



# MAERB Spring Report 2024

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### MAERB Office and Staff

The MAERB office is open from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm **EASTERN**. As always, you have your dedicated Program Manager, either Jim Hardman ([jhardman@maerb.org](mailto:jhardman@maerb.org)) or Michelle Everett ([meverett@maerb.org](mailto:meverett@maerb.org)), as your central contact, so you can reach out to them with questions. If you do not know who your Program Manager is, please contact [maerb@maerb.org](mailto:maerb@maerb.org), and you will receive an answer to that question. Leah Millett ([lmillett@maerb.org](mailto:lmillett@maerb.org)) is MAERB’s part-time administrative assistant who does a lot of work in the background, so you may occasionally hear from her. And Sarah Marino, MAERB’s Executive Director, is always available as well.

### MAERB at the 2024 AAMA Conference

The MAERB is planning to be at the AAMA Annual Conference at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton in Grand Rapids, MI, from September 20-23, 2024. MAERB will be hosting the following events at the date and times below:

**Friday, September 20, 2024, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm EASTERN:**

#### **Self-Study Workshop, 2022 Standards and Guidelines**

This Self-Study Workshop is designed to help continuing and initial accreditation programs prepare for the comprehensive review process. This year’s workshop is based upon the 2022 *CAAHEP Standards and Guidelines*. The workshop will focus on the MAERB resources to help you prepare for the Self-Study, walk you through the Self-Study template, discuss how to best ensure if you are effectively implementing the MAERB Core Curriculum, and provide an overview of how to prepare for the site visit. This program is led by experienced surveyors, who will share their expertise and knowledge of the *Standards* and the survey process. There is a \$200 fee for attending the workshop. We will be opening the registration for the event in late March 2024, once the AAMA publishes the conference schedule. The programs that have visits

scheduled in 2025, 2026, and 2027 will be contacted and given first preference for registering, after which point registration will be open to the broader community.

**Sunday, September 22, 2023**, Exact Time TBD – EASTERN:  
**MAERB Forum**

During the MAERB Forum, you will receive a report about MAERB's activities in academic year 2023-2024; at this time, we do not have many details yet about the substance of the Forum, but we will share that information as it becomes available. We wanted, however, to let you know that we will be there.

### Annual Report Form (ARF) 2023 and 2024 Deadlines

Looking ahead, below you will find a schedule for the 2023 ARF deadlines as well as an outline of the 2024 ARF submission schedule. Please remember that you should be updating your ARF Tracking Tool regularly so that you can easily fill out your Annual Report Form each year. The MAERB office held a training on the ARF Tracking Tool in September 2023, and you can find a recording of that under the *Resources* tab on the *ARF Information* page of the MAERB website ([www.maerb.org](http://www.maerb.org)). MAERB is offering the Tracking Tool webinar again on Thursday, April 11, 3:00 – 4:30 pm EASTERN. Look below for more details.

For the 2024 ARF, we are extending the timeframe for completion of the Annual Report Form, from five weeks to seven weeks, to allow the MAERB staff more time to review the ARFs in advance of the deadline. The MAERB staff will be glad to review your ARF in advance of submission, but you must schedule an appointment two weeks prior to the final deadline. They will not review the information in the last two weeks before the ARF is due. Here are important dates for the next round of ARFs:

#### **Fall Submissions, 2024 ARF**

(2023 admission cohorts and 2023 graduates, as well as updates to prior years)

**August 13, 2024:** Program Directors will receive a notice informing them that in approximately 30 days the 2024 ARF will be accessible online.

**September 12-13, 2024:** Program Directors will be sent an email with ARF logistics, along with the green light to proceed.

**November 1, 2024:** Firm deadline for submission of the 2024 ARF.

#### **Spring Submissions, 2024 ARF**

(2023 admission cohorts and 2023 graduates, as well as updates to prior years)

**December 16, 2024:** Program Directors will receive a notice informing them that in approximately 30 days the 2024 ARF will be accessible online.

**January 16-17, 2025:** Program Directors will be sent an email with ARF logistics along with the green light to proceed.

**March 7, 2025:** Firm deadline for submission of the 2024 ARF.

The MAERB office does not give extensions for the submission of the ARF. There is a late fee if it is submitted late.

## Training Webinar: ARF Tracking Tool, Thursday, April 11, 2024, 3:00 – 4:30 pm EASTERN

As you know, all Program Directors are required to annually submit their fully updated ARF Tracking Tool that substantiates the aggregated data that they are reporting on their current ARF. In April 2024, MAERB will be holding a webinar (very similar to the September 2023 webinar) for Program Directors to learn effective ways to use the ARF Tracking Tool. Attendance is optional; however, for those who have never attended an ARF Tracking Tool training, it is encouraged.

