
Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with Mental Retardation (ICF/MR) Survey

Survey protocols and Interpretive Guidelines are established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide guidance to personnel conducting surveys. They serve to clarify and/or explain the intent of the regulations and all surveyors are required to use them in assessing compliance with federal requirements.

The currently used survey protocols and federal regulation set for ICFs/MR is [Appendix J](#) of the State Operations Manual or SOM. The first section of Appendix J includes background information and describes the survey protocols, including the eight survey tasks. The remainder of Appendix J is the federal regulatory requirements for ICFs/MR.

Below is a brief description of the ICF/MR surveys. Please refer to Appendix J for more specific information regarding the 8 survey tasks and the ICF/MR survey process.

Recertification Surveys

Unannounced recertification surveys are conducted annually for all ICFs/MR, prior to the expiration date of the existing 12-month time-limited provider agreement. If the annual recertification survey cannot be completed within the 12 month time frame, then a 2 month extension may be granted. The recertification survey must be completed before the expiration of the extension. The survey process is divided into three stages, which are the fundamental, extended, and full survey. Please refer to [Appendix J](#) for more specific information regarding fundamental, extended, and full surveys.

Follow-up Surveys

When deficiencies are cited, an unannounced follow-up survey may be conducted. The purpose of the follow-up survey is to determine that systemic corrective action have been implemented for the deficiencies cited during the previous survey. A follow-up survey may be conducted at the facility or by phone/mail.

Complaint Surveys

Anyone may file allegations of provider non-compliance with regulatory requirements. The state agency is required to investigate all such allegations. When a complaint which alleges regulatory non-compliance is received, an unannounced complaint survey is conducted which focuses on the allegations of the complaint. Please refer to [Chapter 5](#) of the SOM for more specific information regarding the complaint survey process.

Initial Surveys

A facility must be fully operational prior to scheduling an initial survey. There is no specific number of days that an ICF/MR must be operational prior to its initial survey, and there is no minimum number of individuals who must be in residence at the time of the initial survey. The facility must have enough individuals in residence to demonstrate that it is able to, and does, provide services to the total number of individuals it proposes to serve. For example, a facility established to serve four individuals would need to show capacity to serve four people, even though not all four people would be required to have actually moved in at the time of the initial survey.

For more comprehensive information related to initial ICF/MR surveys, please refer to [Chapter 2](#), Section 2138A, of the SOM.