



POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ADVERSE AND OTHER DECISIONS

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

This document describes various policies and procedures of NABH for dealing with adverse decisions against applicant and accredited/certified HCO.

2.0 SCOPE

NABH Secretariat shall monitor the HCO for compliance with the requirements applicable from time to time. The issues that fall under the scope of this document are related to situations wherein applicant or accredited/certified HCO has not complied with one or more terms and condition as well as any of the applicable requirement.

3.0 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ADVERSE AND OTHER DECISIONS AGAINST HCOs

NABH Secretariat shall monitor the HCOs of any information that casts doubt on the suitability of awarding or maintaining accreditation/certification of HCO. NABH may consider an appropriate action in each case, taking into account the objective evidence against and facts available and comparing them with the related clauses as mentioned in this document.

Various categories of decisions are as follows:

- A. Adverse decisions against applicant HCO
 - A.1 Inactive and Closed
- B. Adverse decisions against accredited/certified HCO
 - B.1 Shifting of Renewal Date
 - B.2 Expiry of Accreditation/Certification
 - B.3 Abeyance
 - B.4 Suspension
 - B.5 Forced Withdrawal
- C. Other decisions against accredited HCO
 - C.1 Voluntary Withdrawal
 - C.2 Extension of Validity of Accreditation Certificate

4. POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ADVERSE DECISIONS AGAINST APPLICANT HCO

4.1 Inactive and Closed

Conditions:

1. When a HCO has submitted incomplete application and has not submitted required information, application fee etc. within three months even after a reminder is sent.
2. When HCO has not undergone pre-assessment within three months of submitting application.
3. When HCO has not undergone final assessment within six months of conducting pre-assessment.
4. When the assessment of the HCO has been conducted and HCO has not taken appropriate corrective actions, if required for non-conformities within three months.
5. When an applicant HCO does not adhere to terms and conditions including misrepresentation of facts like use of NABH logo or accreditation mark

Action by NABH

A communication to be sent to the HCO that it has been put under “Inactive” category and application will be closed. Against the name of the HCO, “application closed” status shall be mentioned under applicant category on NABH website. Fee paid once are non-refundable as per QCI rules. HCO has to apply afresh and it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.

For a condition mentioned at 5 above, a warning letter shall be sent to adhere to the conditions, to obey within 30 days failing which application will be closed. The HCO will be treated as a forced withdrawal case. There will be no provision for appeal in this case. HCO has to apply afresh and it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.

5.0 POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ADVERSE DECISIONS AGAINST ACCREDITED/CERTIFIED HCO

5.1 Shifting of Renewal Date

Condition

1. If a HCO has not applied 6 months prior to the expiry of accreditation/certification and is unable to complete formalities for re-accreditation before the expiry of accreditation.

Action by NABH

1. The HCO will not remain in accredited/certified category and cannot use NABH Accreditation/Certification Mark. If HCO continues to use the NABH accreditation/certification mark and claim accreditation status, it will be debarred from NABH accreditation/certification process and may be fined. HCO will be treated as a forced withdrawal case. There will be no provision for appeal in this case. HCO has to apply afresh and it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.
2. Accreditation/Certification status will be granted when the HCO undergoes the re-assessment; is able to complete the corrective actions on the non-conformances after Re-assessment and the Accreditation Committee recommends renewal of accreditation/certification. The renewal date of Accreditation certificate, in case it is after the expiry of accreditation certificate, shall be the date on which the recommending authority send recommendation. The certificate shall be valid for a period of three years in case of accreditation and two years in case of certification programmes.

5.2 Expiry of Accreditation/Certification

Condition

1. When the HCO has not submitted the application for renewal before expiry of accreditation/certification.

Action by NABH

1. NABH Officer shall inform the HCO at least one month before expiry of accreditation/certification that it shall not claim accreditation/certification status.
2. HCO shall not use NABH Accreditation/Certification Mark in letterheads, publicity matters, other documents etc once the accreditation cycle is over.
3. After the date of expiry of accreditation/certification, NABH website will be updated to show the expired status.
4. The HCO shall have to apply afresh depositing application fees and other outstanding charges and undergo fresh assessment, as a new applicant HCO.
5. The unique Registration number will remain same, for the purpose of identification and tracking of earlier records.
6. The HCO will have a new certificate date, if successfully get accredited/certified.
7. The status shall be published on NABH website, thereafter.
8. If HCO continues to use the NABH accreditation/certification mark and claim accreditation/certification status, it will be debarred from NABH accreditation/certification process and may be fined. HCO will be treated as a forced withdrawal case. There will be no provision for appeal in this case. HCO has to apply afresh and it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.

