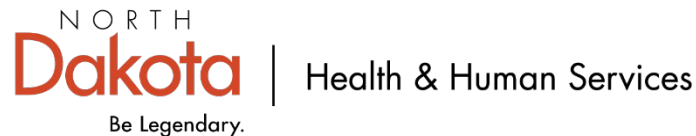


Accreditation Options For ID/DD Agency Providers



As of January 1, 2025, per NDAC 75-04-01, the Developmental Disabilities Section will be allowing some flexibilities regarding accreditation. The department will begin recognizing and accepting accreditation from accreditation entities included in this packet.

This packet aims to provide some preliminary information regarding each of the department approved accreditation entities. This structured comparison provides a quick snapshot of each of the options to assist providers in making informed decisions based on their specific needs and preferences. This should not substitute completing your own research into the available options.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this packet is for general informational purposes only and is not intended as professional advice. While we strive to keep this document accurate and up to date, it may not reflect the most current information. Always consult with the accreditation entity in question.

About

Social Current is the premier partner and solutions provider to a diverse network of human and social service organizations. Together with our network, we are activating the power of the social sector to effect broader systemic change that is needed to achieve our vision of an equitable society where all people can thrive.

****Does not accredit healthcare or nursing services, so would not accredit EHHC.**

What does the accreditation process look like?

- Combination of a self-study and an on-site visit. It involves a detailed review and analysis of an organization or program's administrative functions and service delivery practices. All are measured against international standards of best practice.
- **Will need to begin 12-18 months in advance.**
- Provider sends in an application and accreditation agreement.
- Intake and assessment
 - You are assigned a dedicated Accreditation Coordinator who serves as a single point of contact.
- Self-Study
- Site Visit
- Ratings Report & Pre-Commission Review
- Accreditation Decision
- Maintaining Accreditation
 - Must complete an annual report indicating maintenance of standards.

Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?

- Four-year accreditation.
- Private Organization, Public Agency, etc.

Do you accredit the provider or the services?

- Services/programs – Requires accreditation of all programs offered by the agency.

Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?

- Most organizations that achieve COA Accreditation are private organizations and receive **full-organization accreditation**. We conduct in-depth reviews of all services for which we have standards, as well as administration and management practices.
- **Will not accredit EHHC.**

What are the focus areas for accreditation?

- Based around their Standards.
- Standards are updated every 3 years.
- These are available at no cost online.

Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?

- No, however the provider is required to submit an implementation of standards annual report to ensure maintenance of the standards.

What are the costs involved?

- The cost varies based on an organization's size and services.
- Sliding scale fee. Two pieces - accreditation fee (based on annual revenue) 500,000 sections. Site visit fee - 2 reviewers for 2 days standard but based on this. Starts 15,000 total at the 500,000.

What supports do you have available for providers? (Webinars, newsletters, workshops, etc.)

- Every organization gets an accreditation coordinator specific to them. Typically, there is a monthly call with this coordinator.
- Offers free on-demand trainings.
 - Includes self-paced trainings and recorded webinars.
 - Have a portal with self-paced optional trainings, PQI, logic models, variety of sources.
- Standards are available online and tables of evidence are available as well.

References

[COA Accreditation - \(social-current.org\)](#)

[Standards - Social Current \(social-current.org\)](#)



About

NADD is an association for persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities and mental health needs, comprised of individuals, families, and support professionals dedicated to enhancing the understanding and treatment of people experiencing co-occurring intellectual/developmental diagnoses (IDD) and mental health conditions.

*At least 10% of DSPs, Specialists, and Clinical Staff must be NADD IDD/MI Dual Diagnosis Certified.

*Must meet this threshold by end of the initial accreditation period.

***Has not accredited Early Intervention programs.**

What does the accreditation process look like?

- Providers would need to send in an application to become a member.
- NADD will learn why you are getting accreditation and what you'd like help with.
- Typical accreditation consists of 2 accreditors over 2 days but may take up to 4 accreditors 4 days.
- Feedback occurs "in the moment" in addition to at the exit meeting.

Onsite, virtual, or hybrid visit consists of:

- Interviews: treatment team members, medical and behavioral health, program administrators and direct care staff
- Records Review/Clinical Practice Assessment
- Policy Review
- Outcomes, Feedback and Consultation

Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?

- There is one type of accreditation. This will be granted based on meeting of standards.
- Three-year, two-year, one-year, or non-accreditation.

Do you accredit the provider or the services?

- Accredits the programs – Will only require accreditation of the programs the provider wishes to take through.
 - Please note: All DD Services require accreditation.

Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?

- Accredits any/all services that work with or will potentially work with people that have an IDD and mental health diagnosis.

What are the focus areas for accreditation?

- 18 competency areas – these will depend on the services provided by your agency.
- Are available at no cost online.

