



2022 Certificate of Recognition (COR) COVID Audit Plan

The 2022 COVID Audit Plan is in effect from January 1 to December 31, 2022.

- On-site data gathering activities by auditors is suspended until March 31, 2022.
 - Internal maintenance auditors who are directed by their employer to remain on-site during the pandemic may continue to conduct on-site data gathering, however the *Safe Auditing Guidelines for Auditors and Employers for On-Site Activities* must be strictly followed.
- Continuation of the suspension will be re-evaluated by Partnerships every quarter throughout 2022 in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.
 - The status of the suspension will be updated by Partnerships at least one month in advance of every quarter.
- **If the suspension is lifted**, then on an individual basis where an auditor and the employer agree that on-site data gathering activities can be conducted safely, these activities may resume. The *Safe Auditing Guidelines for Auditors and Employers for On-Site Activities* must be strictly followed.
 - Approval by the CP is not required.

Audit Techniques

- Remote interviews are conducted using web-based platforms (Teams, Zoom, WebEx, etc.) or by telephone calls.
 - For some audits, questionnaires can take the place of interviews (as allowed by Partnerships Standard 1.9).
- The use of observations for COR and SECOR audits will remain optional throughout 2022.
 - Auditors may explore the use of remote technology for observations with the approval of their Certifying Partner.

COR Audits

A. Certification/Recertification Audit Minimum Requirements

External audits based on documentation and interviews (conducted remotely) are eligible for 3-year CORs.

- The minimum requirement for documentation is any six months of system documentation in the previous 12-month period.
- The passing score for certification/recertification is a minimum of 80% based on overall score only. There is no minimum element score requirement.

B. Maintenance Audit Minimum Requirements

Audits based on documentation and interviews (conducted remotely) by either the employer's internal auditor or an external auditor are eligible to maintain COR.

- The minimum requirement for documentation is any six months of system documentation in the previous 12-month period.



- The passing score for maintenance audits is a minimum of 60% based on overall score only.

C. COR Audit Instruments based on Documentation and Interviews

CPs are not required to create specific COVID audits based on documentation and interviews, the current approved audit is used.

- Auditors will mark observation questions as not applicable (N/A).
- Multiple audit technique questions that require observations are scored based only on the other specified techniques (documentation and/or interviews).

D. Processing Documentation and Interview Audits in CORRS

Use the COVID audit template to process certification/recertification or maintenance audits in CORRS.

- For certification/recertification audits, select the three-year COR term.
- Enter only the overall audit score. Element scores are not reported.
 - Note when observation questions in COR audits are marked as N/A, this unbalances the scoring proportions between elements.

Maintenance Options for COR

The following maintenance options are available to employers in the COR program (these options are not available to SECOR employers).

- Standard 1.5 – Action Plans
 - The submission timelines for action plans for COR maintenance are extended:
 - The deadline for employers to submit an Action Plan to their CP for approval is June 30, 2022.
 - The deadline for employers to submit their completed Action Plan to their CP for review is December 31, 2022.
- Standard 1.10 - Corrective Action Reports (CAR)
 - CAR questions requiring observations are not required during 2022, and may be scored as not applicable (n/a).
- Standard 1.21 - Use of Corporate Audits for COR Maintenance
- Standard 1.22 - Health and Safety Perception Surveys

Small Employer Certificate of Recognition (SECOR) Audits and Assessments

A. SECOR Audits - Minimum Requirements

- External SECOR audits based on documentation and interviews (conducted remotely) are eligible for three-year certification.
 - The minimum requirement for documentation is any six months of system documentation in the previous 12-month period.
- The current approved SECOR audit instrument is used.
 - Auditors will mark SECOR observation questions as not applicable (N/A).



- Multiple audit technique questions that require observations are scored based only on the other specified techniques (documentation and/or interviews).
- SECOR element scores are reported.
 - Note, compared to the COR audit, there are so few SECOR questions that require observations, marking these as N/A does not significantly affect the balance between elements.

B. SECOR Assessments - Minimum requirements

- SECOR Assessments conducted with the current documentation-based process are eligible for three-year certification.
 - The minimum requirement for documentation is any six months of system documentation in the previous 12-month period.
- CPs follow the current review and scoring process for SECOR assessments as outlined in Partnerships Standard 7.2.

C. Scoring Requirements for SECOR Audits and Assessments

- The passing score for certification/recertification is a minimum of 80% based on overall score, and no less than 50% in each audit element.
- The passing score for maintenance is a minimum of 60% based on overall score only.

COR Expiry Date Extensions

COR expiry date extensions for up to 90 days are available to both COR and SECOR employers.

- Extensions may be offered to employers at CP discretion, and will not be advertised.
- Employers may receive multiple COR expiry date extensions if required.
 - Note COR expiry dates cannot be extended past December 31, 2022. Extensions issued after October 2 must be shorter than 90 days to avoid crossing the calendar year.

Auditors

A. Auditors - 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 within the three-year auditor certification period.

B. Auditor Candidates - Qualification Requirements

For certification, auditor candidates are 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 qualification audit based on both documentation and interviews (conducted remotely).
- While the COVID pandemic continues, auditor candidates are allowed a one-year period (after completion of auditor training), to complete and submit their required qualification audit to their CP for review.



- If individual circumstances merit a longer period for an auditor candidate to complete their qualifying audit, the CP should contact Partnerships for approval.

C. Auditors Holding Limited Status from 2020

Auditors holding limited status (after completing a documentation-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 by December 31, 2022.

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

D. CP Staff Audits of Member Employers

CPs may use staff auditors to conduct COR certification/recertification or maintenance audits in 2022.

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

Safe Auditing Guidelines for On-Site Work

Partnerships and the Certifying Partners jointly developed the *Safe Auditing Guidelines for Auditors and Employers for On-Site Activities*.

- This document sets the requirements for on-site work (when permitted) for all COR audits, maintenance audit options and auditor qualification audits, including the requirement to follow all applicable public health directives and guidelines.
- The guidelines must be followed by auditors, auditor candidates and employers for any COR on-site data gathering activities.

WCB PIR Refund Eligibility

The WCB confirms PIR refund eligibility for the 2022 COR auditing plan.

Completion of 2021 Audits

Audits conducted up to and including December 31, 2021, follow the requirements of the 2021 COR COVID Audit Plan.

For Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Ian Hooper at 780-415-9997 or e-mail: ian.hooper@gov.ab.ca or AFPA at info@afpa.com 403.201.3657