



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

Comparison of COA and CARF Accreditation Processes

Council on Accreditation

Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities

Can you tell me more about your agency?

Founded: 1977

Mission: COA partners with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting accreditation standards.

Vision: COA envisions excellence in the delivery of human services globally, resulting in the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

More than 1,800 private and public organizations that serve more than 7 million individuals and families are accredited or in the process of becoming accredited.

COA is the sole national independent accrediting body under the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption to accredit intercountry adoption service providers. COA is the only national accreditor designated by the Department of Defense to develop accreditation standards and processes for human service programs for military personnel and their families.

Founded: 1966

Mission: to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of the persons served.

Vision: through responsiveness to a dynamic and diverse environment, CARF serves as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of the persons served by CARF-accredited organizations and the programs and services they provide.

Accredits more than 6,000 providers with more than 46,000 programs for 5,900 providers at 19,500 locations serving 8.3 million persons.

<p>How long will my organization's accreditation last?</p>	<p>Four years. A three year accreditation cycle is available.</p>	<p>Three years. A one year Provisional Accreditation can be granted under certain conditions.</p>
<p>What programs and services are reviewed?</p>	<p>Accredits <i>all</i> of an organization's programs and services.</p>	<p>Accredits individual services. All programs being accredited are subject to review.</p>
<p>Where can I get support during the accreditation process?</p>	<p><u>MyCOA</u> A password protected support portal with robust capabilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customized version of the standards, including only those service standards relevant to the organization. • Capacity for staff to cooperate and communicate about standards and process issues. • Key documents are uploaded to the organization's page. • Ability to bookmark specific standards for easy access. 	<p><u>CARF Customer Connect Website</u> Using a password to securely log on to Customer Connect, providers can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage their individual contact information. • View up-to-date information about their organizations' surveys. • Access information about the accreditation process. • View and download documents specific to their organizations. • Read the latest CARF International news and announcements.
<p>How does your review process work?</p>	<p>The COA accreditation process takes 12-18 months to complete, depending on the readiness of the organization, its size, and the number of services being delivered.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application: COA's Client Relations Division provides an overview of the accreditation process, cost, and describes your rights and responsibilities in the accreditation process. The application is then completed. 	<p>The steps to accreditation involve a year or more of preparation prior to the site survey and ongoing quality improvement following the survey.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with a designated CARF resource specialist who provides guidance and technical assistance regarding the accreditation process. 2. Conduct a self-evaluation. The organization must implement and use the standards for at least six months before the survey.

