AAAHC has implemented the transformational *1095 Strong, quality everyday* philosophy, a call-to-action that equips ambulatory leaders with the best of what they need to operationalize quality practices. The *1095 Strong* initiative centers on providing accreditation tools, resources, and relevant education to bring meaningful value to organizations and promote compliance with the Standards, all 1,095 days of the accreditation term.

For more than 40 years, AAAHC has provided facilities with relevant Standards and education for improvement of their patient care environment and has updated our Standards regularly to reflect proven developments in medicine, technology, and specialty practice. AAAHC is proud to announce the publication of the new *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care,* released as version 43 (v43). The new version of Standards will apply to organizations seeking Ambulatory (AMB) accreditation with AAAHC. The handbook reflects valuable feedback from our Standards Development Committee, client organizations, surveyors, partners, and staff.

AAAHC continues our commitment to ambulatory accreditation and certification with enhanced tools and education that support the *1095 Strong, quality every day* philosophy. This edition inaugurates *1095 Engage*, our uniquely designed Accreditation Management System (AMS) which empowers health care organizations to pursue excellence by providing single-source operations solutions.

AAAHC transitioned to *1095 Engage* with the needs of clients at the forefront. Features include a living profile that drives Standards curation, facilitates organizational change notifications, reinforces ongoing compliance, and accelerates triennial renewal processes. The AMS also provides on demand access to accreditation documents such as decision letters, survey reports, and certificates. The implementation of *1095 Engage* required Standards revisions and structural changes to enable Standards curation. The new architecture transforms AAAHC Standards from chapters to more cohesive categories and better enables Standards curation so that you can focus on what is most important and applicable to your organization.

Watch for updates *Triangle Times Today* in 2024 for the latest updates on v43 and *1095 Engage* to learn more.

Question	Response
1. **What has changed from the v42 Standards to the new v43 Standards?**	Key revisions incorporated into AMB v43 include: • Introduction of new Standards architecture which moves from Chapters to Categories and Levels to differentiate Standards • Standards additions to recognize workplace violence and aggression • Standards additions to enhance orientation and training requirements • Addition of new telehealth/telemedicine guidance at appropriate Standards *Please refer to the handbook crosswalk for additional revision information.*

Question	Response

2. How did the architecture change?	The new v43 Standards architecture includes the following components:
	
	 • *Categories:* Standards are organized by Category. Each Category groups similar concepts to facilitate organization compliance, streamline the onsite survey process, and minimize redundancy during the 1095 cycle.
	
	 • *Statements of Requirement (SOR) and Universal and Selective Standards:* Each Category is composed of multiple Statements of Requirement (SOR). The SOR states the overarching intent of the Standard. Within each Category, there are two types of SORs: Universal and Selective. Universal SORs apply to all organizations seeking or maintaining AMB accreditation. Selective SORs apply based on program selection and the relevant services or specialty information pertaining to the organization as provided in the organization's Application or Profile.
	
	 • *Elements of Compliance*: As with the current Standards, some of the SORs will be standalone and contain the elements of compliance within the SOR, and some SORs will have Elements of Compliance (EOCs) and Sub- Elements of Compliance (SEOCs). EOCs and SEOCs are evaluated as Yes, No, or Not Applicable. All EOCs and SEOCs roll up and reflect the level of compliance at the SOR.
	
	 • *Application of the Standards / Curation*: Based on organization information provided in the application or updated through the organization's Profile, AAAHC creates a set of Standards applicable to each organization that includes Selective and Universal Standards. Organizations will see their curated Standards in the new Accreditation Management System (AMS) launching in 2024.
	
	 • *Standards Levels:* Standards are assigned levels to distinguish requirements that have the potential to directly jeopardize the immediate safety of patients, employees, and/or members from administrative or other Standards. This stratification allows for prioritizing the Standards with the highest risk to patient and staff safety. There are three Standards Levels:
	
	    ○ Level 0: Standards in test mode, or during a grace period for implementation.
	
	    ○ Level 1: Standards which specify, or apply to, activities or processes which DO NOT involve the provision or conduct of patient care, OR the assurance of patient or employee safety.
	
	    ○ Level 2: Standards which specify, or apply to, activities or processes which involve the provision or conduct of patient care, OR the assurance of patient or employee safety.
	
	 • *Validation Category*: The Validation Category allows for the evaluation of the information the organization has submitted through the Application to ensure accuracy and completeness. The Standards in this category verify information such as services, state requirements and eligibility.

