

## Health Center Program Requirements

Health centers are non-profit private or public entities that serve designated medically underserved populations/areas or special medically underserved populations comprised of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, the homeless or residents of public housing. A summary of the key health center program requirements is provided below.

For additional information on these requirements, please review:

- Health Center Program Statute: Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. §254b)
- Program Regulations (42 CFR Part 51c and 42 CFR Parts 56.201-56.604 for Community and Migrant Health Centers)
- Grants Regulations (45 CFR Part 74)

Summary of Key Health Center Program Requirements	
NEED	
1.	<p><b>Needs Assessment:</b> Health center demonstrates and documents the needs of its target population, updating its service area, when appropriate. (Section 330(k)(2) and Section 330(k)(3)(J) of the PHS Act)</p>
SERVICES	
2.	<p><b>Required and Additional Services:</b> Health center provides all required primary, preventive, enabling health services and additional health services as appropriate and necessary, either directly or through established written arrangements and referrals. (Section 330(a) of the PHS Act)  <b>Note:</b> Health centers requesting funding to serve homeless individuals and their families must provide substance abuse services among their required services (Section 330(h)(2) of the PHS Act)</p>
3.	<p><b>Staffing Requirement:</b> Health center maintains a core staff as necessary to carry out all required primary, preventive, enabling health services and additional health services as appropriate and necessary, either directly or through established arrangements and referrals. Staff must be appropriately licensed, credentialed and privileged. (Section 330(a)(1), (b)(1)-(2), (k)(3)(C), and (k)(3)(I) of the PHS Act)</p>
4.	<p><b>Accessible Hours of Operation/Locations:</b> Health center provides services at times and locations that assure accessibility and meet the needs of the population to be served. (Section 330(k)(3)(A) of the PHS Act)</p>
5.	<p><b>After Hours Coverage:</b> Health center provides professional coverage for medical emergencies during hours when the center is closed. (Section 330(k)(3)(A) of the PHS Act and 42 CFR Part 51c.102(h)(4))</p>
6.	<p><b>Hospital Admitting Privileges and Continuum of Care:</b> Health center physicians have admitting privileges at one or more referral hospitals, or other such arrangement to ensure continuity of care. In cases where hospital arrangements (including admitting privileges and membership) are not possible, health center must firmly establish arrangements for hospitalization, discharge planning, and patient tracking. (Section 330(k)(3)(L) of the PHS Act)</p>

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- 7. Sliding Fee Discounts:** Health center has a system in place to determine eligibility for patient discounts adjusted on the basis of the patient's ability to pay.
- This system must provide a full discount to individuals and families with annual incomes at or below 100% of the Federal poverty guidelines (only nominal fees may be charged) and for those with incomes between 100% and 200% of poverty, fees must be charged in accordance with a sliding discount policy based on family size and income.\*
  - No discounts may be provided to patients with incomes over 200 % of the Federal poverty guidelines.\*
  - No patient will be denied health care services due to an individual's inability to pay for such services by the health center, assuring that any fees or payments required by the center for such services will be reduced or waived.

(Section 330(k)(3)(G) of the PHS Act, 42 CFR Part 51c.303(f)), and 42 CFR Part 51c.303(u))

- 8. Quality Improvement/Assurance Plan:** Health center has an ongoing Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance (QI/QA) program that includes clinical services and management, and that maintains the confidentiality of patient records. The QI/QA program must include:

- a clinical director whose focus of responsibility is to support the quality improvement/assurance program and the provision of high quality patient care;\*
- periodic assessment of the appropriateness of the utilization of services and the quality of services provided or proposed to be provided to individuals served by the health center; and such assessments shall: \*
  - be conducted by physicians or by other licensed health professionals under the supervision of physicians;\*
  - be based on the systematic collection and evaluation of patient records;\* and
  - identify and document the necessity for change in the provision of services by the health center and result in the institution of such change, where indicated.\*

(Section 330(k)(3)(C) of the PHS Act, 45 CFR Part 74.25 (c)(2), (3) and 42 CFR Part 51c.303(c)(1-2))

### MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

- 9. Key Management Staff:** Health center maintains a fully staffed health center management team as appropriate for the size and needs of the center. Prior approval by HRSA of a change in the Project Director/Executive Director/CEO position is required. (Section 330(k)(3)(l) of the PHS Act, 42 CFR Part 51c.303(p) and 45 CFR Part 74.25(c)(2),(3))

- 10. Contractual/Affiliation Agreements:** Health center exercises appropriate oversight and authority over all contracted services, including assuring that any subrecipient(s) meets Health Center program requirements. (Section 330(k)(3)(l)(ii), 42 CFR Part 51c.303(n), (t)), Section 1861(aa)(4) and Section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act, and 45 CFR Part 74.1(a) (2))