Join us to learn more:

[Thursday, November 14, 12:00p – 1:00p CST](#)

Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?

- No visits are required between the accreditation cycles; however, they are available to assist as needed.

What are the costs involved?

- Membership fees are based on provider's revenue and range from \$50 to \$3500.
- Application cost of Accreditation is \$500, payable as a non-refundable fee; one application fee covers multiple programs in the same organization. Will accredit up to 8 Programs for the same fee.
- Accreditation Survey cost depends on the size and complexity of the program in question, based on a flat fee of \$3,000 per Surveyor per day plus travel expenses.
- There is a \$1,500 annual fee to maintain Accreditation, after the initial year. One annual fee covers multiple programs in the same organization.
- There are costs associated with certifying staff. For accredited agencies, the first 10% are free. After this, for accredited agencies, DSP Certifications cost \$50, Specialist Certifications cost \$225, and Clinical Certifications costs \$285. Requires renewal every 2 years for a fee.

What supports do you have available for providers? (Webinars, newsletters, workshops, etc.)

- NADD offers a partnership with them, but also offers collaboration with other accredited entities nationwide that may offer expertise in specific areas. They work to match you with surveyors and peers that meet your needs.

References

[Accreditation-Program-Manual-June-2023.pdf \(thenadd.org\)](#)

[Accreditation Competency Areas - The NADD](#)

[Scoring Tool - acp-survey.pdf \(thenadd.org\)](#)

About

An independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. To earn and maintain *The Gold Seal of Approval*® from The Joint Commission, an organization undergoes an on-site survey by a Joint Commission survey team at least every three years.

***Does not accredit Early Intervention Programs.**

What does the accreditation process look like?

- Application for accreditation and deposit and indicate the first date you think you'll be ready for your survey – this application should be submitted **at least 6 months in advance of anticipated accreditation date**. The Joint Commission assigns an account executive to be your primary contact. The survey should occur within 12 months of your application submission date.
- The Surveyors arrive “unannounced” or with short notice for most surveys (30-day notice for new providers, 7-day notice for reaccreditations).
- Tracing the supported person’s experience, which involves observing services provided by various caregivers and programs within the organization, as well as hand-offs between them.
- On-site observations and interviews.
- Assessment of the physical facility.
- Review of documents provided by the organization.

**May include other activities depending on settings/supports provided.

Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?

- Valid for approximately 3 years
- Several setting types for accreditation, DD providers would utilize the Behavioral Health Care and Human Services setting.

Do you accredit the provider or the services?

- The organization – the standards applicability process identifies which standards apply to the various settings/populations your agency serves.
- Will require accreditation of all services offered by the provider.

Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?

- The standards applicability process identifies which standards apply to the various settings/populations your agency serves.

What are the focus areas for accreditation?

- Focuses on their standards.
- Available for purchase on their website.

Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?

- Providers complete an 18-month check-in through their portal. Can opt in for and in-person visit.
- Once accredited, an organization will need to submit its Focused Standards Assessment at 12 and 24 months after a survey. The evaluation and plan of action should be completed electronically and transmitted to The Joint Commission.
- After submitting the evaluation and plan of action, the organization can, if desired, schedule a touchpoint conference call with staff from the Joint Commission’s Standards Interpretation Group to discuss the FSA and resulting action plans.

What are the costs involved?

- Must submit \$1,700 deposit with application – is applied towards accreditation fees.
- Fees are based on a combination of an on-site survey fee billed during the year of the organization’s on-site survey and an annual fee billed during the application year and in January of each year during an organization’s accreditation cycle. Approximately 60% of the organization’s total accreditation fees are due during the year of the on-site survey.
- On-site fee for a small organization starts at \$3,430. Annual fees for behavioral health care organizations start at \$1,990 per year and are adjusted based on the number of individuals served, the types of services and programs provided, and sites of care, treatment, or services. A fee calculator is available to help organizations estimate their fees.
- 2024 copy of Accreditation Standards - \$181
- 2025 copy of Accreditation Standards - \$219

What supports do you have available for providers? (Webinars, newsletters, workshops, etc.)

- Offers translated materials if necessary.
- Offers Mobile Notification of Onsite Surveys
- Offers a library of publications that apply to all health care settings and organizations. Includes books, manuals, and digital subscriptions for a cost.

References

- [2024 Behavioral Health Human Services Organization SAG \(jointcommission.org\)](https://www.jointcommission.org)

About

CARF® International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. Through accreditation, CARF assists service providers in demonstrating value by the quality of their services and meeting internationally recognized organizational and program standards.

What does the accreditation process look like?