	<p>2. Intake/Assessment: COA creates a customized timeline for the completion of the organization’s accreditation process and the site visit is scheduled.</p> <p>Each organization is assigned an Accreditation Coordinator who serves as your consultant, coach, cheerleader, and ombudsman throughout the process.</p> <p>3. Self-Study Process: Under the guidance of its Accreditation Coordinator, organizations assess their practices against COA's standards and remediate discrepancies where necessary.</p> <p>Ten weeks prior to the scheduled site visit, the organization submits a set of important documents to COA for the Review Team to examine prior to conducting the on-site review.</p> <p>4. Site Visit</p> <p>5. Report on site visit findings called the Pre-Commission Review Report</p> <p>6. Accreditation Decision</p> <p>7. The Final Accreditation Report</p>	<p>3. Submit Intent to Survey. The Intent includes detailed information about leadership, programs, and services that the organization is seeking to accredit and the service delivery location(s).</p> <p>Intent to Survey and supporting documents are required at least three full calendar months before the two-month time frame in which the survey is being requested.</p> <p>4. CARF selects the survey team. Surveyors are selected by matching their program or administrative expertise and relevant field experience with the organization’s unique requirements. Emphasis of work is on site survey.</p> <p>5. Accreditation Decision.</p>
<p>How does your site visit work?</p>	<p><u>Site Visit</u></p> <p>Occurs 6-12 months after formally beginning accreditation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review team examines the organization's implementation of applicable standards through observing services, interviews with stakeholders- including governing body members, staff at all levels, and persons served- and reviews documentation. 	<p><u>Site Survey</u></p> <p>Occurs approximately three months following submission of Intent to Survey. Actual site survey will occur within a two-month window.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey team conducts the survey and determines the organization’s conformance to all applicable standards on site through the observation of services, interviews with persons served and other stakeholders, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COA Peer Reviewers are prohibited from providing consultation to the organization while on-site in order to prevent potential conflicts of interest. • All residential programs will be visited. If the organization provides services at numerous program sites, a sample of sites will be visited, as determined by the Team Leader prior to the site visit. • An exit interview is conducted in which the team discusses an overview of their data, a report of the specific findings is provided after completion of the site visit. 	<p>review of documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveyors can provide consultation on standards to organization personnel while on-site. • All locations that offer those programs or services for which the organization is seeking accreditation must be included in the survey and will be visited. • In some instances, surveyors will also visit sites at which a program or service is offered, but which the organization does not own or operate. At minimum, they will check that these sites conform to health and safety standards. • An exit conference is conducted on site to inform the organization of the team’s findings.
<p>Who are the reviewers and what are their qualifications?</p>	<p><u>Peer Reviewers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are unpaid volunteers. • Are seasoned, skilled professionals who must have at least five years of relevant experience, a graduate degree, and certification from COA. • Receive continuous online training. • Role is to determine the organization’s implementation with the applicable COA standards. 	<p><u>Surveyors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are paid \$50/day while doing site surveys. The senior/administrative surveyor who writes the report receives an additional \$75. • Are peer practitioners from the field who are employed by service providers that have CARF accreditation or who have experience in the programs and services that are accredited by CARF. • Receive three-day training. • Role is to assess conformance to CARF standards.

<p>What happens after the review?</p>	<p><u>Pre-Commission Review Report</u></p> <p>Following the site visit, the organization receives a Pre-Commission Review Report (PCR), which summarizes the most important findings from the site visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PCR focuses on important areas where the organization may not have successfully implemented the standards and provides specific recommendations on how to remediate these problem areas. • Following an accreditation decision, organizations receive a Final Accreditation Report (FAR) which is a comprehensive report of the site visit and which describes the organization's strengths as well as areas in need of improvement before the next accreditation cycle. 	<p><u>Survey Report</u></p> <p>Survey Report is provided approximately six to eight weeks after the survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A written Survey Report provides a description of the organization's strengths, recommendations regarding standards that were not met, and suggestions about what could be done to conform to the standards. • A Quality Improvement Plan must be submitted within 90 days following notice of accreditation. This plan shall address the organization's current and future efforts to make improvements in all areas of the survey report where recommendations are made.
<p>How do we maintain accreditation?</p>	<p>COA's maintenance of accreditation process enhances the value of accreditation in the post-accreditation years by promoting continuous implementation of/performance with COA's standards throughout an organization's accreditation cycle.</p> <p>COA's maintenance of accreditation process is composed of three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-reporting of critical incidents and significant occurrences. 2. Participation in the review of third-party concerns or complaints. 3. Completion of an annual Maintenance of Accreditation Report (MOA). 	<p>Organizations must continue to operate in conformance to standards. They must incorporate changes to the standards, accreditation conditions, and policies and procedures between accreditation cycles as they are published and made effective by CARF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to a 90-day Quality Improvement Plan, organizations must submit a signed Annual Conformance to Quality Report. The report is submitted in each of the two years following the Three-Year Accreditation award. • Organizations must report significant administrative and "sentinel" events within 30 days of their occurrence. Changes in situation

