



Provisional Release:

# Updated Quality Assurance and Mentoring Protocols for Home Energy Score

Guidance on Remote Mentoring, Desktop  
Quality Assurance, and Dispute Resolution

MAY 2017

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## Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Part 1: Minimum Requirements for Remote Mentors and DTQA Auditors.....	6
Part 2: Remote Mentoring Protocol.....	7
Part 3: Desktop Quality Assurance Protocol .....	9
Part 4: Remote Service Provider Requirements.....	13
Part 5: Dispute Resolution & Appeals Guidelines.....	14

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## Executive Summary

- ▶ The Home Energy Score is an asset rating that allows homeowners, buyers, and renters to compare U.S. homes in terms of estimated energy performance. Based on a standard in-home assessment of a home's energy-related assets, the Home Energy Score Report provides a variety of information that can be included in MLS listings and potentially influence home appraisals and financing.
- ▶ The Home Energy Score Team developed a procedure for Remote Mentoring in which a candidate Assessor can be mentored through a video-conferencing application or a software allowing for photos and videos of the home to be uploaded and shared with the Remote Mentor. Using these technologies, a Mentor can deliver an educational experience similar to live, in-person mentorship for an Assessor in another part of the country.
- ▶ Similarly, by reviewing 20-35 photos and other supporting information supplied by the Assessor, a Desktop Quality Assurance (DTQA) Auditor can enter a Quality Assurance (QA) assessment for the home and verify the data entered by the Assessor through comparison with the photo evidence. Any points of contention can be discussed over the phone or through email between the Assessor and DTQA Auditor.
- ▶ These new solutions are being offered on a provisional basis, meaning they may be rescinded if programs are not able to maintain certain standards for quality of implementation.
- ▶ Home Energy Score Partners can elect to continue in-person mentoring and in-home quality assurance providing they meet the mentoring and QA requirements for in-person QA and mentoring or adopt the following new DTQA and remote mentoring protocols

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## Introduction

The Home Energy Score is an asset rating that allows homeowners, buyers, and renters to compare U.S. homes in terms of estimated energy performance. Based on a standard in-home assessment of a home's energy-related assets, the Home Energy Score Report provides information that can be included in MLS listings and potentially influence home appraisals and financing.

To be a trusted source of energy information and therefore influential in the real estate market, there must be systems in place to assure that high quality scores are consistently produced. To that end, the U.S. Department of Energy imposes three quality related requirements:

- ▶ First, all Home Energy Score Assessors must complete U.S. DOE's free, online Simulation Training and Test. The standard training platform ensures that all Home Energy Score Assessors are introduced to the Tool with the same instruction and rigorous testing.
- ▶ Second, all new Assessors must conduct their first Home Energy Score with an experienced Assessor that has been deemed a Mentor by U.S. DOE.
- ▶ Third, the U.S. DOE requires a quality assurance (QA) review of at least 5% of randomly selected Home Energy Scores on a quarterly basis.

## Existing Quality Assurance and Mentoring Practices

To meet the QA requirement, Home Energy Score Partners use an independent qualified Assessor to re-score these homes and then compare results with the original assessments. The Home Energy Score Team tracks Partners' QA progress and highlights instances where the QA and original assessments vary by more than 1 point on the 10-point scale. In such cases, a paper review or third assessment is required to explain the variation and provide a corrected Score.

## Problem Statement

Ideally, QA ensures that a program maintains high quality while not becoming cost-prohibitive to implement. The existing QA strategy works well in some cases: for example, if utility programs are already sending in qualified personnel to perform other QA checks, the additional repeat score can generally be performed at little additional cost. In other cases, the QA requirement may be too costly to implement and results in reduced program viability.

The existing QA strategy is particularly challenging to implement in regions with only a small number of Home Energy Score Assessors and potential QA providers, and in rural areas where travel time to/from homes is significantly higher. Furthermore, even where repeat assessments are feasible, many Partners are not able to quickly apply lessons learned from the QA assessments to proactively use the information to improve training and implementation.

Similarly, in certain regions of the country, accessing qualified Home Energy Score Mentors for candidate Assessors to become active can be a challenge. Anywhere a new Assessor is trying to become active where no Assessors have previously been established results in a "chicken-or-egg" problem: The Assessor cannot become fully active until a Mentor approves them, but no one in the region can be a Mentor without

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being a fully active Assessor.

