

# A Protocol for Sense-Sensitive Facility Observations

<b>Phase</b>	
<b>Introduce yourself</b>	1. Introduce yourself to the person in charge and say what the purpose of your inspection is (as appropriate).
<b>Initiate facility walk-through to get first impressions</b>	2. It's important to get on the floor quickly to show interest in care and to reduce the time the facility has available to cover any problems, assuming the facility does this sort of thing. One approach might be to just start with a general greeting, doing a walk-about, engage in further discussion with the person in charge, then continue with in-depth observations and finally you enter the exit stage.
<b>Request a "status" report.</b>	3. Early during the inspection, ask the person in charge about any changes in the facility's operation since your last inspection (staffing changes, physical plant, population, etc).
<b>Pay attention to your hunches.</b>	4. That sixth sense: if something just doesn't feel right to you, pay attention to what is giving you that feeling. Investigate further in that area, but if there is no evidence to support your hunch, don't cite anything.
<b>Other Senses</b>	<b>Pay attention to all your senses:</b>
<b>See</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the building clean and well maintained? <input type="checkbox"/> What is the staff doing? <input type="checkbox"/> Are required documents posted? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there an activity or a meal-taking place? <input type="checkbox"/> Is an adequate amount of food provided?
<b>Hear</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> What tone does staff use when speaking to children? <input type="checkbox"/> Are children crying or are there happy sounds of busy children? <input type="checkbox"/> Is staff responding to the signaling system? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the signaling system work? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you hear your arrival being announced on the loudspeaker?
<b>Smell</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Do you smell apple pie baking, or something less pleasant? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the building smell like urine, excrement, or stale kitchen odors?
<b>Touch</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Are surfaces clean? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the medication storage locked? <input type="checkbox"/> Are emergency doors unlocked? <input type="checkbox"/> How hot is the water? <input type="checkbox"/> Are books, toys, games, utensils, plates, trays clean?
<b>Taste</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In most cases, you will rely on the persons in care for this. Ask them whether the food is good. You <i>may</i> need to taste the food (especially if investigating a food complaint), although this probably won't be the first thing you do.  <b>NOTE:</b> If you eat an entire meal at the facility, be sure to pay for it so you don't give the impression that you can be influenced

**NOTE:** What do you do first when you begin an inspection?

- Δ Pay attention to all your senses
- Δ First impressions may help you decide where to focus your time during the inspection
- Δ First impressions may also give you the wrong idea, so be sure to back them up with facts
- Δ What you look at first may tell the licensee what you think is most important (whether or not you intend to convey that message).