



ACCREDITATION SANS FRONTIÈRES

ASF Public Accreditation Registry Policy

What ASF publishes about accreditation status, and how anyone can verify a claim is genuine

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Foreword

Today, nobody outside ASF can verify that a claimed ASF accreditation is real, current, or accurately described. This policy exists to close that gap, built directly on the established practice of real accreditation bodies — Joint Commission's Quality Check, and the public disclosure practices of accreditors such as the Higher Learning Commission and ACCJC — rather than inventing a new approach where established, working practice already exists [1–3].

This policy does not ask ASF to publish anything these bodies do not already publish, and does not withhold anything they already disclose. Where their practice differs on a genuine judgment call — most notably, whether a withdrawn or denied accreditation remains publicly visible — this policy follows their actual, established answer rather than ASF's own untested preference.

1. Purpose

This policy governs what ASF publishes about the accreditation status of every organization it has ever accredited, and establishes the mechanism by which any member of the public can verify that a specific claimed ASF accreditation is genuine. The purpose is prevention of false or lapsed accreditation claims, consistent with the same purpose Joint Commission's Quality Check and comparable public registries serve [1].

2. Why Verification Matters: The Real Scale of Credential Fraud

This is not a theoretical concern invented to justify a bureaucratic requirement. The DataFlow Group, a credential-verification body operating across the Gulf Cooperation Council region, has screened 375,000 doctors, nurses, and allied healthcare professionals since 2013 — and found that more than 10,000 of them had used fake or misrepresented academic credentials, professional licenses, or work history in their applications [4].

A single documented scheme in the United States, operating between 2016 and 2021 through three fraudulent Florida nursing schools, produced more than 7,600 fake nursing diplomas; some recipients went on to pass the national nursing licensing examination and were subsequently employed in real healthcare settings [5]. A separate law enforcement operation seized 100,000 fraudulent healthcare certificates in a single action [6].

These cases concern individual professional credentials, not organizational accreditation specifically — but they establish the same underlying point this policy exists to address: where verification depends entirely on trusting a claimed credential rather than checking it against an independent, public record, a meaningful proportion of those claims will be false, and some of those false claims will not be caught until real harm has already occurred.

An organization displaying an accreditation mark it does not currently hold is not a hypothetical scenario this policy guards against out of caution. It is the organizational-level version of exactly the pattern documented, repeatedly and at real scale, in the individual credentialing cases above.

3. What Gets Published

The following table states, field by field, what ASF makes public and what it keeps confidential — mirroring the real distinction established accreditors draw between status-level information and the confidential institutional file [2]:

Field	Shown	Notes
Organization name and location	Public	As registered with ASF
Standard(s) held	Public	Which of ASF's published standards
Current status	Public	Full / Conditional / Suspended / Declined / Withdrawn (Section 4)
Date accreditation granted	Public	
Current cycle's next review date	Public	
Formal Public Disclosure Notice	Public	For any final adverse action (Section 4.3)
Surveyor names	Confidential	Never published
Criterion-level survey findings	Confidential	The confidential institutional file (Section 3.1)
Active, unresolved complaint or sentinel event	Confidential	Until resolved, per Section 7

3.1 The Confidential Institutional File

Consistent with established accreditor practice, the detailed record ASF holds on an organization — full survey findings, correspondence, internal deliberation — remains part of ASF's confidential relationship with that organization and is not published, regardless of the organization's public status [2]. What is public is the fact and nature of the status itself, not the underlying file.

4. How Status Is Displayed

4.1 Status Categories

Consistent with the more granular decision categories established accreditors actually use, rather than a simplified pass/fail model, ASF's public registry displays one of the following [1]:

- Accredited — the organization currently holds full accreditation against the stated standard
- Conditional — accreditation granted with specific conditions under active follow-up (Section 4.1 of the ASF Accreditation Process Guide)
- Under Review — a decision is pending and not yet final; no adverse status is displayed while an appeal is active (Section 4.2)
- Withdrawn — accreditation was withdrawn following a final decision
- Declined — accreditation was not granted following a final decision

4.2 Nothing Adverse Is Disclosed Before a Decision Is Final

Consistent with established accreditor practice, information about an action still under review or appeal is not disclosed as an adverse status — an organization contesting a preliminary decision through the appeal process described in Section 4.3 of the ASF Accreditation Process Guide continues to show its prior status, or “Under Review,” until that appeal is resolved [2–3]. Disclosing a preliminary, still-appealable adverse decision as if it were final would misstate the organization's actual status to the public.

