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# CMS Manual System

## Pub. 100-07 State Operations

### Provider Certification

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Department of Health & Human  
Services (DHHS)  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid  
Services (CMS)

Transmittal 23

Date: JANUARY 19, 2007

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#### **SUBJECT: Federal Minimum Qualifications Standards**

**I. SUMMARY OF CHANGES:** The Surveyor Minimum Qualifications test was converted from a paper and pencil test to an automated test and was converted from a two module test to a one module test.

**NEW/REVISED MATERIAL - EFFECTIVE DATE\*: February 20, 2007**  
**IMPLEMENTATION DATE: February 20, 2007**

*Disclaimer for manual changes only: The revision date and transmittal number apply to the red italicized material only. Any other material was previously published and remains unchanged. However, if this revision contains a table of contents, you will receive the new/revised information only, and not the entire table of contents.*

**II. CHANGES IN MANUAL INSTRUCTIONS: (N/A if manual not updated.)**  
**(R = REVISED, N = NEW, D = DELETED) – (Only One Per Row.)**

<b>R/N/D</b>	<b>CHAPTER/SECTION/SUBSECTION/TITLE</b>
<b>R</b>	4/Table of Contents
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.1C/Test Composition
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<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.1E/Unsuccessful Performance
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.2/Test Administration/Registration
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.2A/SA Registration Responsibilities
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.2B/RO Registration Responsibilities
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.2C/Contractor Registration Responsibilities
<b>N</b>	4/4009/4009.2D/Testing Center Registration Responsibilities
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.3/Additional Responsibilities
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.3A/Additional SA Responsibilities
<b>R</b>	4/4009/4009.3B/Additional RO Responsibilities
<b>N</b>	4/4009/4009.3C/Surveyor Responsibilities
<b>N</b>	4/4009/4009.4/Test-Related Activities
<b>N</b>	4/4009/4009.4A/Recordkeeping
<b>N</b>	4/4009/4009.4B/Training of Surveyors That Do Not Pass The SMQT

**III. FUNDING: No additional funding will be provided by CMS; contractor activities are to be carried out within their FY 2007 operating budgets.**

**IV. ATTACHMENTS:**

	<b>Business Requirements</b>
<b>X</b>	<b>Manual Instruction</b>
	<b>Confidential Requirements</b>
	<b>One-Time Notification</b>
	<b>Recurring Update Notification</b>

**\*Unless otherwise specified, the effective date is the date of service.**

# State Operations Manual

## Chapter 4 - Program Administration and Fiscal Management

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*(Rev. 23, 01-19-07)*

### Transmittals for Chapter 4

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## **4009.1C - Test Composition**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*The Surveyor Minimum Qualifications Test (SMQT) is a 1 day 4 hour automated test which focuses on the LTC facility, the survey process, related laws, regulations and guidelines, environmental quality, sanitation, resident assessment and care plans, facility records, medicine, nursing, rehabilitation, gerontology, disability, chronic disease, resident rights, quality of life, nutrition, pharmacy, infection control, scope, and severity. The test also focuses on skill in documenting, gathering, and integrating information.*

## **4009.1D - Successful Performance**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

### **Successful Completion**

*An individual must successfully complete the SMQT in order to survey independently. A surveyor can serve as a member of a survey team with at least one surveyor who has successfully completed the required training, but cannot survey independently until the surveyor has successfully completed the SMQT.*

## **4009.1E - Unsuccessful Performance**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

### **1. Unsuccessful Completion**

*Individuals who do not successfully complete the SMQT must retake the examination until they are successful. Alternate procedures for meeting surveyor minimum qualifications in rare and extraordinary circumstances are specified in §4009.1.E.3. If a surveyor fails to successfully complete the SMQT, the State Survey Agency (or, if a federal surveyor, the RO) must develop an individual training plan (ITP) for the surveyor to correct deficiencies. The components of the ITP are specified in §4009.1.E.2. During this period, the surveyor may participate in surveys as a trainee, i.e., the surveyor must be accompanied onsite by a surveyor who has successfully completed the training and testing program.*

### **2. Individual Training Plan (ITP)**

The ITP must have the following components:

- Individual training objectives that address the area of deficiency identified by the training and testing program;
- A plan to meet training objectives;

- A schedule for meeting these objectives; and
- Someone designated to monitor the progress of the individual toward meeting these objectives.

Upon completing the ITP, the surveyor must retake *the SMQT*.

### **3. Rare and Extraordinary Circumstances**

If the SA considers an individual to be a highly qualified LTC surveyor and that individual does not successfully complete *the SMQT* after three attempts, the State Survey and Certification Director may petition the RO for an exception to *the requirement of passing the SMQT* for the individual. The *State* must *include at least the following documentation in its request for an exception:*

- A rationale as to why this individual has not successfully completed the *SMQT*;
- *Attestation by the State Survey and Certification Director that the individual for whom the request is being made is a highly qualified LTC surveyor; and*
- Evidence that the individual has full understanding of LTC requirements, guidelines, and survey procedures, and has applied them accurately, consistently, and effectively when conducting LTC surveys or accompanying the survey team. This evidence may consist of documentation of onsite evaluations of the surveyor's performance by experienced surveyors, *including supervisors*.

