

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a white lab coat over a black and white striped shirt, is looking down at a tablet computer she is holding. The background is a blurred city street at night, with lights from buildings and streetlights visible.

Site Visit Fundamentals

Arrival, Purpose, Facility Type, Site Visit

Arrival

This Site Visit type is unannounced, meaning you should be able to complete the entire inspection without contact with staff or employees.

You should:

- Park in a designated parking area and exit your vehicle.
- Look around the area to assess the type of facility and verify the address, including suite number if needed.
- Discretely take the required photos from outside the facility. If it is an office building, you will need to go to the suite door.
- *If it is a Private Residence, do not approach the door. Take a single photo of the exterior from a distance that clearly shows the address.*

Maintain discretion and professionalism if approached by anyone during the Site Visit.

For example, you are taking pictures of the exterior when a staff member approaches and asks if you need assistance. Introduce yourself and explain the situation in a calm and professional tone, but do not provide additional details:

“Hello, my name is John. I am here on behalf of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to conduct a site visit. The purpose is to verify that your location is open and operational. I'm required to take a few photographs. My visit does not require an attendee from the location to participate. I will be finished shortly.”

Purpose of the Site Visit

The goal of an Observational SV is to verify that the business in question is operational at the address in question. The Inspector must document if the facility meets the qualifications.

If it is not immediately apparent that the facility is operational, take these additional steps to investigate:

- Look for other criteria like if the lights are on or the facility has office furniture and supplies.
- Observe if staff are present and business is being conducted.
- Check if the door is unlocked.
- Check if there are any notifications that the provider has moved to a different location.

Additional steps taken to determine if a location is operational must be noted in “Additional Comments.”

Scenario 1: You arrive to the facility at 3:00 PM and see that the lights are off and the door is locked, but a sign states that the business closes at 12:00 PM daily.

Action: Take photos of the facility including the posted hours and enter the date and time of the First Visit. Return on a day and time that fits the facility’s posted hours of operation to complete the SV.

Scenario 2: You arrive to the facility and see a different business name on the door, and the business you are looking for is across the street.

Action: Take pictures of both buildings and indicate the correct address. Leave detailed notes in the Additional Comments box explaining what you found.

Site Verification

If the location is found to be non-operational during the first or second visit, include the following details in the “Additional Comments” section of the survey:

- What was found during the first visit and why it was deemed “non-operational.”
 - “I arrived at the address on the job order, which led me to a private residence.”
 - “Construction materials and equipment were staged inside the office at the indicated address.”
- What was discovered when additional steps were taken.
 - “I called the phone number in the Job Order Details for directions to the suite. The recording said the facility was closed.”
 - “Receptionist Jane Doe confirmed that ATX Physical Therapy is doing business as Longhorn Physio.”
- What was found during the second visit and why it was deemed “non-operational,” if applicable.
 - “Sign on the door said by appointment only. When I called, Dr. Tran said they are not seeing patients.”
 - “On the second attempt, the door was still locked, and the office furniture had been removed.”

Facility Type

During an Observational SV, the Inspector will determine the type of facility. The most common types are:

Storefront – a freestanding, single-tenant structure typically used for retail or business.



Office Suite-Strip Mall – an office in an open-air shopping center where the stores are connected and arranged in a linear row, typically with a sidewalk in front.



Office Suite-Office Building – an office in an enclosed, multi-tenant building with interior corridors and office entrance; may be of varying height. This type includes providers operating inside a hospital, assisted living, or nursing home.



Other Facility Types

Some less common facility types you may come across are:

Warehouse – a large building where raw materials or manufactured goods may be stored before distribution for sale.

P.O. Box – a uniquely addressable lockable box located on the premises of a United States post office station.

Commercial Mailbox – a uniquely addressable lockable box near or within a business (e.g., UPS, FedEx).

Private Residence – any building, buildings, or part of a building owned by a private entity which serves as a permanent residence.

Other– any location you encounter that does not fit any other facility type. (E.g., vacant lot, mobile building.) These will always require details in “Additional Comments.”

Regardless of type, an exterior photo of the site is required for every Site Visit. The facility type should be clear by the photo alone.



Other Required Photos

In addition to the exterior and entrance photos discussed in the previous module, and in order to confirm all the Job Order Details, some additional detailed photos are required. These photos should be added at the bottom of the SV report form under Additional Photos.

Address— This could be the building number on the side of the building or above a door, but you may find it elsewhere as well.

Suite Number— This may be on the door, a sign nearby, or a building directory.

Business Signage— This may be on the building, entrance door, a monument sign near the building, or if nothing else is available, a building directory.

Hours of Operation— This is usually on the entrance door or nearby. If hours are not posted, there is no need to ask for them inside.