4.3 The Public Disclosure Notice

Where a final decision results in withdrawal or declined accreditation, ASF posts a formal Public Disclosure Notice to the registry within one business day of notifying the organization — matching the real timeline established accreditors apply to comparable notices [3]. The notice states the action taken and its date, and includes the organization's own response or comment, where the organization chooses to provide one, exactly as established accreditor practice does [2–3].

4.4 Withdrawn and Declined Organizations Remain Listed

An organization whose accreditation was withdrawn or declined remains visible in ASF's public registry, showing that status and the date it took effect, rather than being silently removed — following directly from the real, established practice of accreditors such as ACCJC, whose public directory continues to list institutions that withdrew or were denied accreditation, alongside the date of that action [2]. Silently delisting a withdrawn organization would let it disappear from public scrutiny at the exact moment scrutiny matters most; this policy does not do that.

This is the one place this policy could have taken an easier path — quietly removing a withdrawn organization protects ASF's own registry from ever looking like it has failures in it. Established accreditors don't take that path, and neither does this policy: a registry that only shows success stories is not a verification tool, it is marketing.

5. Accuracy and Update Timing

A final accreditation decision under Section 4.1 of the ASF Accreditation Process Guide is reflected in the public registry within one business day of the organization being notified — the same standard applied to adverse Public Disclosure Notices under Section 4.3, applied here to every decision type, not only adverse ones.

6. Verification Mechanism

Any member of the public can confirm whether a specific organization holds current ASF accreditation, against which standard, and in what status, through ASF's published registry — without needing to contact ASF directly or rely solely on the organization's own claim. This is the concrete anti-fraud purpose of this policy, directly responsive to the real, documented pattern of credential misrepresentation described in Section 2: an organization displaying an ASF accreditation mark or making an accreditation claim can be checked independently, the same way a Joint Commission Gold Seal claim can be verified through Quality Check [1].

7. Relationship to Other ASF Policies

- An active, unresolved complaint under the ASF Public Complaints & Feedback Policy is not reflected in the public registry until it results in a final decision — an unresolved allegation is not a status
- A sentinel event under the ASF Sentinel Event Policy does not, by itself, change public registry status (consistent with Section 5.1 of that policy) unless it results in a final accreditation decision
- Registry status changes flow from final decisions made under the ASF Accreditation Process Guide, and this policy does not create any new grounds for a status change of its own

References

- [1] Joint Commission. Quality Check. Oakbrook Terrace (IL): The Joint Commission; 2026.
- [2] Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process. 2026.
- [3] Higher Learning Commission. Denial or Withdrawal of Status (INST.E.60.010). Chicago: HLC; 2026.
- [4] DataFlow Group. The Alarming Reality of Fraud in Healthcare. 2025.
- [5] Clinician.com. Fake Diplomas Pose Risk to Healthcare Employers. 2023.
- [6] Substack (Dr. Jennifer Tenpenny). Does Your Doctor Have A Real Medical Degree? 2026.

Annex A — Registry Data Field Specification

The complete, exhaustive list of fields ASF's public registry displays — nothing beyond this list is published without a future revision to this policy.

- Organization legal name
- Organization location (city, country)
- ASF standard(s) held, with version number
- Current status (Section 4.1)
- Date accreditation first granted
- Date of current cycle's next scheduled review
- Public Disclosure Notice text and date, where applicable (Section 4.3)

Annex B — Sample Public Record

Organization	[Example Hospital], [City, Country]
Standard Held	ASF Hospital Standards, v3.0
Status	Accredited
Accredited Since	[Date]
Next Review	[Date]

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A registry that cannot show a withdrawal is not a verification tool — it is a list of endorsements. This policy publishes what established international practice already publishes, grounded in the real, documented scale of credential fraud it exists to guard against.