	<p><i>The MOA Report:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates your organization's commitment to the pursuit of organizational excellence and quality service delivery for persons served. • Affirms your organization's ongoing implementation of/performance with COA's standards. • Following COA's review of the annual MOA Report, an accredited organization may receive recognition for demonstration of an exemplary quality/performance improvement initiative. 	<p>may require a supplemental on-site survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARF maintains contact with the organization during the accreditation tenure. Organizations are encouraged to keep in contact with CARF as needed during accreditation to help maintain conformance to the standards. <p><u>Unannounced Site Visits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARF reserves the right to conduct an unannounced site visit when concerns are raised regarding an organization's ongoing conformance to the standards.
<p>What program areas are accredited?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Home Study Services – Post-Placement Services – Foster Care to Adoption Services • Adult Day Services • Adult Guardianship • Adult Protective Services • Case Management Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Case Management – Care Coordination – Intensive Case Management • Child and Family Development and Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Early Intervention Services – Home Visitor Services – Parent Education Groups 	<p><u>Aging Services/CARF-CCAC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) • Person-Centered Long-Term Care Communities (PCLTCCs), Nursing Homes • Adult Day Services • Assisted Living • Aging Services Networks • Dementia Care Specialty Program • Stroke Specialty Program <p><u>Behavioral Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assertive Community Treatment • Assessment and Referral • Business Networks • Case Management/Services Coordination • Community Housing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protective Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Child Protective Case Management Services • Community Change Initiatives • Counseling, Support, and Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Counseling Services – Education and Support Group Services – Non-crisis Information and Referral Services • Crisis Response and Information Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crisis Intervention – Crisis Hotline Services – Information and Referral Services • Day Treatment Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Day Treatment – Social Adjustment Services – Intensive Outpatient Treatment – Partial Hospitalization • Disaster Recovery Case Management • Domestic Violence Services • Early Childhood Education • Employee Assistance Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Internal EAPs • Family Preservation and Stabilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Intensive Family Preservation • Financial Education and Counseling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Housing Counseling and Education • Foster Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Family Foster Care – Therapeutic Foster Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Integration • Crisis and Information Call Centers • Crisis Intervention • Crisis Stabilization • Day Treatment • Detoxification • Drug Court Treatment • Employee Assistance • Inpatient Treatment • Integrated Behavioral Health/Primary Care • Intensive Family-Based Services • Intensive Outpatient Treatment • Out-of-Home Treatment • Outpatient Treatment • Partial Hospitalization • Prevention/Diversion • Residential Treatment • Service Management Networks • Supported Living • Therapeutic Communities • Opioid Treatment Programs • Criminal Justice • Juvenile Justice <p><u>Employment and Community Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Employment Services • Community Integration • Community Housing • Supported Living • Organizational Employment Services • Respite Services
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Foster Care Case Management – Foster Home Services • Group Living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Group Homes – Group Living for Youth – Group Living for Adults w/ DD – Residential Centers • Guardianship Services for Minors • Home Care and Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Home Health Aide Services – Personal Care Aide Services – Homemaker Services • Immigration and Refugee Resettlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Resettlement – Resettlement Practice with Separated and Unaccompanied Children – Transition Services – Immigration, Citizenship, and Naturalization Legal Assistance Services • Intercountry Adoption • Juvenile Justice Case Management • Juvenile Justice Corrections • Juvenile Justice Day Services • Kinship Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Informal Kinship Care • Opioid Treatment • Outdoor Activities Supplement • Outpatient Mental Health Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diagnosis, Assessment, and Referral – Clinical Counseling Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services Coordination • Autism Specialty Program • Medical Rehabilitation • Inpatient Rehabilitation • Outpatient Rehabilitation • Home and Community Services • Residential • Vocational • Brain Injury • Spinal Cord System of Care • Stroke Specialty • Amputation Specialty • Interdisciplinary Pain Rehabilitation • Occupational Rehabilitation Programs • Health Enhancement • Case Management • Pediatric Specialty Programs <p><u>Child and Youth Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Referral • Behavioral Consultation • Case Management/Services Coordination • Child/Youth Day Care • Child/Youth Protection • Community Housing and Shelters • Congregate Care • Counseling • Crisis and Information Call Centers • Crisis Intervention • Day Treatment • Early Childhood Development
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Street Outreach – Mobile Outreach – Drop-in Centers for the Homeless • Pregnancy Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pregnancy Options Counseling – Birth Options Counseling • Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services – Assertive Community Outreach • Residential Treatment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Short-Term Diagnostic and Assessment – Crisis Stabilization • Respite Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Short-term Residential Respite – Crisis Nurseries • Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities • Services for Substance Use Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diagnosis, Assessment, and Referral – Co-Dependency Counseling – Substance Use Counseling – Treatment for Substance Use • Shelter Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Shelters • Low Demand Shelters • Short-term Shelters • Enhanced Shelter Services • Transitional Shelters • Shelters for Homeless and Runaway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Preservation and Support • Foster Family and Kinship Care • Group Home Care • Health Enhancement • Home- and Community-Based Rehabilitation • Intensive Outpatient Treatment • Legal Permanency • Prevention/Diversion • Residential Treatment • Respite • Specialized or Treatment Foster Care • Support and Facilitation • Community Transition • Community Youth Development • Employment Transition • Supported Independent Living • Juvenile Justice
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	<p style="text-align: center;">Children and Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Advocacy • Supported Community Living Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supported Housing – Supported Single-room Occupancy Housing – Supported Apartments – Transitional Housing – Halfway Houses – Scattered Site Housing • Vocational Rehabilitation Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Skill Development Training – Vocational Evaluation – Work Adjustment – Job Development and Placement – Supported Employment – Work Services • Volunteer Mentoring Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Youth Mentoring – Friendly Visitors (Older Adults) • Ways to Work • Wilderness and Adventure-Based Therapeutic Outdoor Services • Workforce Development and Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial Asset-Building Services • Youth Development Services • Youth Independent Living Services 	
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Who recognizes your accreditation?