The registration link for the webinar on Thursday, April 11, 3:00 – 4:30 EASTERN is listed below. There is currently a video of a webinar that took place in September 2023 posted on the MAERB's website ([www.maerb.org](http://www.maerb.org)) under the *Resources* tab on the page ARF Information. The April 2024 webinar will be recorded and posted on the website, replacing the September 2023 video.

You can register for the webinar at the following link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsc-GorjorG9aae5VYys\\_qkW2F8jC4wPUq](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsc-GorjorG9aae5VYys_qkW2F8jC4wPUq)

## ARF Review Process

The MAERB Office is frequently asked questions about the process that the MAERB office uses to review individual program's Annual Report Form (ARF). While the ARF is used primarily for the program to annually report its outcomes, it also serves other purposes, which are outlined below.

**General Information Tab:** MAERB staff review the General Information tab of your ARF to ensure that we have accurate information about your program in our database. Even though much of this information doesn't change from year to year, we require you to complete this tab every year.

The first four questions describe your program, including type of award offered, the number of credit or clock hours, the number of semesters, half-semester, quarters, or modules, and the length of the program for a full-time student. We compare the information that you provide with the information in our database to ensure that no changes have been made.

The next six questions deal with personnel, including the name of your immediate supervisor, the name(s) of the practicum coordinator(s), and the name(s) of the full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty members with your medical assisting program. For all these positions, we compare your answers to our database and our document site to confirm that there have been no unreported changes over the past 12 months. If necessary, we will ask for additional documentation.

The final three questions focus on the process that you use to define your admission cohort. You are asked whether you use a trigger course, or a formal admissions process. If it is a trigger course, we ask what the course number is and in which term the course is taught. Finally, you are asked if you have been using the same method of defining your admission cohort for the five years represented on the ARF, as the answer to that question helps the MAERB staff to understand any potential anomalies in the five-year trend data.

**Outcomes:** As you know from MAERB's many ARF-related resources, the main purpose of the ARF is to annually report your outcomes. You will find instructions and videos under the Resources tab on the MAERB website ([www.maerb.org](http://www.maerb.org)) on the ARF Information page. Along

with the instructional material, you will also find the Employer and Graduate Survey template that you are required to use. For programs that are not yet CAAHEP-accredited, the ARF Tracking Tool template is also posted there.

On the Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation tab of the ARF, you report the admission cohort/s for the specific calendar year, along with the current status of all the admitted students, including the number who have dropped and the number who have graduated. The number of students that are still in-progress is automatically generated in the ARF, after you report on your dropped and graduated students. You also need to update any changes in status for all the students from the four previous years of admission, until there are no students left in progress.

The MAERB staff check the top row of your ARF, the most recent year reported, against the tracking tool (more on that later) you submitted, checking for accuracy. In addition, they look at the number of students in progress for the preceding years to see if the ARF has been updated. If there are errors, you are contacted, and, if corrections need to be made, the ARF will be unlocked, and you will be charged an administrative fee.

On the next tab, Graduation Year Data, you would report the number of graduates in the specific calendar year. You are not able to change the previous years' numbers, as those numbers are stable and won't change. The MAERB staff look at your Tracking Tool to confirm that the number of graduates matches the number that you reported on your ARF.

For the next four tabs, Graduate Survey, Job Placement, Employer Survey, and Exam Participation and Passage, the same process applies. The MAERB staff check the most recent year, matching the aggregated data with the ARF Tracking Tool. As with all tabs of your ARF, if corrections need to be made, the ARF will be unlocked, and you will be charged a \$200 administrative fee.

**Tracking Tool:** As the preceding discussion indicates, it is vitally important that the Tracking Tool be complete and updated when submitting it to MAERB with your ARF. In addition, the Tracking Tool must be filled out with the correct formatting to allow for filtering and sorting. In the column headers that call for dates, you should follow the pattern given: MM/DD/YYYY. Please don't use periods or text. This is especially important when reporting the date of admission and the date of graduation. The month of admission on the Tracking Tool should match the month of admission on your ARF.

**Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes and Resource Assessment Forms:** In addition, you are asked to submit the Advisory Committee meeting minutes and the Resource Assessment Form that corresponds to the most recent year of your ARF. For example, if you are completing your ARF for the 2022 admissions and graduate cohorts, you would submit your 2022 Advisory Committee meeting minutes and your Resource Assessment Form for either 2022 calendar year or 2022-2023 academic year.