5.3 Abeyance

Condition

1. When a HCO had undergone a Surveillance or Re-assessment visit and has not taken all corrective action and submitted closure report to NABH within three months of Surveillance/ Re-assessment visit.
2. When a HCO has not paid the Accreditation/Certification fees and the accreditation/certification expenses, fines beyond three months of the due date.
3. When a HCO does not appropriately respond to the queries as requested by NABH, even after two reminders.
4. When a total system failure or gross negligence in technical aspects is identified at the time of Surveillance or Re-assessment visit.
5. If the HCO is not maintaining the terms and conditions of accreditation/certification or has breached the provision of the standard agreement between HCO and NABH.

Action by NABH

1. The HCO is notified in writing about its change in accreditation/certification status as abeyance.
2. The abeyance status is given to a HCO for no longer than three months.
3. The HCO in abeyance status is not published, however if inquiries are made the HCO is referred to as under abeyance and working towards restoration of accredited/certified status.
4. To regain accreditation/certification status, the HCO in abeyance status must notify to NABH of its desire and agree to undergo verification assessment, paying the assessment charges and other outstanding payments. Abeyance status will continue till verification assessment is completed and a decision is taken. Restoration of accredited/certified status must happen before three months from the date HCO has been put under abeyance.
5. After verification assessment, assessment report to be placed to accreditation committee for further recommendation.
6. The certificate date remains unchanged, after accreditation/certification is restored.
7. If the HCO does not proceed further or respond or notify NABH about its inability to undergo verification assessment and restore accredited/certified status within three months of the abeyance status, action shall be initiated to suspend the accreditation of the HCO.
8. In case of total system failure and gross negligence in technical aspects, observed during surveillance or re-assessment, NABH will immediately put the HCO under 'Abeyance' category and ask the HCO to stop claiming accreditation/certification status. (If this is applicable, report may be directly placed to CEO- NABH for further action).

5.4 Suspension

Condition

1. When a HCO continues to be in 'Abeyance' status for three months
2. When a HCO violates the standard agreement conditions of maintaining accreditation/certification such as, but not limited to:
 - non co-operation with NABH
 - refusal to allow examination of documents & records
 - denial of access to NABH & its assessor to its services and patient care areas
 - wrong representation of scope of accreditation/certification

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- misuse of accreditation/certification mark
 - misleading reporting of facts
 - brings NABH into disrepute in any manner etc.
 - result of complaint analysis or any other information, which indicates that the HCO no longer complies with requirements of NABH.

Action by NABH

1. The HCO is notified in writing, about the NABH concerns and asked to reply with evidences.
2. After 30 days, of the above notification if issues are not resolved, a suspension letter is issued.
3. The suspension status of HCO is published.
4. A HCO can remain in suspension status for a maximum period of three months.
5. If the HCO does not respond to the suspension letter or refuses to meet the conditions to lift the suspension, 'Forced Withdrawal' action is initiated. If, even after suspension, the HCO continues to violate the conditions of accreditation/certification, an action on Forced withdrawal of accreditation/certification shall be initiated by NABH.
6. If HCO continues to use the NABH accreditation/certification mark and claim accreditation/certification status, it will be debarred from NABH accreditation/certification process and may be fined. HCO will be treated as a forced withdrawal case. There will be no provision for appeal in this case. HCO has to apply afresh and it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.
7. To regain accreditation/certification status, the HCO in suspension status must notify to NABH of its desire and agree to undergo verification assessment, paying the assessment charges and other outstanding payments. Suspension status will continue till verification assessment is completed and a decision is taken. Restoration of accredited/certified status must happen before three months from the date HCO has been put under suspension.
8. After verification assessment, assessment report to be placed to accreditation committee or further recommendation.
9. The HCO, during the period of suspension cannot use NABH accreditation/certification mark and claim accreditation/certification.
10. NABH website will announce the suspension of accreditation/certification.

