

November 2024

Thank you for reaching out with questions about becoming an accredited provider of continuing medical education for physicians. Being an accredited provider of physician CME can be a great benefit to your organization, your physicians, and their patients.

As background, the Southern States CME Collaborative (SSCC) is an ACCME recognized accreditor. We are a joint effort of the Mississippi State Medical Association, the North Carolina Medical Society, and the Medical Society of Virginia.

We look forward to speaking with you about it in greater detail, but here is some information on the process of achieving accreditation:

The Initial Accreditation Process:

1. The applicant should have these general eligibility requirements before applying:
 - a. Be an organization that is eligible for accreditation. This includes providers of clinical services directly to patients, institutions whose primary mission is the education and training of physicians and physicians-in-training, health profession membership organizations, and others (see the [ACCME definition](#)).
 - b. Headquarters for the CME program must be within one of the primary states that make up the SSCC – Virginia, North Carolina, and Mississippi – or a contiguous state that does not have a program to accredit intrastate providers of CME. (Currently, that includes South Carolina, West Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana.) At least two-thirds of the program’s anticipated learners should come from in-state or the nearby geographic area.
 - c. Have a mission statement documenting its commitment to CME, framed in terms of improving learners’ competence, skill, performance, and/or patient outcomes.
 - d. Have completed at least two CME activities within 24 months preceding application. (These activities can be accredited activities with an accredited joint provider, or they may be offered by initial applicants without CME credit. If provided without CME credit, they are nonetheless expected to have followed a process that documents compliance with all ACCME criteria and standards.)
 - e. Be able to document that you have conducted a program of physician education in a medical or medically related field, both in terms of educational content and administrative support.
2. The applicant meets with the SSCC’s program manager for their state (see below) to discuss accreditation and to assess whether the applicant organization is likely to benefit from accreditation and be in compliance with the ACCME’s [Accreditation Criteria](#) and [Standards for Integrity and Independence](#) and policies necessary to provide accredited continuing medical education. Following review, the provider can be invited to continue the application process.

3. If invited to continue the application process, the provider will complete and submit a Pre-Application for Initial Accreditation with the Southern States CME Collaborative. The Pre-application will be reviewed by the SSCC and you will receive word within 4 weeks.
4. If the Pre-application indicates that the applicant organization is indeed an eligible organization and has the processes in place that would likely lead to a successful accreditation application, the applicant will be invited to submit a full application for Initial Accreditation.
5. An application, including a Self-Study report and Performance-in-Practice files from two completed educational activities should be submitted within 12 months, along with requested documentation. A survey interview with two trained volunteer SSCC surveyors will take place approximately 3 months after the materials are submitted. There is a \$1000 non-refundable initial application review fee and a \$2000 initial survey fee, total \$3000.
6. The applicant's materials and the surveyors' report are then reviewed by the SSCC's Accreditation Review Committee, which will determine whether the provider meets expectations for all of the Criteria, Standards for Integrity and Independence, and general policies. If so, the provider will be granted *Provisional Accreditation* for a two-year term. (Provisional Accreditation has all the status of full Accreditation, except that this first accreditation term is two years instead of four years.)

Reaccreditation:

At the end of the two-year Provisional Certification term, the accredited provider will go through the reaccreditation process, including submission of a new Self-study Report and new Performance-in-Practice files, and a survey interview. The provider will be eligible for a subsequent accreditation term of either 4 years (or 6 years if optional Accreditation with Commendation is sought).

The Accredited Provider Fees:

In addition to the initial accreditation fees of \$3,000 that are outlined above, there is an annual accreditation fee which is payable to your relevant state medical society. The Medical Society of Virginia has a tiered system for calculating annual accreditation fees, based on the tiers used by the ACCME. The 2025 MSV fee schedule is below:

	Average Annual Number of Activities (Prior 3 Years)	Average Annual Number of Learners (Prior 3 Years)	2024 Annual Accreditation Fee
Tier 1	43 or fewer	4,466 or fewer	\$4,575
Tier 2	44 – 135	4,467 – 15,422	\$4,800
Tier 3	136 – 905	15,423 – 164,727	\$6,300
Tier 4	906 – 1906	164,728 – 634,356	\$8,700
Tier 5	More than 1906	More than 634,356	\$ 11,800



MSV's fee schedule is based on (and significantly discounted from) that of the ACCME, which charges the SSCC an annual fee to serve as a Recognized Accreditor. Accreditation fees can vary from year to year, depending on changes in the size of the program and on any increases in fees from the ACCME. (The ACCME has already signaled that fees will increase in 2025.)

I hope this information is helpful as you think about accreditation. I'll be happy to answer any questions and will be available to assist you through the application and accreditation processes. Please feel free to follow up with questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marc Jackson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marc Jackson

Program Manager, Accredited Continuing Education

The Medical Society of Virginia and The Southern States CME Collaborative