The MAERB staff **DO NOT** review your submitted Minutes and Resource Assessment, as our primary goal in asking for these materials is to serve as a repository in case there should be a sudden change in Program Director and the important information is lost in the shuffle. It is your responsibility, as Program Director, to ensure that your submitted Minutes and Resource

Assessment are accurate, complete, and saved for your 3 most recent Resource Assessments. It is used during the comprehensive review visit, if the surveyors report that those documents are missing. The MAERB staff will go to the repository to find that information. If it is inaccurate or incomplete, then the deficiency will remain as a citation in the CAAHEP letter.

Our goal in sharing the review process with you is to demonstrate **why** you are requested to share this information, as each piece that you submit is used either in the process of evaluating your outcomes or for future substantiation, such as your next site visit.

### [MAERB's Policies and Procedures Manual](#)

The MAERB Policies and Procedures Committee met in January 2024 for their bi-annual discussion of the MAERB *Policies and Procedures Manual*. At the meeting, one change was approved, regarding Policy 225: Resource Assessment. There were also some editorial changes in Policy 205: ARF Processing.

The MAERB *Policies and Procedures Manual* has been updated and posted at the MAERB website. Note that the *Policies and Procedures Manual* is designed to allow you to easily click to a policy using the Table of Contents. In addition, there is a chart at the beginning of the *Policies and Procedures Manual* that outlines all the changes over the years. Below is a summary of the changes for your convenience.

The following change constitutes substantive changes to the specific policy and are outlined for you below.

**Policy 225 Resource Assessment:** The policy was changed based upon the new Resource Assessment Form that was adopted in August 2023, with required use beginning in January 2024. It outlines the need to annually assess the program's resources and to detail that assessment on the Resource Assessment Form. In addition, it outlines the requirement to conduct three surveys of your resources: One by faculty, one by students, and one by the advisory committee. The Resource Assessment Forms and the raw data of the required surveys must be kept for a three-year period.

The changes in the policy listed below were purely editorial and focused on the "Examples and Procedures" section. There was no change in substance.

### **Policy 205 Annual Report Form Processing**

#### [Accreditation Networking: Sharing and Caring](#)

In MAERB's Virtues of Accreditation document, one central theme is the community that is created among programs, faculty, and program directors due to the alignment to the CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines*. Whenever there is the opportunity to share, that community is strengthened and enhanced.

As part of its quality improvement project, MAERB is instituting a series of networking events for the Program Directors of CAAHEP-accredited medical assisting programs. The networking events will be focused on a specific theme, and, while there will be a very brief presentation (5-7 minutes) by either expert subject-matter volunteers or the MAERB staff, most of the webinar time will be spent in breakout sessions so that the participants can talk with each other. Then there will be a reporting out so that the different small groups can learn from each other.

For the spring 2024 networking series, MAERB has designed two topics, with three webinar options for each topic, with the goal of having as many people participate as possible. As the substance of the conversation will depend upon the participants, the sessions held for each topic will not end up being identical; however, the MAERB presentation for each session will be the same. To allow as much participation as possible, you are asked to sign up for only one session under each topic. There is a limit of 100 people per session, based upon the limits of Zoom. MAERB will close the registration for a particular session when that cap has been reached.

The specific topics are outlined below.

### **Accreditation Tips and Tricks**

Achieving and maintaining accreditation is not an intuitive act, as it requires familiarity with the CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines*, along with a range of supplementary documents. This networking session will focus on Program Directors sharing tips and techniques about how they make the process of complying with accreditation an easier task. There will be a brief presentation from a member of the MAERB staff, and then the participants will be broken up into small groups and will share their tips and techniques with each other. Finally, each group will report out so that there can be networking among groups.

Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm EASTERN [Register](#)

Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm EASTERN [Register](#)

Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm EASTERN [Register](#)

### **Teaching the MAERB Core Curriculum**

While the MAERB Core Curriculum outlines a range of specific items that need to be taught and assessed, the methods of teaching and assessment vary considerably from program to program, even when the same textbooks are used. This networking session will provide Program Directors the opportunity to share what innovative materials they have incorporated into their programs and classrooms to effectively teach and assess the MAERB Core Curriculum.

Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 3:00 pm – 4:15 EASTERN [Register](#)

Friday, March 22, 10:00 am – 11:15 am EASTERN [Register](#)

Tuesday, March 26, 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm EASTERN [Register](#)

The Registration information is also posted on the MAERB website under the About tab on the Events and Announcements page.

### [MAERB Resources](#)

To achieve our goal of continuous quality improvement, MAERB is always updating the resources that are provided to the Program Directors of CAAHEP-accredited programs. The MAERB resources are now located on several different pages under the *Resources* tab on the main page of the MAERB website.

