**Maternal and Neonatal Designation Program**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **Is my hospital required to apply for a designation?**

We feel that this program will improve quality of care to create better maternal and neonatal outcomes in our state. With that being said, we highly **recommend** each hospital participate. Currently though, it is **not** a requirement.

1. **What level can my hospital apply for?**

If you apply for a designation, you are required to apply for the level of care you have been authorized to provide, by the Georgia Department of Community Health Certificate of Need program. For example, a facility that has a certificate of need to provide Level II maternal/neonatal services can only apply to be designated as a Level II Maternal and/or Neonatal Center.  The only exception is that a Level of Care III hospital may apply for a Level of Care IV designation after they have been surveyed and meet the standards of the Joint Commission (maternal) and/or the American Academy of Pediatrics (neonatal).

1. **How do I apply for a Level I Maternal and Neonatal Center Designation?**

Hospitals seeking a designation as a Level I **Maternal** Center have the option of contacting the Georgia Department of Public Health Maternal Designation Program or The Joint Commission (TJC) Maternal Verification Program.

* **Level I hospitals that seek maternal designation with DPH** will apply to [Maternal Designation Program](mailto:erin.smith@dph.ga.gov)
* **Level I hospitals that seek maternal designation with** **TJC** will apply to

[The Joint Commission Maternal Verification Program](https://www.jointcommission.org/accreditation-and-certification/verification/maternal-levels-of-care-verification/contact-us-about-joint-commission-verification/)

Level I hospitals that seek **neonatal** designation should contact DPH

[Neonatal Designation Program-LOC I](mailto:erin.smith@dph.ga.gov). The AAP does not survey Level I Neonatal Centers.

1. **How do I apply for a Level II, Level III, or Level IV Maternal Center Designation?**

Hospitals seeking designation as a Level II, Level III, or Level IV Maternal Center will apply to The Joint Commission (TJC) Maternal Verification Program [The Joint Commission Maternal Verification Program](https://www.jointcommission.org/accreditation-and-certification/verification/maternal-levels-of-care-verification/contact-us-about-joint-commission-verification/)

1. **How do I apply for a Level II, Level III, or Level IV Neonatal Center Designation?**

Hospitals seeking designation as a Level II, Level III, or Level IV Neonatal Center will apply to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) [NICU Verification Program](https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/nicuverification/Pages/default.aspx).

1. **How much does it cost to apply for a Maternal and Neonatal Center**

**Designation?**

* **Level I Maternal/Neonatal Designation**
  + If the Level I Maternal Center chooses DPH Maternal/Neonatal Designation Program to verify their designation, there will be no fee.
  + If Level I Maternal Center chooses The Joint Commission Maternal Verification Program to verify their designation, DPH will cover a portion of the cost of the survey.
* **Level II, Level III, and Level IV Maternal Designation** - DPH has a partnership with TJC to cover a portion of the cost of the survey. This is based on the level of survey needed.
* **Level II, Level III, and Level IV Neonatal Designation** - DPH has a partnership with AAP to cover a portion of the cost of the survey. This is based on the level of survey needed.

1. **What happens after TJC/AAP sends our site survey report to our hospital?**

You will have 90 days to submit your site survey report, additional documentation correcting any deficiencies noted in your site survey report, and a data report to DPH. DPH will issue the final determination.

1. **How can I advertise our designation?**

If your facility is designated by DPH, you may advertise that you are a DPH Designated Maternal Center or a DPH Designated Neonatal Center and it will be posted on the DPH website. If you do not receive a designation from DPH, you are still able to advertise the level of care you have through the Certificate of Need program.

1. **How long does the designation last?**

Your designation lasts for 3 years unless it is surrendered, suspended, or revoked prior to that time. At that point, you will either choose to let it lapse or apply for another designation.