

## **CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines Version 12.0**

### **Summary of Updates and Emphasis**

This document is a reference tool that highlights the major changes from the *CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines Version 11.0 to 12.0*. This document is not a substitute for reviewing the *CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines V12.0* in its entirety. The *CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Assurance Guidelines V12.0* manual is effective upon its release in September 2025. General formatting and minor wording revisions have occurred throughout the manual and are not included in this change matrix. Please contact the CAHPS Hospice Survey Project Team for any specific questions.

QAG Section	Summary of Key Changes in V12.0
<b>Chapters</b>	
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Revised V11.0 to V12.0</li> <li>○ Revised dates as necessary (e.g., 2024 to 2025; 2025 to 2026)</li> <li>○ Minor formatting and wording revisions throughout the manual</li> <li>○ References to XML File Specification V11.0 have been updated to XML File Specification V12.0</li> <li>○ Updated Telephone mode to Phone mode</li> <li>○ Updated Mixed mode to Mail Phone mode</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>II. Introduction and Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated The Current CAHPS Hospice Survey, Administration Procedures, and Web Mail Mode section</li> <li>○ Updated the CAHPS Hospice Survey Quality Measures and Constituent Items table</li> <li>○ Added the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) survey reapproval date</li> <li>○ Updated the Compare Tool Refresh Date Timeline table</li> <li>○ Updated the CAHPS Hospice Survey Development and National Implementation Timeline</li> <li>○ Updated the Data Collection and Submission Timeline</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>III. Program Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated the link for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security and Privacy Rules</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that hospices may not contact caregivers directly regarding survey responses provided by the caregiver in the survey, except when the caregiver explicitly requests a call from the hospice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>IV. Communications and Technical Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>V. Sampling Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Added that decedents whose only caregiver is under the age of 18 should be coded with a caregiver relationship of "8 - No caregiver of record"</li> <li>○ Adding "Decedent's caregiver on the vendor's Do Not Call List" to the ineligible decedents/caregivers criteria</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>QAG Section</b>	<b>Summary of Key Changes in V12.0</b>
<b>VI. Mail Only Survey Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Added that a general signature block that references a specific department or team at the hospice (example: “Sincerely, Quality Improvement Team, XYZ Hospice”) may be used instead of the signature of the hospice Administrator or survey vendor Project Director</li> <li>○ Added that letters must not include any QR codes for the survey vendor or hospice</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors must have a process to identify addresses that are submitted as “unknown,” “don’t know,” etc. and must attempt to update with the hospice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>VII. Phone Only Survey Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Added that a general signature block that references a specific department or team at the hospice (example: “Sincerely, Quality Improvement Team, XYZ Hospice”) may be used instead of the signature of the hospice Administrator or survey vendor Project Director, i.e., prenotification letter</li> <li>○ Added that letters must not include any QR codes for the survey vendor or hospice, i.e., prenotification letter</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors must have a process to identify addresses that are submitted as “unknown,” “don’t know,” etc. and must attempt to update with the hospice, i.e., prenotification letter</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that the “number-survey-attempts-telephone” field captures the number of telephone attempts made during the survey administration period</li> <li>○ Clarified that survey vendors must attempt to reach each caregiver in the sample, even caregivers with one initial for a first name</li> <li>○ Clarified that if an interviewer reaches a screening number (e.g., privacy screen such as Google assistant, privacy manager, phone intercept, or blocked call) the call counts as one telephone attempt and additional attempts must be made (up to five attempts)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>VIII. Mail Phone Survey Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Added that a general signature block that references a specific department or team at the hospice (example: “Sincerely, Quality Improvement Team, XYZ Hospice”) may be used instead of the signature of the hospice Administrator or survey vendor Project Director</li> <li>○ Added that letters must not include any QR codes for the survey vendor or hospice</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors must have a process to identify addresses that are submitted as “unknown,” “don’t know,” etc. and must attempt to update with the hospice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that the “number-survey-attempts-telephone” field captures the number of telephone attempts made during the survey administration period</li> <li>○ Clarified that survey vendors must attempt to reach each caregiver in the sample, even caregivers with one initial for a first name</li> <li>○ Clarified that if an interviewer reaches a screening number (e.g., privacy screen such as Google assistant, privacy manager, phone intercept, or blocked call) the call counts as one telephone attempt and additional attempts must be made (up to five attempts)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>IX. Web Mail Mode Survey Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Added that a general signature block that references a specific department or team at the hospice (example: “Sincerely, Quality Improvement Team, XYZ Hospice”) may be used instead of the signature of the hospice Administrator or survey vendor Project Director</li> <li>○ Added that letters must not include any QR codes for the survey vendor or hospice</li> <li>○ Added that invitations must be sent from an email address that is specific to the CAHPS Hospice Survey</li> <li>○ Added additional guidelines regarding the email invitations</li> <li>○ Added the option for an “Unsubscribe Statement” to be added to the email invitations</li> <li>○ Added that the web survey platform must not allow auto advance to the next question once a web response is entered for a question</li> <li>○ Added the requirement that once caregivers submit survey, the redirection page must not contain any marketing information</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors must have a process to identify addresses that are submitted as “unknown,” “don’t know,” etc. and must attempt to update with the hospice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that supplemental or adjunct services such as commercial software or other means to find or replace email addresses provided by the hospice must not be used</li> <li>○ Clarified that supplemental questions must be identical for the web survey as well as both mail wave attempts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>X. Data Coding and Data File Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated the Final Survey Status Code “7- Non-response: Breakoff/Partial Complete”</li> <li>○ Added that one initial for a first name is not considered an incomplete first name and that survey vendors must attempt to reach each non-respondent to the mail survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that the “number-survey-attempts-telephone” field captures the number of telephone attempts made during the survey administration period for survey modes “2-Phone Only” and “3-Mail Phone”</li> <li>○ Clarified that if the “survey-mode” is “4 – Web Mail,” the “email status” must be coded “1-Yes” or “2-No.” The code “88 - Not Applicable” is not allowable.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>XI. Data Submission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated the Survey Vendor Authorization Form timeline table</li> <li>○ Added “pgp” XML file extension as allowable encryption</li> <li>○ Clarified the content of the Survey Status Summary Report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>XII. Oversight Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No revisions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that all survey materials relevant to the CAHPS Hospice Survey administration are required to be submitted for each approved mode of the survey administration, in all languages used</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>XIII. Data Reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated the Public Reporting Provider Preview Period and Refresh Date table</li> <li>○ Updated the Publicly Reported CAHPS Hospice Survey Measures section</li> <li>○ Updated the Top-Box, Middle-Box, Bottom-Box Response table</li> <li>○ Updated the Adjusting Results section</li> <li>○ Updated the CAHPS Hospice Survey Star Ratings section</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Emphasis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clarified that the February 2026 Care Compare refresh will be the last refresh that uses data from only the original survey. Scores for the May 2026 through November 2027 Care Compare refreshes will be calculated using data from quarters that fielded the original and revised surveys. During this time, Star Ratings will be calculated for the seven original measures that are not undergoing substantive changes in the revised survey.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>XIV. Exception Request Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>