Throughout this Spring 2024 MAERB Report, you were informed of several optional training sessions. You can find a complete list under the About tab on the Events page. We do regularly update our materials, and those updates are shared in the weekly Tipping Points. The updates, corrections, and

new resources are outlined below indicating the page on which they can be found under the Resources tab:

- *Home page*: New important dates have been added, and the MAERB Office holidays are listed.
- *ARF Information*
  - Updated: ARF Tracking Tool Instructions
  - Updated: 2023 ARF Instructions
  - Updated: Outcomes Thresholds Chart
- *Site Visits and Program Resources*
  - **Updated**: Initial Accreditation SSR Template (added in the new Resource Assessment form) **There were formatting updates and additional instructions**
  - **Updated**: Continuing Accreditation SSR Template (added in the new Resource Assessment form) **There were formatting updates and additional instructions**
  - **New**: Checklist: Lab Equipment and Supplies
  - **New**: Spring 2024 *MAERB Report*
- *Standards and Policies*
  - **Updated**: *Policies and Procedures Manual*
- *Educator Videos*
  - **New**: Site Visit Preparation for Program Directors
  - **New**: Resource Assessment Form Webinar
  - **New**: MAERB Virtual Forum 2023

## MAERB's Contact Information

**Telephone:** The telephone number for MAERB remains the following: 312-392-0155. When you listen to the message, you will hear the extensions for the MAERB staff. Please call us when you have questions. As you were informed above, MAERB's office hours are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm EASTERN.

**Submitting Self-Studies, Progress Reports, and other Accreditation Materials:** If your submission is not large or multi-layered, you are encouraged to send the documents via email to your Program Manager.

Program Directors have the capacity to upload large submissions, such as Self-Study Reports, Progress Reports, and other special reports on the *Submissions* tab of the MAERB website. The directions for doing so are on the Resources tab of the MAERB website ([www.maerb.org](http://www.maerb.org)) on the Program Resources/Accreditation Resources section. The instructions are titled, "Submitting Documents, MAERB website." Program Directors can access the Submissions tab by using their ARF password. This upload system of the *Submissions* tab is designed for any large collection of documents.

**Mailing Address:** In order to remit payments via check to MAERB, you would use the following address:

MAERB  
2020 N. California Ave., #213  
Suite 7  
Chicago, IL 60647



## Virtues of Accreditation

The MAERB showcases Virtues of Accreditation on a regular basis in its biannual MAERB Report. At the September 2019 MAERB Forum, participants requested that MAERB provide a brief outline of the virtues of accreditation so that Program Directors and other instructional staff of CAAHEP-accredited medical assisting programs can discuss the benefits of CAAHEP accreditation with administrators at the organizations that sponsor the medical assisting program.

Below you will find a list of accreditation virtues that we first published in fall 2019 and have been updated since then. The MAERB welcomes your participation in this process, as we realize that you, too, have a list of advantages that you outline when you speak to students, administrators, and employers. Please contact Sarah Marino ([smarino@maerb.org](mailto:smarino@maerb.org)) if you have additional ideas.

- **Accreditation assures professional competence:** Graduates from a CAAHEP-accredited program have covered the comprehensive MAERB Core Curriculum and achieved the psychomotor and affective competencies to ensure patient safety.
- **Accreditation offers standardization, uniformity, and consistency:** All CAAHEP-accredited programs cover the same MAERB Core Curriculum, so employers can be guaranteed that the students know a given body of entry-level knowledge.
- **Accreditation requires external verification, review, and validation:** In fulfilling the standards, CAAHEP-accredited programs submit their outcomes to MAERB for an annual review and go through a comprehensive site visit review with CAAHEP every ten years.
- **Accreditation protects resources:** The accreditation *Standards and Guidelines* specify that the students and faculty have access to specific resources to ensure that the program can comply with the national standards.
- **Accreditation enhances the institution's reputation:** Institutions participating in programmatic accreditation distinguish themselves from other institutions.
- **Accreditation is public:** CAAHEP-accredited programs are listed in a CAAHEP database for student and educator access, and CAAHEP-accredited programs post their status and outcomes.
- **Accreditation travels well:** Employers across the country recognize the value of accreditation.
- **Accreditation advances the profession:** The standardization, uniformity, and consistency that accreditation ensures, as well as the review of the *Standards and Guidelines* and MAERB Core Curriculum, move the profession forward toward greater recognition in the allied health field.
- **Accreditation acknowledges accountability:** Educational programs graduating prospective healthcare workers must be accountable in ensuring patient safety, and accreditation supports the process of accountability with curriculum that is innovative, relevant, and current.

You can help us by adding to this list, so please contact Sarah Marino ([smarino@maerb.org](mailto:smarino@maerb.org)) with your suggestions, and we will continue with this list.