The current procedure in managing this situation is to convene Mentors and aspiring Assessors in a single location - such as a training center, conference, or other convention - to conduct mentoring. However, this process is time and resources intensive. A Remote Mentoring strategy is necessary to increase the active Assessor pool throughout the country at an accelerated rate.

### Our New Solution: Remote Mentoring and Desktop Quality Assurance

The process of becoming an active Home Energy Score Assessor is now easier and more streamlined. Previously, there was a need to have Assessors available in every region to assist with mentorship and quality assurance. Now quality assurance and mentoring requirements can be handled remotely through photo and video technology. With this change, the Home Energy Score program is fully accessible in every U.S. market.

The Home Energy Score Team developed a procedure for Remote Mentoring in which a candidate Assessor can be mentored through a video-conferencing application or a software allowing for photos and videos of the home to be uploaded and shared with the Remote Mentor. Using these technologies, a Mentor can deliver an educational experience similar to live, in-person mentorship for an Assessor in another part of the country.

For Desktop Quality Assurance (DTQA), rather than performing a second, independent, in-field assessment, the DTQA Auditor reviews 20-35 photos of the home's key features submitted by the Assessor. Using these photos and other supporting information, the Auditor can enter a QA assessment for the home and verify the data entered by the Assessor compared to the photo evidence. Any points of contention can be discussed over the phone or through email between the Assessor and QA Auditor. This method is likely to work particularly well with home inspectors, energy auditors, or contractors who already use photo-evidence of the home's features as part of their business model.

This document consists of five parts, each outlining specific requirements for these new remote options.

- Part 1: Minimum Requirements for Remote Mentors and DTQA Auditors
- Part 2: Remote Mentoring Protocol
- Part 3: Desktop Quality Assurance Protocol
- Part 4: Remote Service Provider Requirements
- Part 5: Dispute Resolution & Appeals Guidelines

These solutions are being offered on a provisional basis, meaning they may be modified or rescinded if programs are not able to maintain certain basic standards for quality of implementation. Home Energy Score Partners can elect to continue in-person mentoring and in-field quality assurance or adopt the new DTQA and remote mentoring protocols.

These solutions are not offered in replacement of existing Mentoring and Quality Assurances practices in protocols, rather as additional ways to carry out these responsibilities.

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## Part 1: Minimum Requirements for Remote Mentors and DTQA Auditors

1. Must be an active Home Energy Score Assessor
2. Must qualify through one of the following paths:
  - a. Hold either a current BPI Building Analyst or RESNET HERS credential for at least two years (credentials must be current or expired for no more than 1 year); AND, have conducted a minimum of 4 Home Energy Scores
    - i. DOE's Home Energy Score Team must review and sign off on at least 4 of these scores through DTQA
    - ii. Issues relating to above assessments must be resolved by Home Energy Score Team, which may include additional QA'd assessments
  - b. Hold a BPI BSP credential AND have conducted a minimum of 20 Home Energy Scores
    - i. DOE's Home Energy Score Team must review and sign off on 10 of these scores through DTQA
    - ii. Issues relating to above assessments must be resolved by Home Energy Score Team, which may include additional QA'd assessments
3. Must receive phone and/or webinar training from the DOE Home Energy Score Team or an approved provider.

Training for prospective mentors will include –

- a. An overview and discussion of relevant information and tools
  - i. Purpose and goals of mentoring
  - ii. "Mentoring Guide"
  - iii. "Assessor Tips" fact sheet
  - iv. Home Energy Score Assessor Calculator
- b. A mock remote mentoring session
- c. An opportunity to ask questions

Training for prospective DTQA Auditors will include –

- a. An overview and discussion of relevant information and tools
  - i. Purpose and goals of DTQA
  - ii. DTQA protocol
  - iii. Desktop Quality Assurance Guidance documentation
  - iv. Home Energy Score Assessor Calculator
- b. Joint completion of one or more example DTQA reviews
- c. An opportunity to ask questions

In the near-term, the Home Energy Score Team will sign off on each new DTQA Auditor and Remote Mentor; however by 2018 the Home Energy Score Team expects to provide additional guidance or a test that will allow other approved parties to authorize individuals to begin performing remote mentoring or DTQA.