Question	Response
3. **How do I learn more about the Standards?**	On January 9, 2024, at 12:00 PM CT, AAAHC will present a complimentary educational webinar, *Your Successful Transition to AAAHC v43 Standards.* To register for the webinar and see supporting resources, please visit aaahc.org. An *Achieving Accreditation* conference will be hosted in Orlando, Florida at the Renaissance SeaWorld on March 21-22, 2024. During this conference, AAAHC faculty and staff will explain best practices for complying with v43 Standards. To register: https://www.aaahc.org/accelerated-readiness/achieving-accreditation/conference/
4. **When will the new handbook be released?**	The digital *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care, v*43 will be released in early January 2024. The print handbooks will be available in mid January 2024.
5. **Where can I get a copy of the handbook?**	To further support the AAAHC *1095 Strong, quality everyday* philosophy where organizations accredited by AAAHC provide high-quality care all 1,095 days of their accreditation cycle, digital copies of the *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care, v*43 will be available for download to all accredited organizations. If you are an AAAHC-accredited organization and did not receive an email notification of this release, please contact AAAHC at info@aaahc.org or 847.853.6060. Others interested in purchasing a copy of the available v43 handbook can place an order online from the AAAHC Store.
6. **I just purchased the v42 handbook. Can I receive a refund?**	*All handbook sales are final.* However, if you purchased the handbook between November and December 2023, AAAHC will provide a replacement digital copy of the *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care*, v43, when available. To receive your copy, contact AAAHC at info@aaahc.org or 847.853.6060.
7. **How do I know which Accreditation handbook applies to me?**	The *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care (AMB),* v43 is designed for ambulatory health care organizations seeking AAAHC accreditation (AMB). If you are an ambulatory surgery center (ASC) seeking Medicare Deemed via participation in the AAAHC programs, the AMB program is not for you. Contact AAAHC at info@aaahc.org or 847.853.6060 if you have additional questions about which program applies to you.
8. **When do the new v43 Standards become effective for AMB?**	The effective date for the v43 Standards is April 3, 2024. Organizations should refer to their Survey Confirmation letter for Standards version guidance. Regardless of expiration/anniversary date, all organizations are expected to comply with v43 after April 3, 2024. Organizations will receive specific transition timelines, as appropriate for their survey type and program.
9. **Is AAAHC providing a crosswalk between v43 and the current version of Standards?**	Yes, included in the handbook, AAAHC is providing a crosswalk with details for Standard requirement revisions. In addition, because all Standard identifiers have changed with the migration to the new Standards architecture, every Standard in the v43 Handbook includes the v42 identifier in the upper left-hand corner, below the current identifier.
10. **How will I know which version of the Standards will apply to my survey?**	Organizations should refer to their Survey Confirmation letter for Standards version guidance. Regardless of expiration/anniversary date, all organizations are expected to be in compliance with v43 on April 3, 2024.

Question	Response
11. What is the handbook price? Is there a different price for digital vs. hard copy?	The price for the digital and hard copy version of the handbooks is the same, but additional fees are charged to cover shipping costs. If you are interested in purchasing a hard copy of the v43 AMB handbook, place an order here.
12. Are there any AAAHC policy changes in the next handbook version?	AAAHC updated terminology and payment policies in v43 and introduced a few new policies and procedures addressing new practices that drive organization compliance and are enabled through the Accreditation Management System (AMS). Policy changes that will be in effect when the AMS launches include:

v43 Handbook	Hard copy	Digital	Combo
Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care	$315 plus shipping	$315	$380 plus shipping

- *Application and Survey Fee Payment:* Effective with launch of the AMS, the Application fee payment is due before an organization submits any information to AAAHC and grants access to the information in the AMS. Effective January 1, 2024, survey fees will be billed upon survey completion with the invoice due upon receipt and prior to accreditation decision release.

- *Preliminary Report:* 24 to 48 hours following the last day of survey, organizations will have access to a preliminary report that provides the organization with an opportunity to begin drafting and implementing a Plan of Correction (POC). The Preliminary Report is not a final report and is subject to change upon AAAHC review.

- *Annual Attestation:* The purpose of the annual attestation is to ensure the organization is maintaining a current and accurate profile and conducting continuous assessment of compliance with the current version of Standards.

- *Plan of Correction:* Organizations are required to complete a Plan of Correction (POC) for all deficiencies through the Accreditation Management System (AMS). For participants in the Medicare Deemed Status program, the requirement has not changed. These organizations are required to electronically submit an acceptable POC for all deficiencies within 10 days of receiving the request. For the Ambulatory Accreditation Program (AMB), for each Level 2 Standard rated as Non-Compliant (NC), the organization will be required to electronically submit an acceptable POC to AAAHC before a final decision is rendered.