



2021 Certificate of Recognition (COR) COVID Audit Plan

Safe Auditing Guidelines

Partnerships and the CPs have jointly developed the “**2021 Safe Auditing Guidelines for Auditors and Employers.**”

- This document sets the requirements for the conduct of all COR audits, maintenance audit options and auditor qualification audits in 2021, including the requirement to follow all applicable public health directives and guidelines.
- These guidelines must be followed by auditors, auditor candidates and employers for all COR audit activities.

Certification/Recertification Audits

The minimum standards for 2021 COR certification/recertification will be:

- External audits conducted by documentation-only will be eligible for one-year CORs.
 - The minimum requirement for a one-year COR will be any three months of documentation in the previous 12 month period.
- External audits conducted by documentation and interviews (conducted remotely) will be eligible for three-year CORs.
 - The minimum requirement for a three-year COR will be any six months of documentation in the previous 12 month period.
- **The passing score for certification audits conducted either by documentation-only or by documentation plus interviews, will be a minimum of 80% based on overall score only (element scores will not be reported).**
- These rules will be effective for all certification audits conducted from January 1 to December 31, 2021.

Notes on certification/recertification audits:

- Remote interviews will be conducted using web-based platforms (Teams, Skype, WebEx, etc.), telephone calls, or in some cases questionnaires can take the place of interviews (as allowed by Partnerships Standard 1.9).
- Remote observations, while not required, may be conducted if practical.

- The minimum standard may be exceeded on an individual basis, if the auditor and employer agree that on-site interviews and/or observations can be conducted safely. Approval by the Certifying Partner (CP) is not required.

Maintenance Audits

The minimum standard for 2021 COR maintenance will be:

- Documentation-only audits conducted by the employer's internal auditor or an external auditor will be eligible to maintain COR.
 - The minimum requirement for a maintenance audit will be any three months of documentation in the previous 12 month period.
- **The passing score for maintenance audits conducted by documentation-only will be a minimum of 60% based on overall score only.**
- These rules will be effective for all maintenance audits conducted from January 1 to December 31, 2021.

Notes on maintenance audits:

- Auditors conducting maintenance audits are encouraged to include interviews (conducted remotely).
- Remote observations, while not required, may be conducted if practical.
- The minimum standard may be exceeded on an individual basis, if the auditor and employer agree that on-site interviews and/or observations can be conducted safely. Approval by the CP to is not required.

WCB PIR Refund Eligibility

The WCB has confirmed PIR refund eligibility for the 2021 COR auditing plan.

COR Audit Instruments

For regular COR certification, maintenance and recertification audits in 2021, Partnerships will not require CPs to modify their existing audit tools. CPs may use their current approved audit instrument and instruct auditors to "N/A" the questions that do not apply, based on the required verification technique.

1. **Documentation-only audits:** CPs use their regular approved audit instrument, and "N/A" the interview and observation questions. CPs may also use their previously approved 2020 COVID documentation-only audit.
 - To enter completed audits into CORRS, use the COVID audit template and report only the overall audit score. This template can be used for maintenance or certification/recertification purposes. For certification audits select the one-year COR term.

2. **Documentation plus interviews:** CPs use their regular approved audit instrument and “N/A” the observation questions.
 - To enter completed audits in CORRS, use the COVID audit template and report only the overall audit score. This template can be used for maintenance or certification/recertification purposes. For certification audits select the three-year COR term.
3. **Regular three technique audits:** CPs use their regular approved audit instrument.
 - To enter completed audits into CORRS, use the regular audit template and report both element and overall scores.

Note in the event your previously approved instrument cannot be adapted to accommodate the “N/A” scoring process described above, please contact Sherry Maljan at 780-903-0033 or Sherry.Maljan@gov.ab.ca

Maintenance Audit Options

The following COR maintenance audit options will continue to be available in 2021:

- Standard 1.4 – Action Plans
 - The submission timelines for 2021 action plans for COR maintenance will be extended:
 - The deadline for employers to submit their Action Plan to the CP for approval is June 30, 2021.
 - The deadline for employers to submit their completed Action Plan to their CP for review is December 31, 2021.
- Standard 1.10 - Corrective Action Reports (CAR)
 - Note CAR questions requiring observation are not required during 2021, and may be scored as not applicable (n/a).
 - This minimum standard may be exceeded on an individual basis, if the auditor and employer agree that observations can be conducted safely. Approval by the Certifying Partner (CP) is not required.
- Standard 1.17 - Safety Surveys
- Standard 1.21 - Use of Corporate Audits for COR Maintenance
- Standard 1.22 - Health and Safety Perception Surveys

Auditor Recertification Requirements

Certified auditors must be recertified at least once every three years. To be eligible for recertification, auditors must.

1. attend an auditor refresher training session within the three-year certification period, and

2. successfully complete one audit (rather than two audits) within the three-year auditor certification period. This change was introduced in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic, and is extended until December 31, 2021.

Auditor Qualification Audits

For auditor certification in 2021, auditor candidates will be required to:

1. complete auditor training (covering all required content),
2. pass the full auditor exam (covering all required content), and
3. successfully complete a qualifying audit based on both documentation and interviews (conducted remotely).

Auditors holding limited status (after completing a doc-only qualification audit in 2020), must conduct a second qualification audit or relinquish their auditor status. The second audit must include both documentation and interviews (conducted remotely), and be completed in 2021 or in 2022 (for internal auditors).

- Prior to conducting their second qualifying audit, auditors must complete focused training (covering interviews, observations and use of the audit tool) from their CP.

Notes on qualification audits:

- Remote observations, while not required, may be conducted if practical.
- The minimum standard may be exceeded on an individual basis, if the auditor and employer agree that on-site interviews and/or observations can be conducted safely. Approval by CP is not required.

CP Staff Audits of Member Employers

CPs may use staff auditors to conduct COR certification/recertification or maintenance audits in 2021.

- Review by an audit reviewer who is external to the CP is not required.
- CP staff conducting audits must be COR certified auditors.

Completion of 2020 Audits

The current rules for COVID COR audits conducted up to and including December 31, 2020 remain unchanged.

For Questions

If you have any questions, please contact your CP or Ian Hooper at 780-415-9997 or e-mail at: ian.hooper@gov.ab.ca