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11. NABH shall inform to the competent authorities e.g. ECHS, CGHS, respective state, etc about the status of HCO.

5.5 Forced Withdrawal

Condition

1. When a HCO remains in 'Suspended status' for three months and have not met the condition for lifting the suspension even after three months.

Action by NABH

1. The HCO is notified in writing.
2. NABH website will announce the withdrawal status of accreditation/certification.
3. NABH shall inform to the competent authorities e.g. ECHS, CGHS, respective state, etc about the status of HCO.
4. In case the HCO has been withdrawn from the accreditation/certification programme it is debarred to participate in the accreditation/certification programme for at least 1 year. The HCO can be re-enrolled in the programme by applying as a new HCO and paying full fees and assessment charges, applicable at time.
5. After the HCO accreditation/certification status is withdrawn, the HCO shall not use accreditation/certification mark or claim accreditation/certification.
6. If HCO continues to claim accredited/certified status or uses NABH mark, financial and non-financial penalty may be imposed to HCO. Decision shall be taken on case to case basis by Board, Accreditation committee and CEO-NABH.

6. POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH OTHER DECISIONS AGAINST ACCREDITED/CERTIFIED HCO

6.1 Voluntary Withdrawal

Condition

1. When a HCO does not wish to continue their accreditation/certification and voluntarily request in writing that their accreditation/certification be terminated

Action by NABH

1. Program officer shall check the Accreditation/Certification Status of the HCO, i.e. Validity of the Certificate

2. Program officer shall ensure that the fees due is received from the HCO
3. Program officer shall ensure that NABH Accreditation/Certification certificate is received in original.
4. A note sheet shall be prepared by the concerned Program officer for taking approval through reporting officer by CEO NABH
5. Once the approval has been received by CEO-NABH, the Program Officer shall accept the same and maintain the record under 'Voluntary Withdrawal Category'.
6. A communication is sent to the HCO that it has been put under Voluntary Withdrawal category.
7. The status of the Voluntary Withdrawal shall appear in the remark's column of the application in NABH portal.
8. The Voluntary withdrawal status is published on NABH website.
9. If HCO decides to regain the accreditation/certification status, after it has sought voluntary withdrawal, it is treated as a new HCO and has to pay all fees, as applicable at that time. However, unique registration number will remain same.
10. A new certificate with current date and number is issued based on fresh assessment.
11. Between voluntary withdrawal and fresh accreditation/certification if any, HCO cannot claim accredited/certified status or use NABH accreditation/certification mark. If HCO continues to claim accredited/certified status or uses NABH mark, financial and non-financial penalty may be imposed to HCO. Decision shall be taken on case to case basis by Board, Accreditation committee and CEO-NABH.

6.2 Extension of Validity of Accreditation Certificate

Condition

If a HCO has applied for renewal of accreditation/certification six months before expiry of accreditation/certification, extension of validity of accreditation/certification may be granted for any of the following reasons:

1. Where re-assessment has been completed, but the Accreditation Committee meeting is yet to take place.
2. Where there is delay in conducting re-assessment for reasons beyond the control of NABH.
3. When the Accreditation Committee has recommended verification/ clarification from Principal Assessor/ Assessor/ Expert/ HCO leading to delay in the decision, beyond the control of NABH.

Action by NABH

An extension to accreditation/certification validity period is granted to the HCO and a letter is sent allowing the HCO to claim NABH Accreditation/Certification status and use of NABH Accreditation/Certification Mark till a final decision on renewal of accreditation/certification is taken. In the event of accreditation/certification to the HCO is not renewed, the HCO shall be informed, immediately, to stop claiming NABH accreditation/certification status & use of NABH Accreditation/Certification Mark. The website will also be updated to show the expired status.

Note: Whenever an adverse decision is likely to be taken on a HCO, the Officer shall first verbally inform the HCO, explaining them the consequences and then follow it up with a letter. The final letter of adverse decision shall be sent by CEO/ Director NABH.

**NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD FOR HOSPITALS
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