



February COR Communication

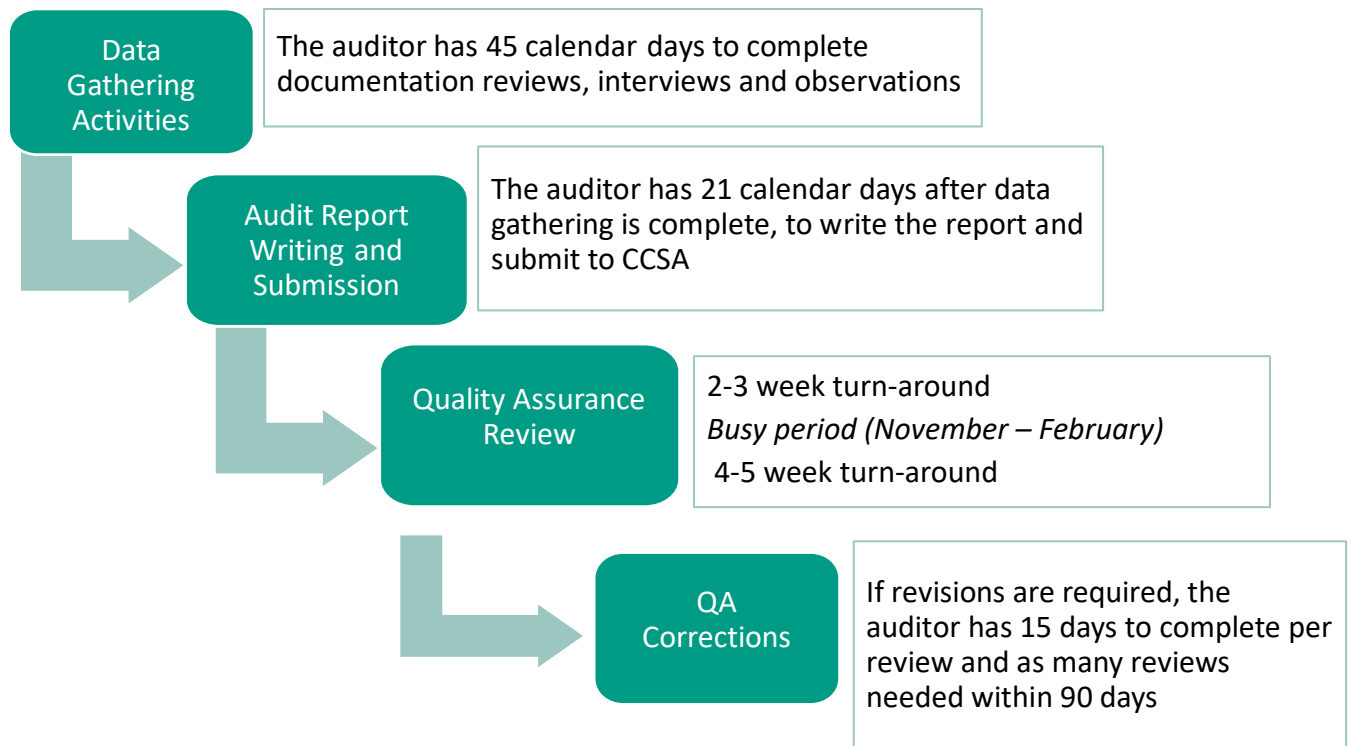
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Information for Employers

Audit Timelines

Ever wondered about the process for completing an audit each year? There are a few steps that auditors and the CCSA must complete outside of the data gathering that the employer sees. Here's a snapshot of a typical audit timeline:





Auditors may need to utilize the full 45 days for data gathering. Therefore, it could be 4-6 weeks after they have completed on-site activities before they submit the final audit to CCSA to review! Keeping in touch with the auditor will help employers know where in the timeline the audit is.

What are COR Audit Quality Assurance Reviews?

All Certifying Partners, including the CCSA, are required to conduct Quality Assurance Reviews of the audit reports submitted by both internal and external auditors. COR Audit Quality Assurance Reviews are required to ensure the Audit Report submitted meets the quality assurance expectations mandated by Partnerships and Certifying Partner Standards.

What does the COR Audit Quality Assurance (QA) Review assess?

