

COVID-19 Webinar for Hospital Accreditation

# Q&A With The Joint Commission

August 16, 2022

# Today's Panel of Speakers

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Associate Director Accreditation

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# Environment of Care and Life Safety

# Pre-Submitted Questions

There have been several questions that center on the ventilation requirements during the public health emergency (PHE) and how Joint Commission field staff will evaluate spaces regarding air pressure relationships. Specific inquiries have centered on airborne infection isolation rooms (AIIRs) also referred to as negative pressure rooms.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

COVID isolation supplies/carts that are needed to be set up outside of rooms, are there regulations to these carts?

Example: must have wheels, everything be covered and inside, must be moved every 20 minutes to comply with egress?

# Vaccination Information

# Required Documents

1. Overall COVID vaccination rate of eligible staff, excluding exempted staff
2. A list of all staff, including positions/titles, including COVID Vaccination status
3. All policies regarding health care staff COVID vaccinations
  - Policies for COVID Vaccination exemptions
  - Policies for COVID Vaccination Requirements
  - Policies for mitigation of unvaccinated staff
4. List of newly hired staff in last 60 days

# Compliance Timelines



# State Timelines

- Compliance timelines for Phase 1 and 2 varied based on each state's requirements
  - ALL states are now in Phase 2, with the following requirements:
    - Establish and implement policies and procedures
    - Staff must be 100% vaccinated\*
- \*100% vaccinated currently DOES NOT include booster doses

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How is The Joint Commission evaluating contracted service compliance with the COVID immunization/exemption requirements from CMS?

For the COVID-19 vaccination status of students, vendors, and contracted staff is it sufficient to have an attestation of compliance from the school or vendor?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you please cover COVID-19 vaccination documentation requirements and good faith efforts related to obtaining compliant documentation for all healthcare personnel in the facility?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do all employees need to have a copy of their COVID vaccination dates in their employee health chart? If employees are not fully vaccinated and have an approved accommodation form, do those forms need to be kept in their employee health chart also?

# Current FAQ's

The following is a list of related FAQs:

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Applicable Entities](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Applicable Staff](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - CMS Definition of 'Fully Vaccinated'](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Exemptions](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Good Faith Efforts](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Required Documents, Policies and Procedures](#)

[COVID-19 CMS Vaccination Requirements - Determination of Compliance](#)

# CMS 1135 Waivers

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Since COVID is no longer a pandemic priority,  
can we still utilize the 1135 Waivers?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is the 1135 waiver still in effect and exactly what are they following currently?



# UPDATE Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension

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The Department of Health and Human Services released a statement on 07/15/22 stating the PHE was extended