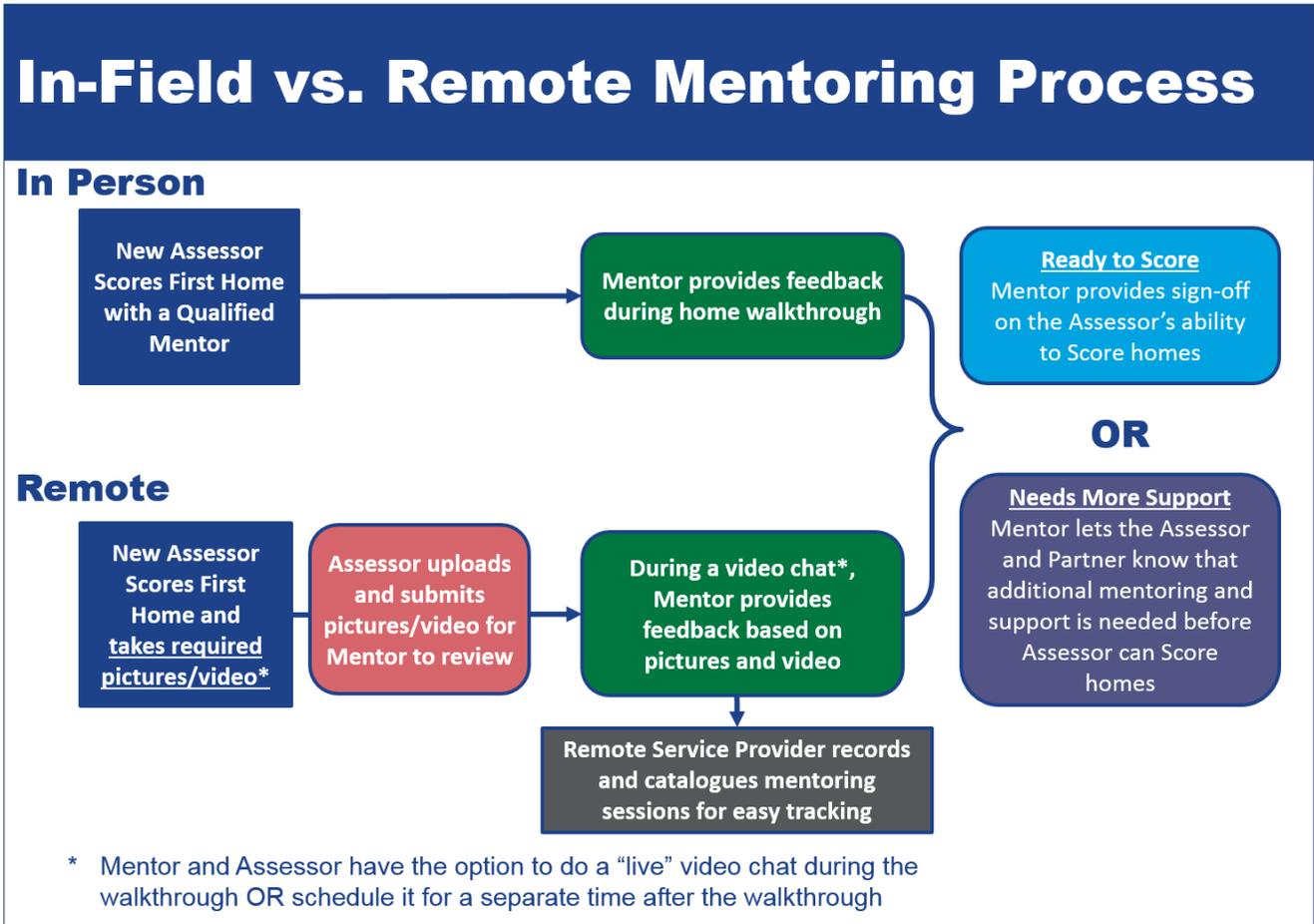
These requirements also pertain to in-field Mentor and Quality Assurance providers moving forward.

