



Medicare Certification Survey FAQ

Rural health clinics must meet certain criteria to be certified for participation in Medicare. When clinics initially apply for certification, an onsite survey is required to determine their compliance with program regulations.

Who conducts initial onsite surveys?

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) will no longer conduct initial onsite surveys for most clinics. Unless clinics receive an exemption (see below), they will contract with a third-party accrediting agency. The agency will charge the clinic to conduct the survey.

How can we apply for an exemption to have the state conduct the survey?

Certain clinics may qualify for an exemption from CMS that allows the state to conduct the initial survey. Clinics applying for the exemption must prove that patients in the community would lack access to care without the RHC.

Exemption requests must be sent in writing to the Bureau of Outpatient Healthcare (PO Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570). Clinics should include the number of patients served by the clinic, the waiting period to see providers, the number of other doctors in the area, and the distance to the nearest hospital. CMS will make the final determination on whether an exemption is granted.

Which third-party accreditation agencies conduct certification surveys?

Clinics can contract with the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (AAAASF) or The Compliance Team.

AAAASF
PO Box 9500
Gurnee, IL 60031
Phone: 888-545-5222
Fax: 847-775-1985
<http://www.aaaasf.org/>

The Compliance Team
P.O. Box 160
Spring House, PA 19477
Office: (215) 654-9110
Fax: (215) 654-9068
<http://www.thecomplianceteam.org/>

What are our options after the contract with the accrediting agency ends?

If a clinic wishes to remain accredited, it can continue to contract with the accreditation agency, and the agency will conduct its recertification. Clinics can also choose to opt out of accreditation and become “compliant” clinics. This distinction will not impact the clinic’s relationship with the state. If a clinic chooses to become “compliant” instead of “accredited,” it will be placed on the state’s recertification survey schedule.

Clinics that lapse their contracts with accrediting agencies and become “compliant” should send a notification letter to the Bureau of Outpatient Healthcare (PO Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570).