- Must contact CARF to get started. Must be in compliance with standards 6 months prior to the survey. Accreditation decision can take up to 8 weeks. **Should reach out 12 months in advance to begin initial accreditation.**
- Conduct a self-evaluation.
- Submit a survey application.
- Invoiced for the survey fee and begin scheduling the survey.
- Survey team is selected.
- Survey is conducted.
 - Observation of services
 - Interviewing persons served and other stakeholders.
 - Review of documentation
- Accreditation decision
- Submit a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Submit an Annual Conformance to Quality Report

Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?

- Three-year and one-year term

Do you accredit the provider or the services?

- Accredits providers for their specific programs and services.
- Provider can choose which programs/services they want to accredit – will need to accredit all DD services.

Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?

- Multiple program areas that organizations can seek accreditation in.
- Business practice standards (ASPIRE and Excellence standards) are applied to all organizations regardless of programs.

What are the focus areas for accreditation?

- Based around their Standards.
- These are updated annually and are available for purchase online.

Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?

- CARF reserves the right to survey an organization at any time if there are concerns about conformance to standards. It is very rare that this happens.
- Organizations are required to submit an annual conformance to quality report to CARF each year prior to their resurvey that includes any major updates and/or issues that the organization has experienced.

What are the costs involved?

- Fee is based on number of surveyors and days needed to complete the survey.
- For surveys conducted July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. This is based on the number of surveyors and days needed to complete the survey, which varies depending on the complexity of the survey. For an estimate, contact CARF. Fees include all surveyor expenses.
 - Application Fee - \$1095
 - Survey Fee - \$2040 per surveyor day.
 - Cancellation/Rescheduling Fee - \$2040 plus nonrefundable travel expenses
 - Manual –
 - Hardcopy - \$205
 - Download for 1 User - \$308

What supports do you have available for providers? (Webinars, newsletters, workshops, etc.)

- Include in-person trainings, virtual trainings, webinars, newsletters, and direct access to resource specialists that can assist in standards interpretation and suggestions for conformance. They also have access to many tools and templates for strategic planning.

References

[CARF Standards Manuals & Workbooks for Purchase](#)

[Resources - CARF International](#)

About

Since 1969, CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership has been a leader in working with human service organizations and systems to continuously define, measure, and improve quality of life and quality of services for youth, adults, and older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities.

What does the accreditation process look like?

In-person, virtual, and hybrid visits

- Request for engagement **at least 6 months in advance of anticipated accreditation visit.**
- Planning – Once RFE is reviewed and approved, CQL works with organization to prepare for accreditation process.
- Self-Assessment – Organization completes a self-assessment to review how policies apply to practices.
- Validation – CQL completed on-site review by conducting focus groups, location visits, individual interviews, policy evaluations, etc.
- Award Letter – Provided to recognize the accreditation following the on-site review.
- Checkpoint visits – To maintain progress in improving quality between accreditation cycles.

Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?

- Systems Accreditation – a one-year term designed solely for human service organizations that are not yet providing services.
- Quality Assurance Accreditation – a three-year term for agencies new to CQL, want to reinvigorate their quality framework, or have had significant leadership changes.
- Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation - a four-year accreditation, expanding upon the use of Basic Assurances®, Personal Outcome Measures®, and Shared Values.

Do you accredit the provider or the services?

- Accredits the provider – will require accreditation of all programs the provider offers.

Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?

- Accreditation is grounded in an organization-wide approach that impacts diverse populations of people receiving human services.

What are the focus areas for accreditation?

- Uses their Basic Assurances, POMs, and Shared Values
- Available for purchase on their website.

Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?

- 12-to-18-month checkpoint, 36-month checkpoint.
- Your accreditation experience with CQL doesn't begin and end with the first visit. CQL embraces a partnership with those that achieve CQL Accreditation throughout the entire term, offering support, guidance, resources, check-ins, and insight.

What are the costs involved?

- Numerous factors influence the exact cost for accreditation including the size, scope of services, and specific needs of an organization. To assist in your budgetary planning, a general estimate is provided.
 - Systems Accreditation – Estimated cost \$5,250
 - Quality Assurance Accreditation – Estimated cost \$18,000 over the accreditation term
 - Person-Centered Excellence – Estimated cost \$22,500 over the accreditation term
- Manuals are also available for purchase on their website. These cover Basic Assurances, Personal Outcome Measures, and Shared Values.

What supports do you have available for providers? (Webinars, newsletters, workshops, etc.)

- Offers Capstone newsletter, monthly webinars, POM workshops, virtual trainings, guides, manuals, access to their PORTAL data system, Facebook group, etc.

References

[CQL Accreditation | The Council on Quality and Leadership \(c-q-l.org\)](#)

[Basic Assurances® Manual - The Council on Quality and Leadership \(c-q-l.org\)](#)

[Personal Outcome Measures® Manual for Adults - The Council on Quality and Leadership \(c-q-l.org\)](#)