



Joint Commission Updating EM EPs to Maintain Alignment with CMS Final Rule on Emergency Preparedness

In response to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) September 16, 2016, final rule on emergency preparedness,¹ The Joint Commission is updating its Emergency Management (EM) standards. The Joint Commission will begin surveying its accredited **deemed hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, critical access hospitals, home health agencies, and hospices** to the updated EM requirements as of the rule's **November 15, 2017**, implementation date.


The aim of the final rule is to establish national emergency preparedness requirements designed to aid health care organizations in properly planning for natural and human-caused disasters and coordinating with federal, state, tribal, regional, and local emergency preparedness systems. The rule is also meant to help prepare providers and suppliers to meet the needs of their patients, residents, clients, and participants during emergency events.¹

In addition to enhancing program-specific requirements to address the CMS rule, The Joint Commission has created new EPs that address the following areas:²

- Continuity of operations and succession plans
- Documentation of collaboration with local, tribal, regional, state, and federal EM officials
- Contact information on volunteers and tribal groups
- Documented annual training of all new/existing staff, contractors, and volunteers
- Integrated health care systems
- Transplant hospitals

The proposed language for the new requirements is currently available to accredited organizations on their secure

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Joint Commission Connect[™] extranet site under “Important Updates.” Final requirements will be made available at https://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/prepublication_standards.aspx upon final CMS approval.

More details will be published in a future issue of *Perspectives*. Questions may be directed to the Standards Interpretation Group—Engineering at 630-792-5900 or to Lynne Bergero, MHSA, project director, Department of Standards and Survey Methods, at lbergero@jointcommission.org. 

References

1. Federal Register. Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers. Accessed Sep 24, 2017. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/09/16/2016-21404/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-emergency-preparedness-requirements-for-medicare-and-medicaid>
2. Joint Commission Resources. Constant vigilance: The Joint Commission revises its standards to mesh with the CMS final rule on emergency preparedness. *Environment of Care*[®] News. 2017;20(10):1, 3, 10, 11.