

### What is a facility compliance report?

A facility compliance report provides information about **how well a facility meets state rules and regulations, federal regulations (nursing homes, home health agencies, and end state renal disease facilities) or voluntary accreditation standards (hospitals)**. These reports are unofficial listings of areas where facilities are determined to **not** be in compliance with applicable state rules, federal regulations or voluntary accreditation standards.

Reports are **prepared as a result of on-site survey visits** that were either conducted by professional surveyors from the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS), another agency or by professional surveyors working for a nationally accepted accreditation body, such as The Joint Commission (TJC), formerly The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

There are many rules or standards with which each facility must comply. These reports list only the rules or standards that the facility was **not** in compliance with on the day of the visit to the facility.

### Are facilities required to correct rule violations?

Yes. Once rule violations are identified, **the facility has a responsibility to correct the violations**.

Where ORS surveyors have cited rule violations, the facility's plan of correction and written statement challenging the rule violations, if any, are on file with ORS and available for public inspection.

**Note:** The nursing home reports and the accreditation reports for hospitals do not reference plans of correction, but plans of correction are also required for these programs.

### How can I tell which facilities have inspection/accreditation reports available?

If facility inspection reports are available online, facilities are displayed in green. These reports may be on our Web site, or accessed via a link to other Web sites maintained by separate agencies or accreditation organizations with whom we interact. If there are state, other agency inspection or accreditation reports available online, you will see a "YES" under the column headed "Inspection Reports Available."

### Why do some facilities have inspection reports and others do not?

Currently, we include **only information from certain inspections done in child caring institutions, child placing agencies, clinical laboratories, community living arrangements, drug abuse treatment facilities, end state renal disease facilities, home health agencies, hospitals, nursing homes, outdoor child caring programs, personal care homes, and private home care providers**. Recent inspections conducted by ORS surveyors and determined to be complete are listed.

**Most facilities are inspected annually** on a rolling calendar. However, it may be a year before some facilities have their inspection reports online. Accredited hospitals are typically surveyed by JCAHO on a three-year cycle, so hospital reports will not change as frequently as other facilities that are inspected annually by ORS.

Other kinds of facilities that are licensed by ORS currently have no inspection reports online. ORS is phasing in the posting of inspection reports on other kinds of licensed facilities over time as the necessary resources are acquired to support the online information system.

### **How do I find out whether a facility I am interested in has an inspection report?**

Visit [Find a Facility](#) and perform a facility search. If there is inspection information available online, the facility will be displayed in green. If there are state, other agency inspection or accreditation reports available online, you will also see a "YES" under the column headed "Inspection Reports Available."

### **Is the information that is posted subject to change?**

Yes. Online information may change as a result of the discovery of errors or omissions. Because the data for state inspection reports is extracted from our internal database system, it is possible that errors or omissions in compiling the data, as well as other errors and omissions, will occur.

Any error or omission in data supplied for online publication will be corrected when it is discovered. Therefore, the State of Georgia, the Georgia Technology Authority, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS), and respective employees, officers and agencies expressly deny any warranty of the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of any information published through this Web site and shall not be held liable for any losses caused by reliance upon the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of such information.

Additionally, no promises or representations are made about the accuracy of the compliance information that is maintained on other Web sites to which you are referred, such as the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid](#) and [TJC \(formerly JCAHO\)](#).

**Any person who relies upon such information obtained online from the ORS or any linked Web site does so at his or her own risk.**

### **How often are new inspection reports added?**

New information, such as a recently completed inspection report, is usually added at least weekly.

### **What should I do if a facility I am using or considering using has rule violations?**

Inspection reports are one source of information concerning the performance of a facility. There are **many other indicators of performance** you may want to consider.

Read the rule violations and **use your own judgment** to determine whether you consider it to be a serious violation. If it is a serious violation, you may want to talk to the facility about it and find out what the facility is doing about the violation. Ask questions: How did they correct it? What are they doing to ensure that the violation does not happen again?

Review other online information. Read the [Guide to Choosing Nursing Homes \(PDF\)](#), prepared by the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#).

### **What does the term "Scope and Severity," listed on some of the inspection reports, mean?**

Scope and Severity describes the process used by the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) to **measure the seriousness of each rule violation cited and how widespread the violation is**. Each facility must comply with hundreds of rules. Some rules impact very directly on health and safety, and violations of these rules are considered more serious than violations of other rules that may deal with administrative requirements



For example, a rule requires that certain employment records be maintained on each employee. The facility may have the records on 10 of 11 employees, but could still be cited for not having the appropriate records on the 11th employee. In this case, the violation would not be considered "widespread" and would not be determined to be as serious as not having the required records on all 11 employees.

### **How is the scope and severity of the violation shown on the inspection reports?**

You will see a "SS" notation, representing Scope and Severity, beside each rule violation. Following the "SS" notation, there will be an alphabet letter ranging from "A" through "L." See the next FAQ for an explanation of these letter notations.

### **How do I interpret the scope and severity letter notation that appears on the inspection report?**

The "SS" letters on the inspection reports range from "A" to "L." "A" is the lowest level finding. "L" is the most serious rule violation category.

An "A" finding means that an isolated (usually a single) violation was found that **only has the potential of producing a minor negative impact**. These findings are considered so minor that no written plan of correction is required by the facility and they are not listed online. We only list "B" violations and higher and require the facility to correct the violations.

An "L" rating means that a rule violation was found which was **widespread and caused either death, serious injury or posed an immediate threat** to the health and safety of the children in care. If all violations are rated no higher than a "D," then the facility is considered to be in substantial compliance with the rules at the time that the inspection survey was done.

### **What should I do if I am considering or currently using a facility that has a serious rule violation?**

**Talk to the facility administrator or director** about the rule violation and the corrective actions that have been taken to make sure the violation does not happen again. You can **contact the Licensing Office** to check the facility's history of compliance.

**Be observant** when you visit the facility to see how the facility is interacting with persons receiving care. **Talk with other facility residents, caregivers, parents, etc.** about their experiences.

As an observant consumer with knowledge of your unique situation, the needs of the person receiving care, the facility and its history, you are in a position to make the decision as to whether the facility is providing acceptable care.

### **What does it mean if the facility has a "pending adverse action" listed on the website or has a comment referencing an adverse action on the survey report?**

This means that the Department of Human Resources (DHR) has put the facility on notice that the **DHR intends to take legal action to penalize the facility for non-compliance** with minimum health and safety standards.

The legal action could include revoking or suspending the facility's license to operate, limiting admission or imposing a civil monetary penalty. If the facility disagrees with DHR's decision to revoke, suspend or take some other adverse action against the facility's license, **the facility can appeal the decision** and have a hearing before an administrative law judge.

If a facility has appealed the adverse action, the action cannot take place until a hearing has been held and a final decision has been made. The facility is permitted to continue operating without penalty while the appeal is pending.

