

Procedure Name:	<b>Virtual Peer Review Policy</b>
Applicable to:	Programs; Peer Reviewers; Program Specialists
Effective Date:	October 2020
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	Peer Review Process; Peer Review Schedule;
Location:	Peer Review Guide; Program Guide

**Policy:**

Programs will participate in a virtual peer review process in the following scenarios:

- The program opts into conducting a virtual peer review or
- Due to a public health declaration or other state of emergency declaration that makes participating in an onsite peer review is not possible.

As a part of a virtual peer review process, all required panel interviews and checklists will be completed. Protected Health Information (PHI) will be reviewed in participant files, supervision files, and other documents as outlined as “Documents Available Onsite” in the body of evidence.

**Procedure:**

**Platform**

Zoom is the platform upon which all virtual peer reviews will occur. Each panel interview will have its own meeting link so each person can get into the meeting(s) they’re supposed to be a part of. The following are some things to consider when determining where / how to participate in the virtual peer review:

- Participants in the zoom meetings should all have their own devices to join the Zoom meeting on. Sharing of devices is discouraged.
- Programs may consider using a computer to participate in order to share their screen to explain something.
- Programs and participants should consider using a quiet, low traffic space and may also want to consider using headphones with a microphone if interruptions are possible.

**Panel Interviews**

Panel interviews will take place just as they would during an onsite peer review except that those participating in the interviews will join via Zoom. Each panel interview will have its own Zoom link and those participating should only be provided links for the meetings they’re participating in. Family Support Participants enrolled in the program should be encouraged to participate in the panel interview remotely if possible. The program and

peer reviewers will work together to identify families that have access to the internet either on their phone or at a location that they can join Wi-Fi.

## Checklists

Each checklist will be completed as explained below.

- Participant file checklists will be completed by sharing documents via PHI review and through screen sharing
- Training file checklists will be completed by the program and submitted prior to Peer Review
- Personnel file checklists will be completed by the program and submitted prior to Peer Review
- Supervision file checklists will be completed by sharing documents via PHI review and through screen sharing

## Protected Health Information Review

Peer Reviewers will review documents containing PHI electronically. This information is used to review all of the checklists along with information found in the “Documents Available Onsite” portion of the “Body of Evidence.” Programs will upload this information into a document server. Prior to uploading this information into the document service programs will ensure that the file name of each document is relevant to the document they are uploading and label which second order standard it applies to. Programs will have all of the documents uploaded no later than three business days prior to the beginning of the peer review. Programs have the option of doing this in two ways:

- Programs may use their own HIPAA compliant document server and grant the assigned peer reviewers and the IFSTAN Coordinator access to read the documents or
- Programs may elect to use a document server provided by IFSTAN. This document server is HIPAA compliant and protected by a Business Associate Agreement. Peer reviewers are provided with access to read the documents. Programs are provided with access to read and write the documents. The IFSTAN Coordinator will also have read and write access to help with organization of the document server and making sure files are where they need to be for the peer reviewers.

As documents that contain PHI may be requested by the peer reviewers during the peer review, programs will refrain from emailing them directly to the peer reviewer but rather upload them to the document server. Peer reviewers also will not print any documents containing protected health information.

## Agenda

The lead peer reviewer will work with the program to create the agenda. The agenda should be finalized six weeks prior to the beginning of the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will then send the agenda to the IFSTAN Coordinator to set up all of the virtual meetings. The IFSTAN Coordinator will send that to the program and to the peer reviewers. The program then will notify all necessary participants of their meeting dates, times, and Zoom links to join the meeting.