

***JCAHO STANDARD FOR TESTING OF IMAGING  
EQUIPMENT THAT IS NOT X-RAY PRODUCING***

JCAHO sets Standards which each facility is expected to meet. They do not tell you how to meet any Standard, rather they leave it to each facility to demonstrate that their policies and procedures meet the applicable Standard.

JCAHO advocates the Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy. Part of the TQM is the Quality Assurance (QA) program. A QA program main objective is the enhancement of patient care. Part of a QA program is the Quality Control (QC) program. In the area of imaging, the QC program is that part of the QA program that deals with techniques used in monitoring and maintaining technical elements of the systems that affect the quality of the image. JCAHO Section 2, Division 8, “Management of the Environment of Care”, and specifically Section EC.2.10.3, “Medical equipment is maintained, tested, and inspected” is the pertinent Standard to be met.

All imaging equipment falls under the general phrase “Medical Equipment,” not just x-ray producing equipment – all imaging equipment. There are three parts to the Standard: (1) maintenance, (2) testing, and (3) inspection.

A biomedical group and/or a third-party equipment maintenance service provider fulfill the “maintenance” portion of this Standard.

A biomedical group is the appropriate group for both the testing and inspection for much of the hospital’s general medical equipment.

For imaging equipment, a medical diagnostic physicist is the appropriate resource for the testing while the biomedical group can continue to fulfill the inspection process.

Note that a third-party equipment maintenance service provider is never the entity that is to provide testing to meet the Standard. The testing accomplished by the service provider is part of his maintenance program and is not part of the QC program. The testing done to meet this Standard is supposed to be a higher level of testing, a level of testing sufficient to assure, among other things, that all maintenance that has been performed has in fact been performed successfully – that is to say, the equipment is working at least as well after the maintenance is performed as it was before the maintenance, and hopefully better.

For ACR accredited facilities, only a qualified medical physicist or an MR Scientist may perform MRI testing for accreditation purposes.