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<b>XIV. Discrepancy Report Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>XV. Data Quality Checks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b> Minimum Business Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated survey vendor and/or subcontractor requirements to participate in the CAHPS Hospice Survey</li> <li>○ Updated dates for relevant survey experience</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors must remove records with completed surveys from further outreach in a timely manner across all modes of administration</li> <li>○ Added that survey vendors may use commercial software/resources to ensure mailing addresses are accurate</li> <li>○ Updated Web-Mail Administration section</li> <li>○ Updated Technical Assistance/Customer Support</li> <li>○ Added Past Performance Requirements section</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Appendix B</b> Survey Vendor Authorization Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated the Survey Vendor Authorization Form timeline table</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Appendix C</b> Data Warehouse Access Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix D</b> Sample File Layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix E</b> XML File Layout Version 11.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updated &lt;ineligible-presample&gt; to include “Decedent’s caregiver is on the vendor’s Do Not Call List”</li> <li>○ Clarified if “Facility Name” is not applicable or not provided, code as N/A</li> <li>○ Updated the Final Survey Status Code “7- Non-response: Breakoff/Partial Complete”</li> <li>○ Clarified that &lt;number-survey-attempts-telephone&gt; is the number of telephone attempts made during the survey administration period for survey modes “2-Phone Only” and “3-Mail Phone.” For Mail Only or Web Mail Mode, code 88.</li> <li>○ Clarified that for Mail Only, Phone Only, or Mail Phone Mode, &lt;email-status&gt;is coded 88. For Web Mail, code 1 or 2 must be included.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>Appendix F</b> Interviewing Guidelines for Telephone Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix G</b> Frequently Asked Questions for Customer Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix H</b> Model Quality Assurance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix I</b> Exception Request Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix J</b> Discrepancy Report Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix K</b> Participation Exemption for Size Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix L</b> Attestation Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix M</b> Examples of Additional Supplemental Questions for Survey Vendor Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix N</b> Informational Flyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>
<b>Appendix O</b> Sample Prenotification Letter (English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li> </ul>

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<b>Appendix P</b> Mail Survey Materials (English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li></ul>
<b>Appendix Q</b> Telephone Script (English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li></ul>
<b>Appendix R</b> Web Survey Materials (English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>No Revisions</b></li></ul>