



THE C3 SUITE

# CMMC Ready® Program

Your path to a well-prepared CMMC Level 2 Assessment:  
Self-Assessment and C3PAO Assessment

## Understanding assessment risk

CMMC Level 2 assessments evaluate 320 assessment objectives defined in the CMMC Assessment Guide. While compliance may already be achieved operationally, assessment outcomes depend on how clearly that compliance can be demonstrated through evidence, interviews, and system demonstrations.

### Organizations facing an assessment often encounter the following roadblocks:

- Poorly organized or inconsistently mapped evidence
- Misalignment between documentation and live system behavior
- Uncertainty during interviews and demonstrations

The CMMC Ready® Program is a separately scoped, assessment-focused engagement for C3 Command and C3 Catalyst clients preparing for their formal Level 2

assessment. It provides focused technical, compliance, and operational support to successfully prepare an organization for an assessment.

Where C3's CMMC solutions focus on building, operating, and sustaining a CMMC-compliant environment, the CMMC Ready Program supports the assessment event itself – ensuring your architecture, documentation, evidence, and operational workflows can be clearly demonstrated and validated.



**THE NEW GOLD  
STANDARD FOR  
ASSESSMENTS"**

- C3PAO  
(after a C3-led Level 2 assessment)

## Preparing for assessment success

The CMMC Ready Program is designed for the most critical milestone of your CMMC journey: your Level 2 assessment itself. Through C3's extensive experience with Level 2 assessments, we have built a streamlined program that prepares your team for a successful outcome.

The result is a calmer, more predictable assessment experience—one that reinforces confidence in the environment, the preparation, and the partnership behind it.

The CMMC Ready Program offers support for CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessment or CMMC Level 2 C3PAO Assessment.

At a minimum, both efforts include:

### Assessment-focused evidence prep

In coordination with you and C3's managed services teams, C3 gathers, organizes, and stages objective evidence for each applicable assessment objective. This effort is designed to reduce assessment friction by:

- Mapping evidence directly to the assessment objectives in the CMMC Level 2 Assessment Guide
- Ensuring artifacts accurately reflect live system configurations
- Pre-validating screenshots, logs, exports, and architectural diagrams
- Minimizing the need for real-time data pulls during the assessment

### Pre-assessment readiness review

C3 facilitates a formal readiness review designed to identify any outstanding issues prior to the assessment. This mock assessment:

- Walks through the assessment objectives using the assessment methodology described in NIST SP 800-171A

- Validates evidence quality and availability
- Identifies any residual gaps that could impact assessment outcomes

This review is intended as validation—not discovery—and assumes a mature, operating, C3-managed environment.

Upon conclusion of the Pre-Assessment Readiness Review, the client has worked through each assessment objective and is positioned to record their Level 2 (Self) assessment results in SPRS and submit the required affirmation. The effort stops here if a CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessment is all that is needed.

For a CMMC Level 2 C3PAO Assessment, the effort keeps going.

### Assessment coordination & support

During the assessment, C3 provides direct compliance support aligned to the Customer Responsibility Matrix and system scope. Members of C3's service delivery teams participate as required to:

- Demonstrate C3-managed configurations and security controls
- Answer assessor questions related to system design, tooling, and operations
- Support clarification of shared and inherited controls
- Help keep assessment activities aligned with scope and schedule

Involving multiple C3 resources means each assessment objective within C3's scope of responsibility can be substantiated by the team that actively manages the associated controls.

There are some prerequisites that are required for both CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessment and C3PAO Assessment.

## CMMC Ready Program Prerequisites

To ensure the greatest chance for a successful Level 2 assessment outcome, C3 requires the following prerequisites to be in place prior to launching the CMMC Ready Program.

These foundational requirements must be in place before your organization can achieve its target CMMC status. Think of prerequisites as the building blocks that make everything that follows secure, stable, and ready to perform as intended.

By meeting these prerequisites, organizations establish a strong operational baseline for the final assessment.

### Prerequisites include:

1. Latest version of C3's CMMC Reference Architecture
2. Zscaler monitoring solution
3. Minimum of 6 months of C3 system management

## Why is a change freeze required?

As part of our proven assessment readiness methodology, we institute a freeze on significant architectural or configuration changes ahead of the assessment. The only exceptions to this freeze are any mutually agreed upon changes required to address gaps identified during the Pre-Assessment Readiness Review.

This step insulates our clients against any changes (including new server deployments, conditional access changes, adding network printing, or adding new asset types to the assessment scope) that could affect the scoped compliance boundary and invalidate the assessment.

The change freeze does not affect operational maintenance tasks such as user account management and patching, which can continue as normal.

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**I ENCOURAGE YOU TO SHARE YOUR APPROACH SO THAT OTHER COMPANIES CAN UNDERSTAND THE BEST WAY TO REPRESENT THEIR IMPLEMENTATION TO AN ASSESSOR... BECAUSE YOU HIT IT OUT OF THE PARK."**

- C3PAO  
(after a C3-led Level 2 assessment)

This timeline represents the ideal timeline of the CMMC Ready Program for CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessment, working backwards from the anticipated Self-Assessment Date.

**CONTRACT SIGNATURE**

**Client Onboarding & Implementation**

**Environment Management & Support**  
ONGOING IT AND CYBERSECURITY SERVICES

**Compliance Curriculum**

**Active Compliance Management**  
ONGOING COMPLIANCE SERVICES

**WEEK**

**"T" MINUS 4 WEEKS: Burn-in period begins**  
Alert track notice sent to managed services teams

**"T" MINUS 3 WEEKS:**  
Project kickoff  
Configuration freeze begins

**"T" MINUS 3 WEEKS:**  
Evidence Playbook Development Begins

**"T" Assessment date**

**"T" Assessment Date:**  
Pre-Assessment Readiness Review  
Self-Assessment

**Prerequisites to initiate CMMC Ready Program:**

- 1. Latest version of C3's CMMC Reference Architecture
- 2. Zscaler monitoring solution
- 3. Minimum of six months of C3 system management

**CONTRACT SIGNATURE**

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**WEEK**

**"T" MINUS 26 WEEKS: Secure assessment date**  
Coordinate with compliance consultant on target assessment date.  
Engage with C3PAO to secure date. (C3PAOs have a 4-6 month backlog)

**"T" MINUS 17 WEEKS: Minimum notice of assessment date target**  
Finalize target assessment week with compliance consultant to allow adequate time for resource scheduling and preparatory activities

**"T" MINUS 13 WEEKS: Signed agreement**  
Fully executed Statement of Work required to secure C3 resources for assessment.

**"T" MINUS 12 WEEKS: Burn-in period begins**  
Alert track notice sent to managed services teams

**"T" MINUS 10 WEEKS: Project kickoff call**

**"T" MINUS 8 WEEKS: Configuration freeze begins**

**"T" MINUS 6-8 WEEKS: C3PAO scoping call**

**"T" MINUS 6 WEEKS: Evidence playbook due**

**"T" MINUS 4 WEEKS: Pre-assessment readiness review**

**"T" MINUS 1 WEEK: All evidence due**  
Note: Assessment evidence package requires three months of "burn-in" reporting to demonstrate adherence to SSP

**"T", Assessment week**

**Prerequisites to initiate CMMC Ready Program:**

- Latest version of C3's CMMC Reference Architecture
- Zscaler monitoring solution
- Validated self-assessment score of 110
- Minimum of six months of C3 system management