What are the CMS Conditions of Participation for hospitals?

THE DIRECT ANSWER

The Conditions of Participation (CoPs) are the federal requirements hospitals must meet to participate in Medicare and Medicaid, codified at 42 CFR Part 482 . They cover everything from patient rights and nursing services to the physical environment — and compliance is verified by state survey agencies or CMS-approved accrediting organizations (like The Joint Commission) with deeming authority. Fail the CoPs and you risk losing Medicare payment, which for most hospitals is an existential threat.

THE COPS THAT TOUCH FACILITIES

- §482.41 — Physical environment. The hospital must be constructed, arranged, and maintained to ensure patient safety. This is the facilities CoP: life safety, emergency power, ventilation, and overall building condition.
- §482.15 — Emergency preparedness. The 2016 Emergency Preparedness Rule's four elements: emergency plan, policies and procedures, communication plan, and training and testing.
- §482.42 — Infection control. The hospital must have an active infection control program — which includes the physical-environment controls surveyors check.

HOW COMPLIANCE IS JUDGED

- Surveyors cite deficiencies at two levels: standard-level (a specific requirement wasn't met) and condition-level (the failure is so serious or systemic the entire Condition is out of compliance).

FIELD QUESTION

Where are the hospital CoPs published?

At 42 CFR Part 482, available on ecfr.gov. The State Operations Manual (SOM) Appendix A gives CMS's interpretive guidance for surveyors.

From Healthcare Facility Hub - free, like everything on the site. The full article is at the link below.

Caution: codes, editions, and targets vary by facility and authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). Figures marked as common practice are facility targets, not code requirements. Confirm against your AHJ and the current code text before acting.