Twenty-five organizations currently endorse COA and its accreditation process. Additionally, COA is recognized by 44 states, the federal government, insurance companies, foundations, and more. See the COA Recognition Report for more information.

Sponsor Organizations:

- Alliance for Children & Families
- Association of Jewish Family and Children’s Agencies
- Catholic Charities USA
- Child Welfare League of America
- Children’s Home Society of America
- Foster Family-based Treatment Association
- Joint Council on International Children’s Services
- Lutheran Services in America
- National Council for Adoption
- National Foundation for Credit Counseling
- National Network for Youth
- National Organization of State Associations for Children
- Volunteers of America

Supporting Organizations:

- American Association of Children’s Residential Centers
- American Network of Community Options

CARF’s International Advisory Council (IAC) represents a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including persons served, providers, and professionals, in the health and human services field. IAC members support CARF’s mission, purposes, values, and vision.

International Advisory Council:

- AARP
- American Academy of Neurology
- American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons
- American Academy of Pain Medicine
- American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
- American Chiropractic Association
- American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services
- American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
- American Hospital Association
- American Kinesiotherapy Association, Inc.
- American Music Therapy Association, Inc.
- American Network of Community Options and Resources
- American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.
- American Physical Therapy Association
- American Psychological Association

	<p>and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Welfare League of Canada • Eagle Program of the United Methodist Association • Employee Assistance Society of North America • Mental Health Corporations of America • NACBH/National Association for Children's Behavioral Health • NASW/ National Association of Social Workers • National Alliance for the Mentally Ill • National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors • National Association of Therapeutic Wilderness Camps • National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Speech-Language-Hearing Association • American Therapeutic Recreation Association • America's Health Insurance Plans • Assisted Living Federation of America • Association of Rehabilitation Nurses • Brain Injury Association of America, Inc. • Case Management Society of America • Child Welfare League of America • Children's Home Society of America • Department of Veterans Affairs • Easter Seals, Inc. • Goodwill Industries International, Inc. • International Association of Jewish Vocational Services • Mental Health Corporations of America, Inc. • National Adult Day Services Association • National Association of Social Workers • National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare • NISH, Inc. • Paralyzed Veterans of America • United Cerebral Palsy Associations • United Spinal Association • US Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
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