



# Accreditation Updates

## Developmental Disabilities Section



A scenic landscape featuring a calm body of water in the foreground, reflecting the sky and the surrounding environment. The middle ground is dominated by a dense line of trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of orange, yellow, and brown. In the distance, a few houses and more trees are visible under a vast, dramatic sky filled with large, textured clouds in shades of blue and white. The overall atmosphere is serene and picturesque.

# Introductions



# Disclaimer

- The information presented is a broad overview and is not all encompassing. As this is a change we will be navigating together, the department will not be held to the information in this presentation.
- It is the responsibility of each agency to do their own research to ensure the accrediting choice best suits them and their needs.





# Please Note

- The department will not be answering questions regarding agency specific situations or specific accreditor information during this presentation. Please make the appropriate contacts offline.
- Please hold general questions until the end of the presentation.





# Agenda

- What is Changing
- What is Not Changing
- Accreditation Options
- Broad Overview of Accreditors
- Considerations
- Agency Scenarios
- Expectations
- Licensing Code Updates
- Questions





# Why the change?

- We received feedback regarding challenges with the current accreditor.
- Allows agencies to choose a system that best aligns with their specific focus.
- Allows for more accessibility – some may find that certain accreditors are more affordable for them, making accreditation more attainable.
- Allows for a more robust system that ultimately leads to better outcomes for people receiving services.





# Background

## **NDAC 75-04-01 Licensing of Programs and Services for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities – Developmental Disabilities**

- 8.12.24- Memo communicating CQL service accreditation change and DD Section exploring options
- 8.12.24- Providers sent the proposed NDAC 75-04-01 updates
- 9.4.24- Oral Hearing
- Public comment accepted through 9.16.24
- TBD- Legislative Hearing December 2024





# NDAC 75-04-01: What is changing?

## Currently:

- Accreditation required initially and on-going for licensure
- Accreditation must be by CQL
- Infant Development licensees are not required to maintain accreditation once initially accredited by CQL

## Effective 01.01.2025:

- Accreditation engagement is required initially for licensure
- Must maintain accreditation from one of the department recognized accreditors
- Infant Development licensees are not required to maintain accreditation once initially accredited





# What is NOT changing...

- Initial and continuous accreditation continues to be required of all agencies.
- Accreditation continues to be a requirement of licensure.
- Accreditation provides national standards for providers to continuously enhance their services and provide quality, person-centered supports.



# Information Gathered

- What does the accreditation process look like?
- Are there different levels/types/terms of accreditations? If so, what do these look like?
- Do you accredit the agency or the services?
- Are there specific programs/services eligible for accreditation? If so, which ones are eligible?
- What are the focus areas for accreditation?
- Are there visits in between the overall accreditation cycle?
- What are the costs involved?
- What supports do you have available for agencies?





# Accreditation Options

- [Social Current – The Council on Accreditation \(COA\)](#)
- [National Association of Dual Diagnosis \(NADD\)](#)
- [The Joint Commission \(JCAHO\)](#)
- [CARF International](#)
- [Council on Quality and Leadership \(CQL\)](#)





- Accreditation activities include a 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.
- Offers a 4-year accreditation period.
- Will require accreditation of all services/programs offered by the agency.
- Accreditation is based around their Standards.
  - Standards are updated every 3 years.
  - These are available at no cost online.
- **DOES NOT ACCREDIT EXTENDED HOME HEALTH CARE (EHC).**
- Every organization gets an Accreditation Coordinator specific to them. Typically, there is a monthly call with this coordinator.
- Offers free on-demand trainings.
- Join us to learn more:  
[Wednesday, November 13, 12:00-1:00pm CST](#)