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## Part 2: Remote Mentoring Protocol

1. Candidate Assessor and Remote Mentor schedule a time for the mentoring session. Both parties agree on and test in advance a technology to use, whether a video conferencing service or software for uploading photos and video.
2. The Remote Mentor must provide the Home Energy Score Team a schedule of planned mentorship sessions with at least 3 days' notice and provide team members the opportunity to take part in the calls/webinars. Mentorship sessions' video/audio should be recorded and tracked/catalogued.
3. Candidate Assessor independently scores a home that has never been scored before. Ideally, the home is one that the candidate Assessor has easy access to - either their own home or a friend's home.
4. Candidate Assessor enters home's data into the Home Energy Scoring Tool as an "Initial" assessment and submits the score.
5. Candidate Assessor details his/her work process throughout the home through a video conferencing service and/or with a combination of video and photos, and presents the relevant supporting materials to the Mentor. This should be done through all parts of the home including but not limited to:
  - a. Exterior
  - b. Basement / crawlspace
  - c. Attic space & visible insulation
  - d. HVAC equipment and related duct registers
  - e. Anywhere ducts are visible
6. The candidate uploads all documentation and shares it with the Mentor electronically.
7. During the scheduled remote mentoring session, the following steps must be followed:
  - a. The candidate goes over each of the data inputs either through a video conferencing service and/or submitted photos and videos, preferably in the order that he/she collected the info during the actual home walkthrough.
  - b. Mentor provides comments and brings up relevant learning opportunities.
  - c. Mentor creates his/her own assessment of the same house using the "Mentor" assessment type.
  - d. Mentor shares their assessment with the candidate to go over any differences in inputs, including discussion of candidate errors and/or instances that require a more subjective interpretation of the home's features.
  - e. Mentor reminds the Assessor of common mistakes mentioned in the "Mentoring Guide" and "Assessor Tips" documents, even if these do not come up specifically in the discussion of the home. It is especially important that the Mentor assist the candidate Assessor on how to use the Assessor Calculator appropriately.
8. Mentor submits the "Mentor" assessment of the home to enable Home Energy Score Team tracking of Remote Mentor activities. The candidate can now be considered a mentored and active Assessor.
9. If the mentor's assessment results in a score that is greater than 1 point different from the candidate's score for that home, the candidate and mentor must determine the appropriate house characteristics and the candidate must resubmit the Score using the "Corrected" assessment type.

10. The candidate Assessor cannot be an active Assessor until they have written approval from an approved Home Energy Score Remote Mentor.



## Part 3: Desktop Quality Assurance Protocol

### Assessors Must Collect the Following Data:

Assessors must take all required photos for every home they score. Assessors are expected to provide at least one copy of these photos. Photos must be well lit (using flash where appropriate), clear, and fully inclusive of the information needed to assess the home. Assessors should take a “too many is better than too few” approach in submitting photos. See the example packet for depictions of sketches and photos that are acceptable for review.

#### 1. Floor Plan: 1 Sketch & Fill in Template

- Legible scan or photo of a drawing/sketch showing the footprint of the home with dimensions. Note "unconditioned" areas where possible.
- Fill in the standard (Figure 1) house diagram (or provide your own sketch) indicating placement of mechanical equipment and ducts as appropriate and whether or not each is in conditioned or unconditioned space.

Check the box next to each item to show in which location(s) it exists in the home.

The diagram is a cross-section of a house divided into four quadrants by a vertical centerline and a horizontal grade line. The top-left quadrant is labeled 'COND. ATTIC' and 'CONDITIONED AREA'. The top-right quadrant is labeled 'UNCOND. ATTIC' and 'UNCONDITIONED AREA'. The middle-left quadrant is labeled 'COND. SPACE'. The middle-right quadrant is labeled 'UNCOND. SPACE'. The bottom-left quadrant is labeled 'COND. BASEMENT'. The bottom-right quadrant is labeled 'CRAWL SPACE OR UNCOND. BASEMENT'. Each quadrant contains a list of equipment types with checkboxes: DUCTS, HVAC, and DHW. The grade line is labeled 'GRADE' on the left side.

Location	DUCTS	HVAC	DHW
COND. ATTIC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNCOND. ATTIC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COND. SPACE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNCOND. SPACE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COND. BASEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CRAWL SPACE OR UNCOND. BASEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 1. Standard House Diagram. Check off the equipment label in all locations where it exists in each home.

#### 2. Exterior: 10 Photos

- One or more per elevation, getting the whole side of the home in the frame whenever possible. One image must be straight-on to each elevation, ideally with an item indicating scale included in the shot (i.e., visible yardstick or ruler). One photo should also be taken on each corner outside the home to show how the exterior walls connect.
- At least one photo per type of exterior foundation / slab insulation if present.
- Close-up of most common window type(s) on home to show number of panes and frame type.