- 11. Collaborative Relationships:** Health center makes effort to establish and maintain collaborative relationships with other health care providers, including other health centers, in the service area of the center. The health center secures letter(s) of support from existing health centers (section 330 grantees and FQHC Look-Alikes) in the service area or provides an explanation for why such letter(s) of support cannot be obtained. (Section 330(k)(3)(B) of the PHS Act and 42 CFR Part 51c.303(n))

**NOTE:** Portions of program requirements notated by an asterisk "\*" indicate regulatory requirements that are recommended **but not required** for grantees that receive funds solely for Health Care for the Homeless (section 330(h)) and/or the Public Housing Primary Care (section 330(i)) Programs.

<b>Summary of Key Health Center Program Requirements</b>	
<b>12. Financial Management and Control Policies:</b>	Health center maintains accounting and internal control systems appropriate to the size and complexity of the organization reflecting Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and separates functions appropriate to organizational size to safeguard assets and maintain financial stability. Health center assures an annual independent financial audit is performed in accordance with Federal audit requirements, including submission of a corrective action plan addressing all findings, questioned costs, reportable conditions, and material weaknesses cited in the Audit Report. (Section 330(k)(3)(D), Section 330(q) of the PHS Act and 45 CFR Parts 74.14, 74.21 and 74.26)
<b>13. Billing and Collections:</b>	Health center has systems in place to maximize collections and reimbursement for its costs in providing health services, including written billing, credit and collection policies and procedures. (Section 330(k)(3)(F) and (G) of the PHS Act)
<b>14. Budget:</b>	Health center has developed a budget that reflects the costs of operations, expenses, and revenues (including the Federal grant) necessary to accomplish the service delivery plan, including the number of patients to be served. (Section 330(k)(3)(D), Section 330(k)(3)(I)(i), and 45 CFR Part 74.25)
<b>15. Program Data Reporting Systems:</b>	Health center has systems which accurately collect and organize data for program reporting and which support management decision making. (Section 330(k)(3)(I)(ii) of the PHS Act)
<b>16. Scope of Project:</b>	Health center maintains its funded scope of project (sites, services, service area, target population and providers), including any increases based on recent grant awards. (45 CFR Part 74.25)
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	
<b>17. Board Authority:</b>	<p>Health center governing board maintains appropriate authority to oversee the operations of the center, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holding monthly meetings;</li> <li>• approval of the health center grant application and budget;</li> <li>• selection/dismissal and performance evaluation of the health center CEO;</li> <li>• selection of services to be provided and the health center hours of operations;</li> <li>• measuring and evaluating the organization's progress in meeting its annual and long-term programmatic and financial goals and developing plans for the long-range viability of the organization by engaging in strategic planning, ongoing review of the organization's mission and bylaws, evaluating patient satisfaction, and monitoring organizational assets and performance;* and</li> <li>• establishment of general policies for the health center.</li> </ul> <p>(Section 330(k)(3)(H) of the PHS Act and 42 CFR Part 51c.304)</p> <p><b>Note:</b> In the case of public centers (also referred to as public entities) with co-applicant governing boards, the public center is permitted to retain authority for establishing general policies (fiscal and personnel policies) for the health center (Section 330(k)(3)(H) of the PHS Act and 42 CFR 51c.304(d)(iii) and (iv)).</p>

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- 18. Board Composition:** The health center governing board is composed of individuals, a majority of whom are being served by the center and, this majority as a group, represent the individuals being served by the center in terms of demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, and sex. Specifically:
- Governing board has at least 9 but no more than 25 members, as appropriate for the complexity of the organization.\*
  - The remaining non-consumer members of the board shall be representative of the community in which the center's service area is located and shall be selected for their expertise in community affairs, local government, finance and banking, legal affairs, trade unions, and other commercial and industrial concerns, or social service agencies within the community.\*
  - No more than one half (50%) of the non-consumer board members may derive more than 10% of their annual income from the health care industry.\*

**Note:** Upon a showing of good cause the Secretary may waive, for the length of the project period, the patient majority requirement in the case of a health center that receives a grant pursuant to subsection (g), (h), (i), or (p). (Section 330(k)(3)(H) of the PHS Act and 42 CFR Part 51c.304)

- 19. Conflict of Interest Policy:** Health center bylaws or written corporate board approved policy include provisions that prohibit conflict of interest by board members, employees, consultants and those who furnish goods or services to the health center.
- No board member shall be an employee of the health center or an immediate family member of an employee. The Chief Executive may serve only as a non-voting ex-officio member of the board.\*  
(45 CFR Part 74.42 and 42 CFR Part 51c.304(b))

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