

HITRUST offers two distinct pathways for firms to engage with the HITRUST Framework (HITRUST CSF®) and expand their service offerings: the HITRUST External Assessor Program and the HITRUST Readiness Licensee Program. These options accommodate varying organizational goals and expertise, enabling firms to align their services effectively with their business models.

- **External Assessors** are HITRUST-approved organizations qualified to perform validated assessments using the HITRUST Framework and its methodologies.
- **Readiness Licensees** are organizations that do not participate in the full External Assessor program but are licensed to use the HITRUST Framework to conduct readiness assessments and offer consulting services aligned with HITRUST methodologies.

This document outlines the process and requirements for each program, empowering organizations to select the pathway that best fits their capabilities and strategic objectives.

HITRUST External Assessor Program

HITRUST External Assessors are HITRUST-approved organizations authorized to conduct HITRUST e1, i1, r2, and AI Security validated assessments. They can also support clients with implementation and remediation efforts, provided these activities are fully disclosed to HITRUST when submitting an assessment for review and certification.

For AICPA firms, HITRUST External Assessors can also deliver SOC 2 reports that include opinions on compliance with both the Trust Services Criteria and the HITRUST Framework (HITRUST CSF).

To qualify as a HITRUST External Assessor, organizations must complete a comprehensive process that ensures they meet the highest standards of knowledge, training, and expertise.

Requirements and Fees

1. **Submit the HITRUST External Assessor Application**
 - Provide the required documents, which include:
 - Application Letter.
 - HITRUST External Assessor Application Form.
 - Evidence of background checks for practitioners.
 - Resumes/Bios for practitioners.
 - Policies & Procedures for Ethics and Integrity of Employees.
2. **Complete HITRUST Certified CSF Practitioner (CCSFP) Training**
 - A minimum of five (5) individuals must complete the HITRUST CCSFP Course and pass the exam.
 - [View the CCSFP Course Schedule.](#)
3. **Achieve Certified HITRUST Quality Professional (CHQP) Designation**
 - Of the five individuals, at least two (2) must complete the CHQP Course.
 - Requires an active CCSFP Certification.
4. **Sign the HITRUST External Assessor Agreement**
 - Execute the agreement to formalize participation in the program.
5. **Submit Annual Program Fees**
 - Fees are determined based on the organization's annual revenue as outlined in the agreement.

Approval and Recognition

After successful completion of the HITRUST External Assessor Agreement:

- HITRUST will issue a formal approval letter recognizing the organization as an approved HITRUST External Assessor.
- The organization will be listed in the MyCSF tool and on the HITRUST External Assessor web page.

This recognition distinguishes firms as trusted partners qualified to perform HITRUST assessments and support clients in achieving compliance and risk management goals.

HITRUST Readiness Licensee Program

Organizations not participating in the External Assessor Program can license the HITRUST Framework (HITRUST CSF) to perform readiness assessments and provide consulting on HITRUST control implementation.

For AICPA firms, this option also allows the production of SOC 2 reports that include opinions on compliance with both the Trust Services Criteria and the HITRUST Framework (HITRUST CSF).

Note: Readiness Licensees are not authorized to perform validated assessments, which are required for HITRUST certification. Validated assessments can only be conducted by HITRUST-approved External Assessor organizations.

Requirements and Fees

- **Purchase a HITRUST Readiness License**
 - Annual fees are determined based on the organization's annual revenue.
- **Complete HITRUST Certified CSF Practitioner (CCSFP) Training**
 - A minimum of two (2) individuals must complete the CCSFP Course and pass the exam.
 - [View the CCSFP Course Schedule.](#)
- **SOC 2 Report Fee (AICPA Firms Only)**
 - AICPA firms issuing SOC 2 reports that include opinions on the Trust Services Criteria and HITRUST CSF® must submit a report fee to HITRUST.
 - Non-AICPA firms cannot produce SOC 2 reports.

Key Differences: HITRUST External Assessors vs. HITRUST CSF Licensees

- **HITRUST External Assessors**
 - Are authorized to perform validated assessments, including e1, i1, r2, and AI Security assessments, which are required to obtain HITRUST certification.
 - Can support remediation efforts, provided proper disclosures are made.
 - AICPA firms can issue SOC 2 reports that include opinions on compliance with the Trust Services Criteria and the HITRUST Framework.
- **Organizations Licensing the HITRUST Framework**
 - Are authorized to perform readiness assessments and provide consulting on HITRUST control implementation.
 - Cannot perform validated assessments or issue validated/certified HITRUST reports.
 - AICPA firms can issue SOC 2 reports that include opinions on compliance with the Trust Services Criteria and the HITRUST Framework, subject to applicable report fees.

By choosing between the HITRUST External Assessor Program and the HITRUST Readiness Licensee Program, organizations can align their services with their business goals while helping clients strengthen security and compliance. Both pathways provide opportunities to engage with the HITRUST Framework, enabling firms to deliver trusted solutions and drive meaningful results.