The renewal effective date is Friday 07/15/22 and will last for 90 days ★

This is the tenth extension of the PHE

★ 1135 Waivers will remain in effect during the declared PHE

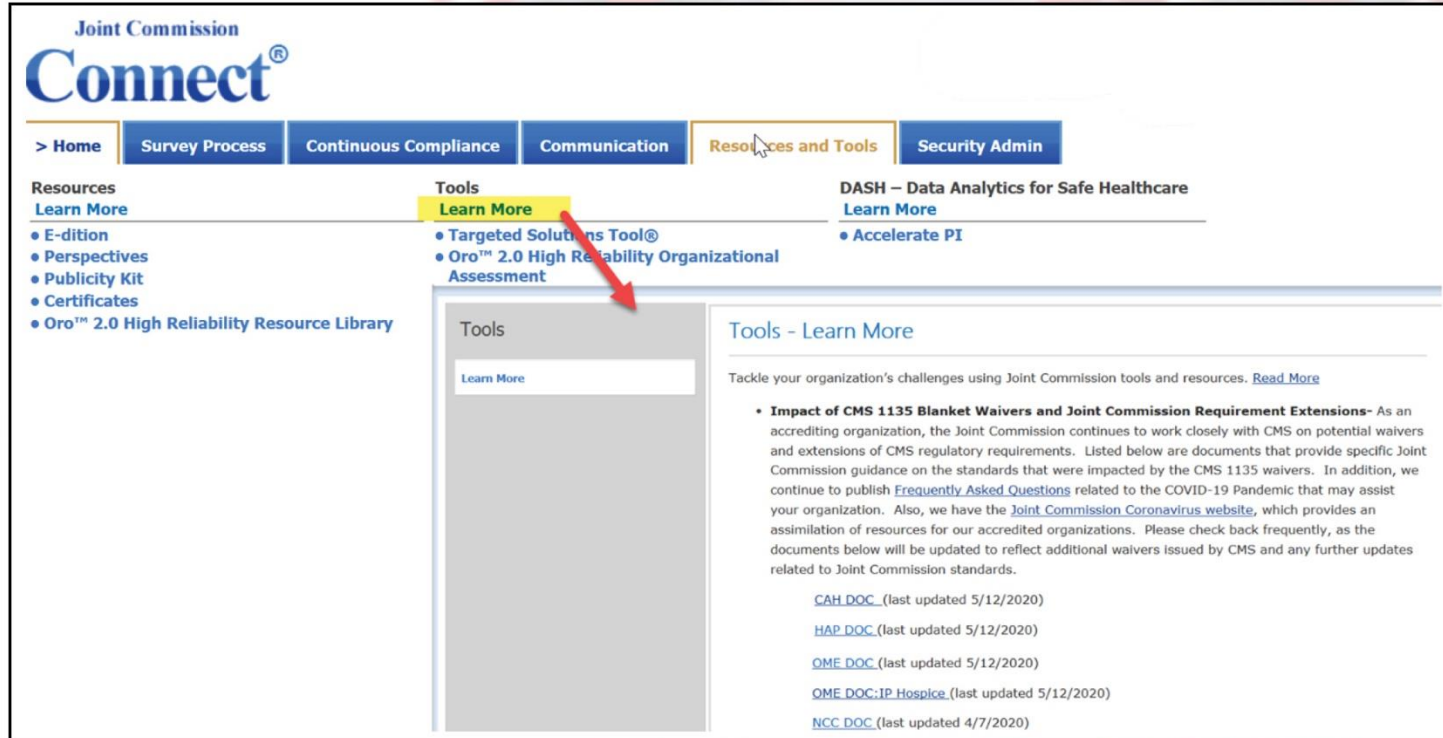
# -Pre-Submitted Questions

What, if any, documentation is needed if using an 1135 waiver for having an inspection delayed due to staffing or material shortages by a vendor?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you please explain the survey process when an organization has taken an 1135?

# 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, 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 and a list of items: Targeted Solutions Tool@ and Oro™ 2.0 High Reliability Organizational Assessment. A red arrow points to the 'Learn More' link under Tools. The main content area displays 'Tools - Learn More' with a sub-header 'Tackle your organization's challenges using Joint Commission tools and resources. [Read More](#)'. Below this is a section titled 'Impact of CMS 1135 Blanket Waivers and Joint Commission Requirement Extensions' with a detailed paragraph of text. At the bottom of this section are several 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.

# Infection Control Practices

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there a new COVID Tracker and what are the most up-to-date guidelines?

## RESOURCES:

CDC has provided a new **Community** Covid Tracker

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html> that provides guidance for the community. These **recommendations do not apply in healthcare settings. Healthcare settings should continue to use**

[https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list\\_select\\_state=all\\_states&list\\_select\\_county=all\\_counties&data-type=Risk&null=Risk](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&list_select_county=all_counties&data-type=Risk&null=Risk)

and continue to follow CDC's infection prevention and control

recommendations for healthcare settings which are available at

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor\\_1604360721943](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor_1604360721943)

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How can we be sure that our staff are protected?

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic (Updated Feb 2, 2022)  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor\\_1604360721943](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor_1604360721943)

