



COARC ON ACCREDITATION FOR RESPIRATORY CARE

CoARC Update on Response to COVID-19: 2020–2021 CoARC Site Visits July 30, 2020

The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) continues to monitor the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on our accredited programs. We are fully aware of the ongoing efforts of administrators and faculty to find ways to provide satisfactory educational experiences for their students during this difficult and uncertain time. The CoARC also supports all programmatic actions focused on ensuring the health, safety and security of students, faculty, patients, and other stakeholders.

We provide the following updates and clarifications regarding **virtual site visits** and **on-site visits** for the 2020-2021 review cycle:

Virtual Site Visits

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CoARC Board met on July 11-12, 2020 and voted to begin performing virtual site visits and will reevaluate the process at the next Board meeting, December 11-12, 2020. Currently, programs will be eligible for a virtual site visit if they meet the stated criteria for one of the following three categories:

1. Entry into RC Practice Programs with Continuing Accreditation status:
 - a) All programmatic outcomes on the 2020 RCS (submission deadline September 1, 2020) have met the required CoARC thresholds.
 - b) There are no pending progress reports or adverse actions.
 - c) The program's Referee supports a virtual site visit.
 - d) Programs agrees signs a Virtual Site Visit Agreement.
2. Degree Advancement Programs:
 - a) Utilizes a distance learning format
 - b) Program agrees to and signs the Virtual Site Visit Agreement document
3. Under special circumstances and after due consideration, a virtual site visit is approved by the CoARC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) after consultation with the program's Referee.



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On-Site Visits

- The CoARC is monitoring COVID-19-related travel restrictions, as our top priority is the safety and well-being of our program personnel and volunteer site visitors.
- If a virtual site visit is not a viable option, on-site visits will be rescheduled for Spring 2021. The CoARC asks that programs be flexible in re-scheduling on-site visits as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- For entry into practice programs with pending provisional accreditation reviews, the CoARC will only schedule the on-site visit once access to campus facilities is permitted, and travel restrictions and other conditions are met. Priority scheduling may be implemented for programs on probation and/or with pending progress reports.
- Site visit team members will work cooperatively with programs to re-evaluate those Standards for which data in the Self Study were incomplete because of factors related to the pandemic, as noted above. In addition, should such data become available prior to the visit, the Program Director will, as always, be able to provide updated information to the Referee.

The CoARC appreciates your ongoing commitment to providing high-quality respiratory care education through your participation in programmatic accreditation.

Additional information will be disseminated by the CoARC as deemed appropriate. Should you have specific questions or additional concerns, please do not hesitate to contact [Bonnie Marrs](#) (817-283-2835 ext. 102). CoARC Coronavirus updates are posted on a dedicated page on the [CoARC website](#).