Site Visit Verification Survey (DMEPOS)

This observational site visit type is conducted at a supplier location. A supplier is a company, person, or agency that provides durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics and supplies (DMEPOS). This includes items such as wheelchairs, knee braces, or walkers.



Site Visit Questions

To help determine if the facility is operational, the site visit form asks some simple questions you will need to answer.

Note: You must approach the facility to make a definite determination. Do not attempt to answer the questions or take photos from inside your vehicle.

Is the provider open for business? – Does it appear from your observation that the facility is prepared to see patients or fulfill transactions? Lights on, door unlocked, etc.

Remember: Site Visits may only be conducted during normal business hours unless otherwise posted. If your visit is outside posted hours, a second visit will be required.

Does the facility appear to have employees/staff present? – Is anyone employed by the provider in question tending to the business?

Note: office building or third-party security staff are not employees of the provider.

Does there appear to be signs of customer activity present during the survey?– Does it appear from your observation that patients or patrons are being served in the facility?

This may look like people in the waiting room, entering/exiting the door, etc. Customer activity does not need to be present for the facility to be operational.

Does the facility appear to be operational?– Considering all the previous questions, can you reasonably determine that the facility is operational?

If the facility is not open for business or employees are not present, do not mark Yes.

All “No” answers must be explained in Additional Comments.

Purpose of this Site Visit

The goal of an Observational SV at a Supplier location is to verify that the business in question is operational at the address in question and supplies DMEPOS items. The Inspector must document if the facility meets the qualifications.

- Does the facility have a sign that indicates the business name?

If yes, a photo of the sign is required.

If no, explain what was present or missing in the additional comments.

- If posted, please enter the hours of operation.

In this instance, you will ONLY enter the hours of operation if they are posted and can be verified with a photo. Do not ask staff or otherwise research the hours of operation.

The format to enter the hours of operation is:

Day to Day, 0:00 AM to 0:00 PM

For example: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Both of these questions require photo evidence OR an explanation in Additional Comments.

DMEPOS Inventory

Inspectors must verify the DMEPOS inventory in stock at the facility.

The site visit form asks:

Does the facility appear to have (DME) inventory present?

If yes, discretely take a photo of what is visible.

Note: This inspection type requires you to enter the facility to visually determine if they have DMEPOS inventory on site.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is any equipment that provides therapeutic benefits to a patient in need because of certain medical conditions and/or illnesses.

This includes but is not limited to:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Corrective lenses | Lancet devices & lancets |
| Crutches | Nebulizers & nebulizer medications |
| Hospital beds | Oral appliance for sleep apnea |
| Home infusion services | Oxygen equipment & accessories |
| Infusion pumps & supplies | Walkers |



DMEPOS Inventory

Answer “Yes” if at least one piece of DME inventory is observed.

If there is little or no durable medical equipment inventory in open view, you may need to interact with the staff to ascertain if DME inventory may be stored elsewhere, such as a back room within the facility.

In this instance, remain composed and professional. Introduce yourself as previously instructed, and only provide what information is necessary to determine the presence of DME.

“Hello, my name is John. I am here on behalf of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to conduct a site visit. I just need to take a few photos to verify the address and that the facility is operational. I also need to confirm if you have medical supply inventory on site and take a photo.”

You may ask, “Is your inventory stored in a back room or warehouse on site?” or “May I take a picture of the storage area?” It is required to complete the site visit.”



Inspectors must enter the facility to determine if inventory is present.

Inspectors should not interact with the staff unless there is little or no DME inventory in open view.

Finishing the Site Visit

At minimum, the report should contain all the required elements before submitting for review.

First and foremost, check that the business name is correct— The business name must match what is listed in the Job Order Details. If the facility operates under a different name, the relationship must be verified and a note entered in Additional Comments.

Check that the date and time are correct— The inspection date and time must match the date and time captured with the photos. If a second visit is required, those dates and times must match, including the execution date at the signature.

Check that only ONE facility type is marked “Yes”— All other facility types should be marked “No.”

Check that any Special Requests have been fulfilled— Hours of operation or specific instructions must be considered to complete the site visit.

Check that all questions are correctly answered— Questions 2, 3, and 7 should all agree. Example: It cannot be open or operational without the presence of staff.

Check that all required photos are attached, clear, and have geotagging data— Every report should have at least two pictures: the building exterior and the provider entrance. Additional photos may be required to capture details.

Check that any needed notes are added to Additional Comments— Make sure everything is entered in complete sentences using proper grammar, spelling, and formatting. Be sure to enter a statement attesting to the accuracy of photos.

Check the signature and name are entered— The Printed Name and signature fields indicate that the report is true and complete. The organization should always be “Deloitte.”

Click “Submit for Review” to complete the site visit.