# Pre-Submitted Questions

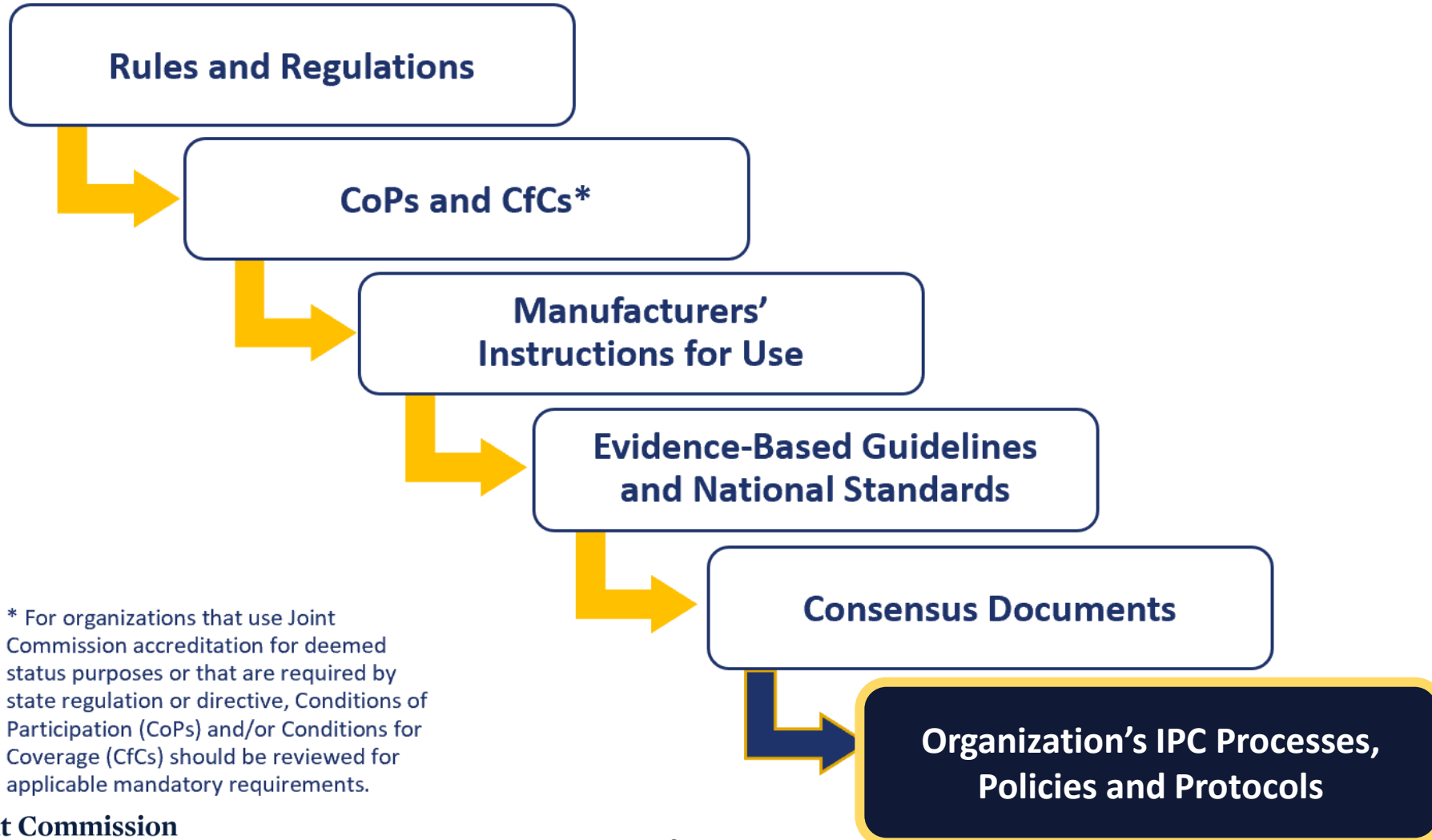
What are current team member/staff screening requirements?

What are the expectations surrounding screening of visitors and patients for COVID-19 symptoms?

Is the organization able to define their policy, or are accredited hospitals required to follow all CDC guidance?



# Hierarchical Approach



# Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the recommendations for assigning patients to semi-private rooms and shared care spaces?

Examples: Covid positive, covid recovered, exposed but negative, timeframes to follow, etc.

**Resource:** Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic (Updated Feb 2, 2022)

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor\\_1604360721943](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#anchor_1604360721943)

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you speak to when PPE Requirements around eyewear with asymptomatic patients might change? This is a frequent question that we get from staff.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the standard for cleaning durable medical equipment (e.g., walkers, sliding boards, etc.) after leaving a COVID+ patient's room?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the recommendations \ guidelines visitation of persons under investigation and patients with confirmed COVID?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can COVID positive patients stay in a non-negative pressure room? We use HEPA machines that are portable.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How to prep a COVID positive patient preoperatively when there are no isolation rooms. What is the expectation?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is an N95 still required for caring for patients without aerosolized procedures?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

How long will masks be approved to wear for an entire shift?

Pre-pandemic a new mask was used for each patient room. Is there any concern for transmission of infection wearing the same mask caring for multiple patients?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can employees who do not deal directly with patients please unmask? Morale is very low because it is the only place in our lives where we have to wear them.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How, if they are at all, are staff storing and reusing masks, respirators and shields?

**Resource:** Implementing Filtering Facepiece Respirator (FFR) Reuse, Including Reuse after Decontamination, When There Are Known Shortages of N95 Respirators <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html#:~:text=CDC%20recommends%20limiting%20the%20number,manager%20or%20appropriate%20safety%20personnel>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the best practice for meal deliveries to a COVID positive patient ?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the current status on use of PPE in patients who have had COVID for more than 5 days?

**Resource:** Ending Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19: Interim Guidance (Updated Jan 14, 2022)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Any recommendations, best practices, or guidelines on when a patient can return to OR schedule after testing positive for COVID?

**Resource:** ASA and APSF Joint Statement on Elective Surgery and Anesthesia for Patients after COVID-19 Infection (Updated February 22, 2022)

<https://www.asahq.org/about-asa/newsroom/news-releases/2022/02/asa-and-apsf-joint-statement-on-elective-surgery-procedures-and-anesthesia-for-patients-after-covid-19-infection>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do you have updated recommendations for providing 1:1 observation for suicidal patients who are COVID positive?

