

Nursing Home Federal Deficiency Severity and Scope

Nursing homes certified to accept Medicare or Medicaid must meet specific federal requirements. The Agency for Health Care Administration conducts inspections for federal certification and when a federal deficiency is cited in a nursing home during an inspection, the deficiency is assigned a “scope and severity” based on the findings.

Scope describes how many persons are affected by the deficiency:

- Isolated involves one or a very limited number of residents, staff or issues;
- Pattern involves more than a very limited number of residents, staff or issue and is usually a group or a unit or wing; and
- Widespread involves a large number of residents or staff, and may be pervasive and/or systematic.

Severity indicates the level of harm to health or safety:

- Immediate Jeopardy that is harm or potential harm occurring now;
- Actual Harm occurred;
- No Actual Harm but there is a potential for harm that is more than minimal; and
- No Actual Harm occurred and the potential for harm is minimal.

The scope and severity is a letter and the description of each possible letter is described below:

Severity				
Immediate Jeopardy to Resident Health or Safety	J	K	L	
Actual Harm that is not Immediate Jeopardy	G	H	I	
No Actual Harm with Potential for more than Minimal Harm	D	E	F	
No Actual Harm with Potential for Minimal Harm	A	B	C	
	Isolated	Pattern	Widespread	Scope