Audit report's quality must achieve an overall audit QA review score of 90% for external auditors and 80% for internal auditors, without any critical errors. Critical errors include, but not limited to, such things as: errors in the representative site or interview sampling, incomplete justification notes, templated justification notes or notes that are copied and pasted.

What is not assessed by the COR Audit Quality Assurance Review?

The COR Audit QA review is not an evaluation of the employer's Occupational Health and Safety Management system.

Why do COR audit reports need to meet standards for quality assurance?

The COR Audit is a comprehensive and objective review of the design and effectiveness of a company's health and safety management system by evaluating it to a given standard. The QA process ensures that an adequate evaluation of the company's OHSMS at a specific point in time has occurred. The QA process also ensures that the auditor notes provided clear and concise recommendations that will assist the employer to close identified gaps and to continuously improve their OHSMS.

Selecting External Auditors

COR Certification and Recertification audits must be conducted by a CCSA-certified External Auditor from outside the organization being audited. CCSA will **only** accept certification and/or recertification audits from External Auditors identified on the CCSA-approved external auditor list located on CCSA's website.





All External Auditors performing audits for the CCSA shall be free from conflict of interest which is defined as:

- a) Someone auditing their own work;
- b) Work in which they played a vital part in the development of a Health and Safety Management System;
- c) The auditor or a member of the auditor's corporate group must not have been employed by, or been in a direct contractual relationship with the employer within the twelve-month period preceding the audit, except for the following:
 - delivering standard CP-developed training courses,
 - delivering generic training courses (in either group or individual employer settings),
 - providing other services not directly evaluated by the audit instrument
- d) The auditor or a member of the auditor's corporate group should not have a personal relationship (e.g. family members, close personal friends) with any key employees or members of the management group at the operation being audited where that relationship may be perceived to influence the results of the audit.
- e) In COR maintenance years, certified auditors may both develop and audit an employer's health and safety program.

External Auditors cannot perform audits in two consecutive years for the same employer, nor can they complete the COR recertification in two consecutive CORs cycles.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding use of external auditors, please do not hesitate to contact CCSA at COR@ab-ccsa.ca

Information for Internal and External Auditors:

Audit Quality Assurance Reminders

The last step in the audit process is the audit quality assurance (QA) review. The purpose of the audit QA review is to ensure audit reports have met Partnerships and CCSA standards. All Certifying Partners are required by Partnerships to implement an audit quality assurance review process. When the audit QA review is complete, you will receive two documents attached to the QA review confirmation email, the QA Form and the Audit Tool.

QA Form

When you receive the QA review confirmation email, open and review the Audit Quality Assurance Form: this form has 2 tabs which include important information from the QA review.



- The first tab, labelled QA form, is a review of the accuracy of the information supplied in the audit report regarding the organization, auditor/audit team and the scope of the audit such as whether interview and site sampling requirements have been met. You will also find general comments which provide the lead auditor with information regarding data not entered on the audit tool such as:
 - Missing auditor or employer information on the Audit information tab
 - Incorrect data input of the interview sampling
 - Overall comments when reoccurring concerns are seen throughout the audit
- The second tab, labelled review of audit report identifies the questions where points have been deducted and refers auditors to the audit tool QA comments.

Audit Tool

The Audit Tool you submit to the CCSA for the audit QA review is returned to you and includes detailed QA comments for each audit question which require review and/or correction. As a reminder, you will see comments in either red or orange; red comments require correction and will typically have a corresponding points deduction; while orange comments are recommendation for future audits.

Do's and Don'ts

Let's look at what the auditor should do when audit QA reviews identify required revisions to the audit report:

- Do read the QA comments in full
- Do make revisions to your original note
- Don't change the color of the font or cross out your previous notes, as these notes are what populate to the audit report and executive summary for the employer. You want the notes to be clear and concise.
- Don't remove the audit quality assurance review notes
- Don't put any notes in the quality assurance comment box

Should the auditor have questions about the QA comments, DO reach out to the CCSA COR team at COR@ab-ccsa.ca, rather than put the questions in the audit tool.

Updated Audit Tool

The CCSA did some minor updates to the audit tool, please ensure when completing an audit to always go to the CCSA website to download the most current version of the CCSA Audit Tool.



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This will ensure you are always using the most up to date audit tool and also ensure you are always starting an audit with a clean Audit Tool. [Click Here](#) to download CCSA Audit Tool.



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