**Resource:** Ligature and/or Suicide Risk Reduction - Monitoring High Risk Patients With Known or Suspected COVID-19

Does a patient who is at high risk for suicide with known or suspected SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) require the 1:1 observer to be in the room? Available at:

<https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/hospital-and-hospital-clinics/national-patient-safety-goals-npsg/000002287/>

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What recommendations do you have for providing active treatment to patients admitted for acute psychiatric care who would normally attend facilitated groups during a COVID-19 outbreak in a treatment milieu?

**Resource:** CMS QSO 21-07: COVID-19 Infection Control for Psychiatric and Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICFs/IID)  
Dec 17, 2020 Available at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-21-07-psych-hospital-prtf-icf-iid.pdf>



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Should psychiatric hospitals require masks for employees?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

When will we stop reporting daily COVID-19 numbers?

# Recovery and The Joint Commission

# Frequent questions you've submitted

- Has COVID impacted surveys?
- How or when will we get a survey?
- What type of instruction have you provided to your surveyors?
- What will that survey process look like, any differences?
- What will the surveyors focus on?
- Options for avoid dates, when the survey is past due?

# Onsite survey activity

Onsite survey activity has been ongoing with close monitoring of the rise of COVID-19 and impacts on survey activity.

Organizations should continue to monitor the Notification of Scheduled Events section of the Joint Commission Connect page for notification of the scheduled survey.

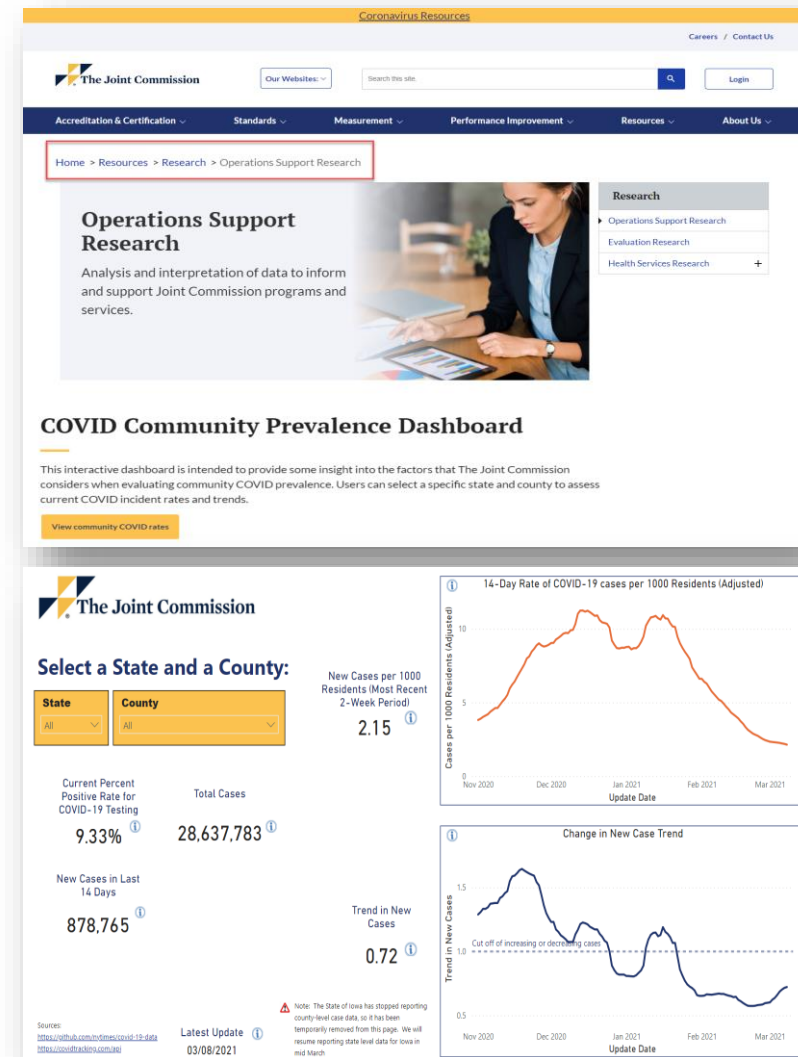
We are aware that some surveys are past their due dates, CMS is also aware – we will conduct those surveys when we are able to do so.

We are prioritizing initial and past due organizations.

# 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 Joint Commission staff can travel to area safely and find appropriate accommodations



# 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

**All Joint Commission Surveyors and Reviewers conducting on-site events are fully vaccinated, as defined by CDC.**

# What instructions have been provided to our surveyors?

- **Review and follow individual state department of health specific travel regulations\*\***
- When onsite wearing a medical mask is required, and eye protection is encouraged
- **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

It is expected that staff participating with the survey also comply with masking and distancing for everyone's safety until further notice.



# 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.
- Driving in separate cars to offsite locations

# 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.
- For CMS deemed surveys, compliance with COVID vaccinations will be reviewed.

# Resources

- COVID Resources

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

- Standards Interpretation

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

# Time For More Questions?

Thank you for joining us.