- Accreditation activities may be on-site, virtual, or hybrid.
  - It involves assessing compliance with NADD's established standards. This includes interviews with staff, people supported, and stakeholders, as well as records reviews, and policy and procedure reviews.
- Awards one-year, two-year, or three-year accreditation depending on adherence to their standards and the quality of services provided.
- Accredits services/programs
  - Agency can choose which programs/services they want to accredit – **will need to accredit all DD services.**
- Accreditation is based around NADD's standards.
  - There is no specific update schedule for their standards. Standards are updated periodically to reflect advancements in research, best practices, and changes in the field of dual diagnosis.
  - These standards are available at no cost online.
- **Has not accredited Early Intervention programs.**
- NADD offers a partnership, but also offers collaboration with other accredited entities nationwide that may offer expertise in specific areas.
- Works to match you with surveyors and peers that meet your needs.
- Join us to learn more:  
[Thursday, November 14, 12:00p – 1:00p CST](#)





- Accreditation activities include a combination of a self-study and an on-site visit.
  - It involves a thorough evaluation of an agency's compliance with established standards through observations, interviews, and document reviews.
- Offers approximately 3-year accreditation period.
- Will require accreditation of all services/programs offered by the agency.
- Accreditation is based around The Joint Commission's standards.
  - Standards are updated regularly.
  - These are available for purchase online.
- **Does not accredit Early Intervention Programs.**
- Offers a library of publications that apply to all health care settings and organizations. Includes books, manuals, and digital subscriptions for a cost.
- Offers mobile notification of onsite surveys.
- Offers translations as needed for some materials.
- Join us to learn more:  
[Tuesday, November 19, 12:00-1:00p CST](#)



# carf INTERNATIONAL

- Accreditation activities include a combination of a self-study and an on-site visit.
  - Involves observation of services, interviews with persons served and other stakeholders, and a review of documentation. All are measures against CARF's standards.
- Awards 1-year or 3-year accreditation depending on conformance to the standards.
- Accredits services/programs
  - Agency can choose which programs/services they want to accredit – **will need to accredit all DD services.**
- Accreditation is based around CARF's standards.
  - Standards are updated annually.
  - These are available for purchase online.
- Offers in-person trainings, virtual trainings, webinars, newsletters, and direct access to resource specialists that can assist in standards interpretation and suggestions for conformance. Also offer tools and templates for strategic planning.
- Will provide translator/interpreter services as needed.
- Join us to learn more:  
[Tuesday, November 26, 12:00-1:00p CST](#)





- Accreditation activities include a combination of a self-study and an on-site visit.
  - It involves a review by conducting focus groups, locations visits, interviews, policy evaluations, etc.
- Offers 3-year (Quality Assurance) or 4-year (Person-Centered Excellence or PCE with Distinction) accreditations.
  - Agency can choose which accreditation type best suits them and their needs. Will not be required to maintain PCE.
- Will require accreditation of all services/programs offered by the agency.
- Accreditation is based around CQL's standards (built into CQL's internationally recognized tools – Basic Assurances, POMs, Shared Values).
  - These are available to purchase online.
- Offers Capstone newsletter, monthly webinars, POM workshops, virtual trainings, guides, manuals, access to their PORTAL data system, Facebook group, etc.
- Join us to learn more:  
[Tuesday, December 3, 12:00-1:00pm CST](#)



# Something to Consider –

*Do you currently use CQL's Personal Outcome Measures (POMs) to meet the Self-Assessment requirement?*

- Some agencies currently use the POMs to meet the self-assessment requirement.
- The department requires a self-assessment be completed **annually** per person supported.
  - If an agency chooses a different accreditor and currently utilizes the POMs to fulfill this requirement, the agency will need to develop a self-assessment and ensure it is completed annually.
  - The specific requirements of the self-assessment can be found in the OSP Instructions.



# Additional Considerations

- If an agency chooses not to continue with CQL and obtain accreditation with a different accreditor, the accrediting body may have specific timeframes for accreditation activities. **This is not an excusable delay for a lapse in accreditation status.**
- If there is a lapse in accreditation, an agency would be considered in non-compliance with the rules of the department as the agency is not accredited.
- Restricted licenses will be issued if there is a lapse in accreditation. A restricted license is valid for up to one year.
  - Agency must complete and submit a plan of correction.
  - Agency must include the corrective action to be taken and the date of compliance. In relation to accreditation non-compliance, would minimally include agency's transition plan, which accreditor has been chosen, etc.