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3. **Attic / Crawlspace:** 3-4 Photos (each location)
    - a. Ruler inserted to show insulation depth in 2-3 places, including some away from central locations.
    - b. Doorway, pull-down stair, or hatch that provides access to conditioned space.
    - c. An image of any areas with missing insulation or exceptions to the overall insulated condition.
  4. **Ducts:** 2-4 Photos
    - a. Status of air sealing and insulation in 2-3 places, including some away from central locations.
    - b. Image showing each duct location (wide enough frame to see whether location is conditioned, unconditioned, vented, etc.).
    - c. Supply registers or radiators if basement is conditioned
  5. **Mechanical Equipment:** 1-2 Photos per equipment item
    - a. At least one photo of the entire unit(s), and one or more of the data plates on HVAC equipment where details are legible, including manufacturer's name and ENERGY STAR emblem, if present.
    - b. Include a photo of the Energy Guide label, if present.
    - c. DHW tank; include data plates if able. If not, show system fuel and type.
    - d. Be conscious of using flash if in a dark space so that name plates can be easily read. If a picture is not possible, ensure the equipment's make and serial number is provided.
  6. **Walls & Envelope:** 3-8 Photos
    - a. Image of skylights from inside house.
    - b. Status of professional air sealing work around home through visual verification in attic and/or crawlspace or basement where possible, or receipt of work done. If present, show evidence of spray foam and/or other appropriate sealant to seal building cavity penetrations.
    - c. If the wall is not standard construction (2x4), an image of an exterior door jamb to show wall depth, with ruler included for scale.
    - d. Blower door reading or documentation if available.
  7. **Other Items:** Photos as needed
    - a. Solar PV item specification sheet (if present) and/or the panels.
    - b. Green certifications or verifications achieved by the home where applicable.
    - c. Anything outside the ordinary, e.g. if the Assessor believes advanced wall framing techniques or higher than normal insulation levels exist, include photos that display wall depth at an exterior door.

### Review by DTQA Auditor and Remote Service Provider

Once the Assessor has collected this information, he/she creates a Home Energy Score and provides supporting materials to the DTQA Auditor electronically, following processes set up by the Remote Service Provider. The DTQA Auditor checks the Assessor's Home Energy Score data points against the DTQA packet and external reference materials (e.g., Google Maps, Zillow, public documents, etc.) for apparent discrepancies. Based on this review of photos, sketches, and other available materials, the DTQA Auditor scores the home using the "QA" assessment type.

The DTQA Auditor documents any data discrepancies, provides comments and/or questions and sends them to the Assessor. If discrepancies are found per specifications explained in the Desktop Quality

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Assurance Guidance document, then the DTQA Auditor must issue a re-score request to the Assessor and follow the Corrective Action Procedure described below. If any of the provided materials (photos/sketches) are inadequate to determine whether discrepancies exist, corrective action must be taken with the Assessor in accordance with Desktop Quality Assurance Guidance.

DTQA processes will experience randomized review from the Home Energy Score Team at a rate of no less than 5% per DTQA Auditor. This process will ensure the DTQA Auditor is examining the QA packets carefully and with up-to-date analysis informing his/her review decisions. The Home Energy Score Team will have regular communications with DTQA Auditors regarding their work and provide additional guidance as needed to ensure high quality data reviews.

