




# APPROVED: Additional Unannounced Survey Exceptions and Advance Notice Provision

At its February 2009 meeting, The Joint Commission's Accreditation Committee approved additional exceptions to unannounced surveys in the **ambulatory care, behavioral health care, home care, and Medicare/Medicaid certification-based long term care** accreditation programs and disease-specific care certification program, **effective immediately**. See the table below for the additional exceptions to unannounced surveys.

Additionally, the Committee approved providing these organizations with **seven business days advance notice** of a

triennial survey, rather than five. This seven-day advance notice also applies **to all organizations that currently receive five business days advance notice** of their survey.

Since The Joint Commission's introduction of unannounced surveys in 2006, experience has shown that unannounced surveys may disrupt daily operations and the provision of patient care, or may not be feasible in certain situations. Seven, rather than five, business days advance notice has been approved due to the benefit that it will have for both the client and internal Joint Commission operations. 

## Additional Exceptions to Unannounced Surveys and Reviews

### Ambulatory care program

- All office-based surgical practices
- An organization that either provides non-deemed ambulatory surgery or telehealth or is a sleep center

### Behavioral health care program

- All methadone programs, if not part of a hospital
- All in-home behavioral health, case management, or Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program, if not part of a hospital
- All freestanding organizations with 10 or fewer staff or a total average daily census (ADC) of less than 100
- All community-based, freestanding programs

### Home care program

- Small, non-deemed health and hospice organizations, if not part of a hospital

### Medicare/Medicaid certification-based long term care program

- All one-day freestanding Medicare/Medicaid certification-based long term care surveys, if not part of a hospital

### Disease-specific care certification program

- All re-certification reviews for Lung Volume Reduction Surgery (LVRS) and Ventricular Assist Devices (VAD)