## **4009.2 -Test Administration/Registration**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*The SMQT is administered at over 200 testing centers located throughout the United States. Each testing center determines their specific hours of operation; however, all testing centers are open at least 16 hours each week, with most open 32 to 40 hours.*

### **4009.2A – State Agency (SA) Registration Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*State Agency (SA) registration responsibilities areas are as follows:*

- SAs work with the surveyors to determine when and where they will take the SMQT;*
- At least 4 weeks before the preferred test date, the SA submits surveyor information on the State Candidates' SMQT Roster Sheet to the SMQT contractor and the RO and lists three possible dates and times for each surveyor to take the test;*
- At least 3 weeks before the test date, and once the SA is notified that the SMQT contractor has contacted the testing center and put the surveyors' names on the eligible list, the SA calls the testing center to schedule the SMQT for surveyors;*
- Within 24 hours of registration, the SA notifies the surveyor of the date, time, and location of their test; and*
- States must ensure that surveyors or surveyors' supervisors call the testing center to cancel the appointment at least 24 hours before the scheduled testing time if the surveyor cannot take the SMQT at the designated time. If cancelled less than 24 hours in advance, CMS will be charged. The contractor and the RO must be notified of all cancellations.*

### **4009.2B – Regional Office (RO) Registration Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*Regional Office (RO) registration responsibilities are as follows:*

- ROs must ensure that they receive the SMQT State Candidates Roster Sheet when surveyors are registered to take the SMQT;*
- ROs must ensure that States follow the established procedures for registering surveyors to take the SMQT; and*

- *ROs must share with the States any updates or changes to the SMQT procedures or policies conveyed to them.*

### **4009.2C – Contractor Registration Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*Contractor registration responsibilities are as follows:*

- *Within 3 days of receipt of the SMQT State Candidates Roster Sheet, the SMQT contractor registers surveyors listed on the roster with the testing center; and*
- *The SMQT contractor notifies the SA of successful registration.*

### **4009.2D – Testing Center Registration Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*Testing center registration responsibilities are as follows:*

- *When the SMQT contractor contacts the testing center to register a surveyor as eligible, the testing center representative puts the surveyor's name on the list of eligible surveyors; and*
- *The testing center and the SA immediately notify surveyors of the date, time, and location for testing.*

### **4009.3 – Additional Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

#### **4009.3A – Additional SA Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*The SA has the following additional responsibilities:*

- *Approving, training, and monitoring training programs;*
- *Distributing SMQT related materials, including any updates or changes to the SMQT procedures and policies as conveyed to them by the RO;*
- *Distributing test results to individual surveyors;*

- *Approving, coordinating, and monitoring training programs for individuals who do not successfully complete the test; and*
- *Maintaining records of the State surveyor's progress toward successful completion of the training and testing program in each LTC surveyor's personnel file. This record should include information specified in §4009.4.A. Do not destroy SMQT records.*

### **4009.3B – Additional RO Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

*The RO has the following additional responsibilities:*

- *Distributing SMQT related materials to Federal surveyors;*
- *Notifying Federal surveyors of dates, times, and locations for testing;*
- *Informing Federal surveyors of test results;*
- *Approving, coordinating, and monitoring implementation of training programs for RO surveyors who do not successfully complete the test; and*
- *Maintaining records of Federal surveyors' progress toward successful completion of the training and testing program in each RO LTC surveyor's personnel file. This record should include information specified in §4009.4.A. Do not destroy SMQT records.*

### **4009.3C – Surveyor Responsibilities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

#### **Test Procedures and Security**

*Each individual participating in the test must adhere to testing procedures established by the testing center, the RO, and the State.*

### **4009.4 - Test-Related Activities**

*(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)*

#### **4009.4A – Recordkeeping**



***(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)***

The SA will use a standardized format *to structure an SMQT record* for each LTC surveyor. The SA uses *this format* to track implementation of the training and testing program and the progress of individual surveyors toward its completion. *The RO will use this format for Federal surveyors. Each record must include at least the following:*

- *Full name;*
- *Surveyor identification number;*
- *Entry on duty date;*
- *Date the individual completed prerequisite requirements for the SMQT;*
- *Date(s) the individual took the SMQT, dates of retests; and*
- *Date of successful completion of the SMQT.*

*These records should not be destroyed under any circumstances and are confidential.*

#### ***4009.4B – Training of Surveyors That Do Not Pass the SMQT***

***(Rev. 23, Issued: 01-19-07; Effective/Implementation Dates: 02-20-07)***

The SA develops a standardized plan to provide training for those surveyors who do not successfully complete *the SMQT*, (e.g., onsite observation of survey team, independent study, continuing education). The plan should address how the SA identifies the most effective approach for each individual in training, and how it manages the individual's progress.