### Corrective Action Procedure

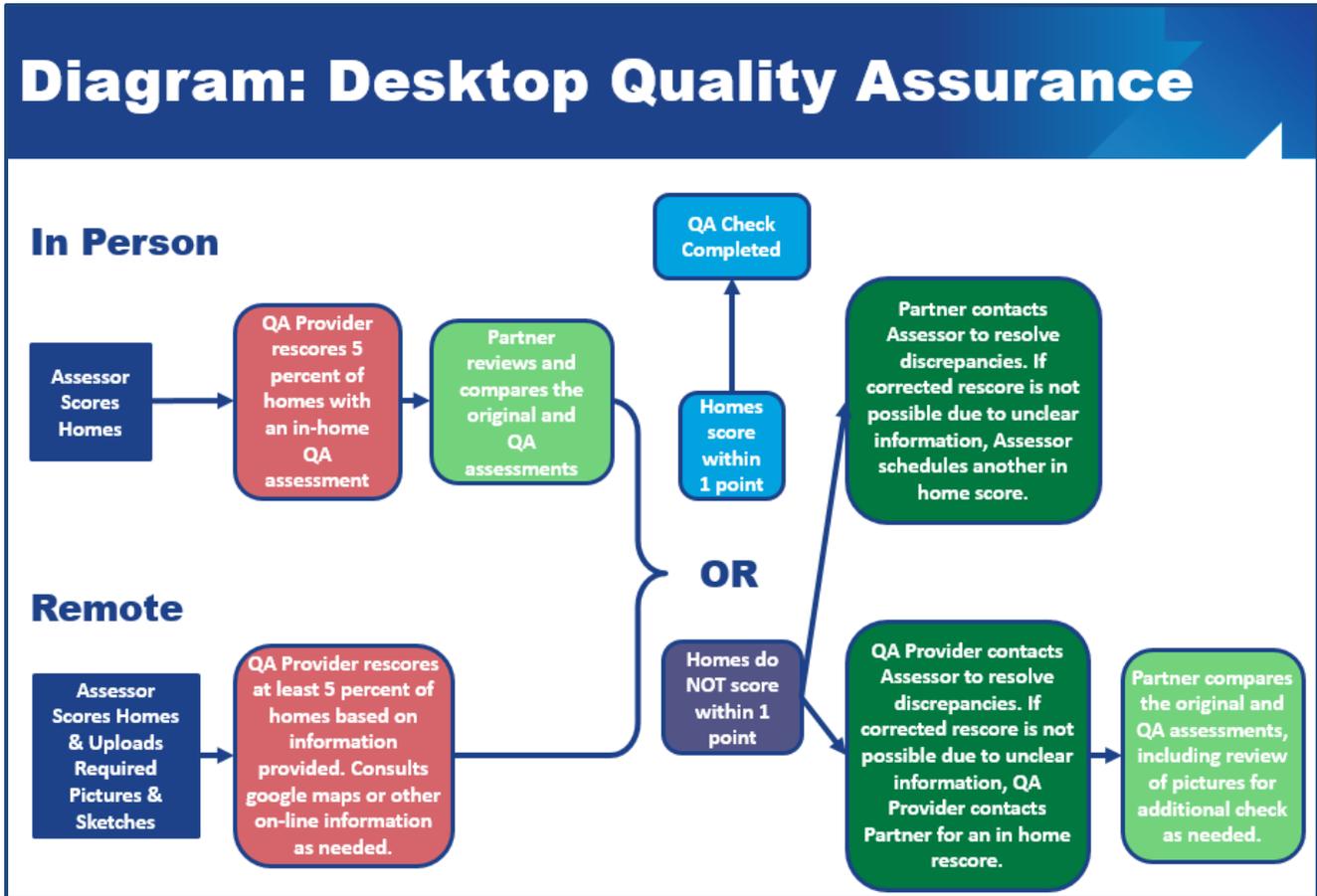
1. When a corrected Score is needed and/or if data discrepancies appear to be a trend for an Assessor, the DTQA Auditor will communicate discrepancies to Assessor within one business day of review and seek clarification. The Assessor's initial assessment will remain unchanged if the Assessor can explain why initial data is correct (or can provide clarifying reference materials). Conversely, the initial assessment should be revised using the "corrected" assessment type for any situation where the Assessor is found to be sufficiently in error to require a rescore.
2. If clarifying information is not immediately available through the Assessor, no report may be delivered to the customer until that information can be obtained. If the report has already been delivered to the client, a re-issue of the corrected report to the client is required. Revisiting the home may also be necessary if discussions between the DTQA Auditor and Assessor are not sufficient to resolve uncertainties regarding data inputs.
3. Communication between the DTQA Auditor and Assessor to rectify data entry discrepancies must be captured in a job file for later review, including how the discrepancy was resolved. The DTQA Auditor should follow their Remote Service Provider's documentation procedures.
4. The Remote Service Provider is responsible for conveying guidance and education to Assessors based on repeated issues in data entry through the DTQA Auditors. At minimum, the Home Energy Score Partner should be made aware anytime an Assessor requires correction on a data entry category on more than two separate occasions (i.e., the Assessor is told corrected procedure for de-rating insulation through phone calls and/or emails three or more times).
5. The Remote Service Provider, on a quarterly basis, must provide the Home Energy Score Team with information detailing how often corrective actions are undertaken across all Assessors and Partners using their services. If an Assessor consistently scores homes incorrectly and fails to improve after corrective guidance, the Home Energy Score Team reserves the right to recommend retraining and/or deactivation of said Assessor.

