

MEAC Deadline Changes and Changes to Regular Processes in Response to COVID

Per guidance from USDE's Herman Bounds (RE: Information for Accrediting Agencies Regarding Temporary Flexibilities Provided to Coronavirus Impacted Institutions or Accrediting Agencies) provided via email on March 18, 2020, MEAC has been given latitude to make temporary changes to our site visit procedures as well as extensions to school deadlines.

The following changes have been approved by the MEAC Board of Directors and enacted on March 23, 2020.

Temporary policy regarding site visits:

MEAC Accreditation Handbook Section G: Policies and Procedures

III.D.1.b All institutions/programs that apply to MEAC for accreditation/preaccreditation are systematically reviewed to determine if they are in compliance with MEAC's standards. This includes...an on-site review to verify information provided in the self-study.

III.H.6 Certain substantive changes also require a site visit by MEAC no later than six months from the date of the change.

During the period of COVID-19 interruptions, site reviews may be conducted either virtually or rescheduled to a later time. Virtual site-visits will be conducted with an engaged, interactive format and followed-up by an abbreviated in-person site visit at a reasonable later date,

Deadline extensions:

Extensions will be granted to all school deadlines during the period of COVID-19 interruptions. This includes schools undergoing the reaccreditation process and that had been scheduled for a site visit during a COVID-19 interruption, even if an extension would prevent MEAC from concluding its comprehensive review of the school prior to the school's expiration of grant of accreditation. In such case, an extension of the term of accreditation will also be granted. Any new reporting assigned during the period of COVID-19 interruptions will have deadlines assigned that take the interruptions into consideration.

The overall rationale for the extensions given are to help minimize school requirements during the initial period of social distancing, isolation and/or quarantine. No reporting will be due during the remainder of March or the duration of April 2020 so that schools can focus on their responses to this unfolding disruption and the health of their students, staff and faculty. Deadlines from May 1 through July 1, 2020 will be given a one-month extension. Deadlines after July 2, 2020 will be reviewed at a later time to ensure an appropriate and timely response to the ongoing COVID-19 disruption.

As always, schools are permitted to submit reports early – deadline extensions do not require the school to delay submission of any report ready to be submitted.

The following institutions/programs will be impacted by the deadline extensions offered:

- **Bastyr University Department of Midwifery** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its Self-Evaluation Report as a part of the reaccreditation process, now due 05/01/2020.
- **Birthingway College of Midwifery** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its 2020-04-29 Monitoring Report, now due 05/29/2020.
- **Birthwise Midwifery School** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its Additional Information Request as a part of the reaccreditation process, now due 06/21/2020.
- **Birthwise Midwifery School** will also be granted a one-month extension of its 2020-07-01 Monitoring Report, now due 08/01/2020.
- **Birthwise Midwifery School** will undergo a virtual site visit as part of the substantive change application process to change legal entity as previously scheduled. In-person follow-up will occur at a later date in tandem with the reaccreditation site visit.
- **Florida School of Traditional Midwifery** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its response to the Draft ARC Report as part of the reaccreditation process, now due 06/14/2020.
- **Florida School of Traditional Midwifery** will also be granted one-month extensions on submission of its 2020-03-16 and 2020-04-30 Monitoring Reports, now due 05/01/2020 and 05/30/2020, respectively.
- **Mercy In Action College of Midwifery** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its Part I: Intent to Renew Accreditation as part of the reaccreditation process, now due 05/22/2020.
- **Midwives College of Utah** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its response to the Draft ARC Report as part of the reaccreditation process, now due 07/11/2020.
- **National College of Midwifery** will undergo a virtual site visit as part of the reaccreditation process, to occur as previously scheduled. In-person follow-up will occur at a reasonable date (TBD).
- **National College of Midwifery** will be granted a one-month extension on submission of its Additional Information Request as part of the substantive change application process to permanently offer distance education, now due 06/04/2020.