

## Relevant Glossary Items from the Joint Commission Comprehensive Manual for Accreditation of Hospitals

### **credentials verification organization (CVO)**

Any organization that provides information on an individual's professional credentials. An organization that bases a decision in part on information obtained from a CVO should have confidence in the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of information. To achieve this level of confidence, the organization should evaluate the agency providing the information initially and then periodically as appropriate. The 10 principles that guide such an evaluation include the following:

1. The agency makes known to the user the data and information it can provide.
2. The agency provides documentation to the user describing how its data collection, information development, and verification process(es) are performed.
3. The user is given sufficient, clear information on database functions, including any limitations of information available from the agency (such as practitioners not included in the database), the time frame for agency responses to requests for information, and a summary overview of quality control processes related to data integrity, security, transmission accuracy, and technical specifications.
4. The user and agency agree on the format for transmitting credentials information about an individual from the CVO.
5. The user can easily discern what information transmitted by the CVO is from a primary source and what is not.
6. For information transmitted by the agency that can go out of date (for example, licensure, board certification), the CVO provides the date the information was last updated from the primary source.
7. The CVO certifies that the information transmitted to the user accurately represents the information obtained by it.
8. The user can discern whether the information transmitted by the CVO from a primary source is all the primary source information in the CVO's possession pertinent to a given item or, if not, where additional information can be obtained.
9. The user can engage the CVO's quality control processes when necessary to resolve concerns about transmission errors, inconsistencies, or other data issues that may be identified from time to time.
10. The user has a formal arrangement with the CVO for communicating changes in credentialing information.

### **designated equivalent source**

Selected agencies that have been determined to maintain a specific item(s) of credential(s) information that is identical to the information at the primary source. Designated equivalent sources include but are not limited to the following:

- The American Medical Association (AMA) Physician Masterfile for verification of a physician's United States and Puerto Rican medical school graduation and postgraduate education completion
- The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) for verification of a physician's board certification
- The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) for verification of a physician's graduation from a foreign medical school
- The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Physician Database for pre-doctoral education accredited by the AOA Bureau of Professional Education; postdoctoral education approved by the AOA Council on Postdoctoral Training; postdoctoral education approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME); and Osteopathic Specialty Board Certification
- The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) for all actions against a physician's medical license
- The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Profile for physician assistant education, provided through the AMA Physician Profile Service (<https://profiles.ama-assn.org/amaprofiles/>)