The Home Energy Score Team will be granted access upon request to DTQA files for further review, including notes from the DTQA Auditor describing any follow-up communications between the DTQA Auditor and the Assessor.

### Sampling Protocol for DTQA

At a minimum, all of an Assessor's first five jobs will receive DTQA. For the first five jobs, as a precaution, Assessors should be encouraged to NOT provide Home Energy Score Reports to clients before DTQA has taken place for that Score. After reviewing the first five jobs, the DTQA Auditor must contact the Assessor

to confirm that the Assessor is generally scoring homes correctly, or that the Assessor needs additional training. If the Assessor incorrectly scores two or more of the five initial assessments, the DTQA Auditor must notify the Home Energy Score Team and the Partner overseeing the Assessor. Later assessments will receive DTQA at a rate of at least 5%, selected randomly. The first five homes do not count toward the 5% QA requirement.



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## Part 4: Remote Service Provider Requirements

Any organization interested in managing DTQA and/or remote mentoring must become a Home Energy Score Remote Service Provider before offering these services. Remote Service Providers must be able to demonstrate that they meet the following criteria:

1. In business for 5 years or more providing quality assurance administrative services.
2. Proven ability to meet IT needs:
  - a. Must have an information system to track, monitor, and store the data files from Remote Mentor and DTQA sessions.
  - b. The Home Energy Score Team must have access to data from sessions if requested, including but not limited to photos/videos from QA and remote mentoring.
  - c. Must be able to ensure data protection and IT security, including but not limited to data encryption, password aging, transaction logging, security breach policies, disaster planning, and backup protocols.
  - d. Must be able to maintain all Home Energy Score API integration needs and future changes as necessary.
  - e. Must be able to provide reports to the Home Energy Score Team of Scores and DTQA data entry, and at least monthly reports on QA trending and score analysis.
3. Proven ability to fulfill the DTQA and/or Remote Mentoring process requirements.
4. Proven training, mentoring, and credentialing ability, such that Remote Mentors and DTQA Auditors can consistently comply with protocols in this document.
5. Must participate in regular Home Energy Score meetings, webinars, and conferences as directed by DOE.

The Home Energy Score Team reserves the right to assess and deny any organization's ability to meet these requirements or to suspend or terminate organization for non-compliance.

Home Energy Score Partners that do not meet requirements for implementing quality assurance either directly or through a contract with a Quality Assurance Service Provider must direct candidate Assessors to one or more qualifying Service Providers. Before being given access to the Home Energy Scoring Tool, Assessors under these Partners must select a qualifying Service Provider to perform QA and notify DOE of this selection.

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## Part 5: Dispute Resolution and Appeals Guidelines

Any organization interested in offering Remote Mentoring and/or DTQA, as well as any Partner working with an organization that offers these services, should consider the below scenarios and include guidance in their contract agreements for how to manage these and other potential disputes.

### Insufficient information from candidate Assessor to the Remote Mentor

In some instances, the Mentor may find that the candidate Assessor did not follow the above protocol and did not provide sufficient information for the Mentor to sign off on the Assessor's performance. This could include poorly-connected, choppy, blurry video, or any other condition that does not allow the Mentor to effectively provide guidance and support to the candidate Assessor. It is advisable that the candidate Assessor and Mentor agree (either through contract or other means) on how fees will be addressed in situations where follow-up mentoring sessions are required due to the candidate Assessor providing insufficient information. It is also advisable that the requisite Protocols for both the candidate and the Mentor are included to avoid misunderstanding. The candidate Assessor cannot be an active Assessor until they have written approval from an approved Home Energy Score Remote Mentor.

### Insufficient information from the Assessor to the DTQA Auditor

In some instances, the DTQA Auditor may find that the Assessor did not follow the above protocol and did not provide sufficient information complete the DTQA review. This could include sloppy, blurry, or otherwise insufficient photographs; sloppy, poorly drafted, or otherwise illegible floorplan sketches, or any other condition that does not allow the DTQA Auditor to effectively provide quality assurance. Whenever an assessment is deemed as having insufficient information to conduct DTQA, the DTQA Auditor can retrieve another randomly selected photo packet from the same Assessor to meet the 5% QA minimum standards.