# Engagement Timelines for Consideration



12-18 months



6 months



1 month



12 months



3-6 months

Accreditation Due Date



**What does this mean  
for your agency?**





# Currently Accredited with CQL

## Quality Assurance or Person-Centered Excellence EXPIRING IN 2025

- Options are to continue with CQL or choose one of the other 4 department approved national organizations for accreditation.
- Ensure current accreditation expiration and accreditor timelines will be met to maintain continuous accreditation.



# Currently Accredited with CQL

## Quality Assurance or Person-Centered Excellence EXPIRING IN 2026 and beyond

- Explore the accreditation options and timelines and plan accordingly to maintain continuous accreditation.
- If choosing a different accreditor, agency can choose to forfeit CQL's interim visits (18-month, 36-month, etc.), however the active accreditation status will be terminated at that time.
  - The agency would need to confirm in advance what the last date of active accreditation status with CQL would be and would need to be accredited by another accreditor prior to this termination.



# Currently Accredited with CQL

## Systems Accreditation

- Will need to complete accreditation through CQL or choose and complete accreditation with a different accreditor in 2025.
- Would currently have a provisional license.
  - Provisional license is effective for 12 months from the date issued.
  - Once accreditation is achieved, an unrestricted license may be granted if in compliance with all licensing requirements.



# Not Currently Accredited with CQL

## Working Toward Systems Accreditation

- **After January 1, 2025, achieving accreditation is not required prior to licensure.**
- Once all licensing requirements are completed, a provisional license may be granted while the provider continues to work toward achieving Systems Accreditation with CQL.
- Must achieve Systems Accreditation within 6-months from the date the agency engaged with CQL.
- Explore the accreditation options and timelines and plan accordingly to ensure full accreditation is achieved by Jan. 1, 2026. An unrestricted license may be granted at this time if in compliance with all licensing requirements.



A scenic autumn path with a bench and colorful trees. The path is covered in fallen leaves, and the trees are in full autumn foliage. A black metal bench is visible in the foreground on the left.

# DD Section Involvement

- Will continue to have a working relationship with accreditors, though not to the extent we've historically had with CQL.
- Will meet with accreditors periodically to discuss updates, progress, concerns, etc., however will not be directly receiving documentation of accreditation or accreditation activities from accreditors - This is partially due to practices of accrediting entities.
- Will review accreditation documentation provided.
- Will continue to be available to attend and/or participate in accreditation activities as invited.



# Agency Expectations

- Maintain continuous accreditation.
- Communicate accreditor choice going forward.
  - Communication of accreditor choice should occur when the agency engages to obtain accreditation.
- Send all accreditation documentation to the department. This includes, but is not limited to, proof of accreditation engagement, interim visits/reports/activities, and accreditation award.
  - Agencies will need to send the information to the DD Section Quality Assurance Specialist.
  - Need to send all accreditation documentation within 5 business days of receipt.
- Remain in compliance with the rules of the department.
  - If out of compliance, a restricted license may be issued.
- Must include all DD services in the accreditation if choosing an accreditor that allows the agency to choose services/programs.



# Other Licensing Code Updates

## NDAC: 75-04-01

### **Effective January 1, 2025:**

- Agencies can obtain a provisional license if the agency complies with the rules of the department and have engaged in obtaining accreditation.
- If an agency cannot submit the license renewal application prior to sixty days of the expiration date of the current license, the agency will need submit a request to waive the sixty days submission timeline to the department prior to the license expiration date.
- A licensee who voluntarily terminates a license shall submit a new application to reapply for licensure.
- An application is not complete until all required information and verifications are submitted to the department.
- Additions were made to the conviction offenses to comply/align with NDCC 12.1. The Background Check policy will be updated due to these changes.
- Updated language to be more person-centered.
- Reorganized to flow better.





# Accreditation Series Dates

- The Council on Accreditation (COA)  
[Wednesday, November 13 at 12pm CST](#)
- NADD  
[Thursday, November 14 at 12pm CST](#)
- The Joint Commission  
[Tuesday, November 19 at 12pm CST](#)
- CARF International  
[Tuesday, November 26 at 12pm CST](#)
- CQL  
[Tuesday, December 3 at 12pm CST](#)





# Questions?





# Thank you!

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