office

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html

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Pre-Submitted Questions

We received several questions regarding the use of N95 respirators including:

- Respirator fit testing requirements including fit testing requirements when a new N95 respirator is obtained
- Documentation requirements for N-95 usage

Resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Healthcare ETS

https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

OSHA Personal Protective Equipment, Respiratory Protection Standard

https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.134

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Pre-Submitted Questions

How do we decontaminate oxygen concentrators that may be contaminated with the COVID-19 virus?

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CMS 1135 Waivers

Pre-Submitted Questions

When can we expect to hear updates on the 1135 waivers? Will there be sufficient warning before waivers end?

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Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension

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The Department of Health and Human Services released a statement on Monday, 07/19/21 stating the PHE was extended

The renewal effective date is Tuesday 07/20/21 and will last for 90 days

This is the sixth extension of the PHE

★1135 Waivers will remain in effect during the declared PHE

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Pre-Submitted Questions

If we go back into Incident Command mode and enact our EOP again, can we go back to utilizing blanket waivers again?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Does the CMS temporary change under section 3708 of the CARES act, which allows a Medicare-eligible home health patient to be under the care of an NP or PA, also cover/apply to Medicaid (under 21) patients?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

Do you anticipate NP signatures being accepted in the future as well?

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Pre-Submitted Questions

The Joint Commission and the OSHA ETS…how is this standard being surveyed during triennial HAP surveys?

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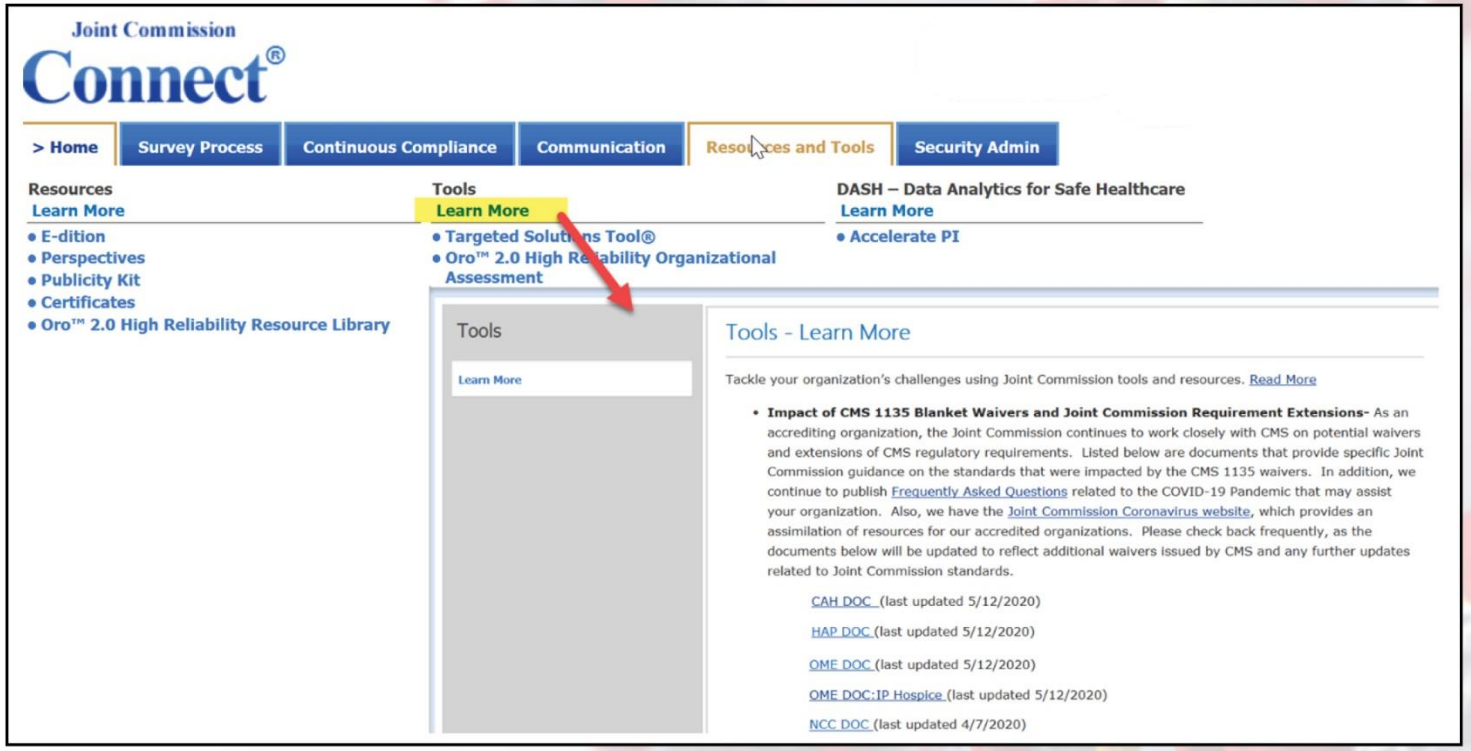
Looking for more information on CMS 1135 Waivers?



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

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Resources

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

- Standards Interpretation
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/

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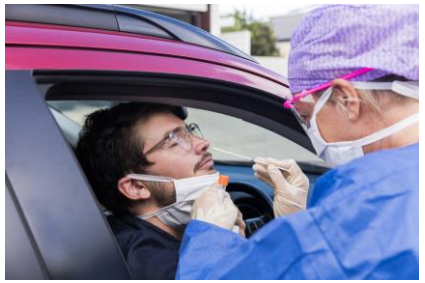
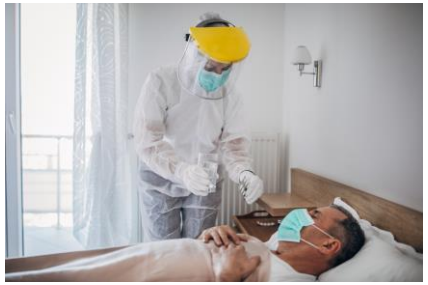
Thank You

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





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