The DTQA Auditor must have a system wherein they can denote an assessment as having insufficient information to conduct DTQA. This denotation can then be viewed by Assessor ID to determine if this is a repeated problem with specific individual Assessors. Whenever an Assessor is deemed to have provided insufficient information, they should receive contact from the DTQA Auditor (either email or phone call) explaining which areas were insufficient and why. Should a single Assessor be found to have provided insufficient information to conduct DTQA five or more times and have been contacted by the DTQA Auditor on at least two separate occasions regarding this, then the DTQA Auditor should notify the Partner overseeing that Assessor as well as the Home Energy Score Team. At that point, the Partner must deactivate the Assessor or can appeal on the Assessor's behalf first to the Remote Service Provider, then to the Home Energy Score Team (see below).

It is advisable that the contract between the Assessor (or the Assessor's Partner organization, if appropriate) and Remote Service Provider (1) outline how the Assessor will be notified in cases where information is found to be insufficient to conduct DTQA; (2) state that the Assessor can be deactivated if they are found to have five or more assessments with insufficient information; and (3) include information regarding how to appeal any deactivation. It is also advisable that the contract include requisite Protocols for both the Assessor and the DTQA Auditor to avoid misunderstanding.

### Initiation of a rescore based on the DTQA assessment

It is possible that, if an Assessor has not adequately scored a home according to Home Energy Score guidance and procedures, the resultant Home Energy Score issued to the customer must be corrected. If this is a point-of-sale transaction, then the Service Provider should have systems in place to ensure the DTQA assessment is completed in a timely manner prior to close of sale. This could include entry of invalid

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or nonsensical data values, entry of incorrect data values as determined through photographic evidence of differing conditions, entry of seemingly incorrect data values as determined through unclear or questionable photographic evidence, or any other condition by which the DTQA Auditor determines the resultant Home Energy Score was likely incorrect by two or more points on the Home Energy Score scale. The DTQA Auditor is given full right of determination over whether the information provided by the Assessor is likely accurate or inaccurate when compared with photo evidence and web-provided resources.

It is advisable that the contract between the Assessor and Service Provider (or the Assessor's Partner organization, if appropriate) state how costs will be addressed in situations where follow-up visits to the home are required due to the Assessor providing an invalid Home Energy Score. This can be handled through the Assessor covering the costs associated with re-visiting the home, the Service Provider reimbursing the Assessor for costs incurred, some combination of these solutions, or another solution by which costs are covered. This should be outlined in the contract to include situations both where the Assessor's initial assessment was correct, and where the initial assessment needed to be corrected.

Regular communication between the DTQA Auditor and Assessors can help maintain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship. In the unlikely event that a "rescoring" dispute is not resolvable based on the contract; the Remote Service Provider should notify the Partner overseeing the Assessor and the Home Energy Score Team to address the issue of that particular home's rescoring needs.

If an Assessor consistently scores homes incorrectly and fails to improve after corrective guidance, the Home Energy Score Team reserves the right to recommend retraining and/or deactivation of said Assessor.

### Initiation of QA and/or rescore via customer complaint

To address instances whereby a customer questions the validity of their Home Energy Score, the Partner (either independently or through their Service Provider) must have in place a standard, documented procedure for addressing such concerns and requests. It is recommended that the Remote Service Provider maintain all QA information collected by Assessors for at least six months or longer as stipulated by the Partner organization. If an in-person rescore is deemed necessary after review of photos and discussion with the customer, another Assessor should re-score the home. The final Score given to the customer should be reviewed by the Partner involved. If the Service Provider or Partner chooses to resolve the dispute through a refund of the customer's payment for the Score and not issue a corrected score, the Service Provider or Partner must alert DOE that the Score is void AND void the Score in their own systems if possible.

### Noncompliant behavior by the Remote Mentor, DTQA Auditor, or the Remote Service Provider

In the event a Remote Mentor, DTQA Auditor or Remote Service Provider does not follow required protocols and performs poorly, DOE will notify the Home Energy Score Partner and Remote Service Provider to alert them of concerns, including excessively slow implementation of QA procedures and/or a backlog of data review that is more than one quarter behind; insufficient communication with the Assessors about how to improve quality of their products; lost or unmaintained data; non-responsiveness to data requests by DOE or per contracts with Assessors and their organizations; or any other condition by which DOE determines unacceptable performance. To the extent possible, DOE will provide technical feedback and work with the Remote Service Provider to determine necessary next steps such as retraining or removal of mentors or DTQA Auditors, process improvements, etc. DOE reserves the right to remove the organization as a Remote Service Provider at any time.

