

Independent Verification: Confirm Without Being Led

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v1.0 | Reviewed October 9, 2026 | Discussion + field checks

Why this matters

Independent verification gives an assigned verifier a chance to find a condition that the performer may have missed. That opportunity shrinks when the verifier simply follows the performer's account. The verifier needs the governing requirements, required separation and an approved method for establishing the actual condition without changing it.

Objective: Describe how the task preserves independent judgment and records an as-found condition against the governing requirement before acceptance.

Key hazards or failure points

Verifier helped create the result; cues substitute for a personal check; separation requirements ignored; missing criteria; changing the condition before recording it; a signature taken as automatic clearance.

Practical controls

- Use the independent-verification process specified for the task. Assign the required competent or authorized verifier and establish independence from the performer's action, including the prescribed separation in time and location.
- Give the verifier the current requirements, item identity, boundaries and safety information. Protect judgment from cues that reveal what answer to give. Never withhold hazard information to create independence.
- The verifier establishes the as-found condition using the approved safe method, compares it with the required condition and reports any difference. Preserve the finding; do not quietly correct the item and then sign it as found acceptable.

Verify It in the Field

Before work, review the actual assignment against the procedure's independence requirements. Confirm that the verifier did not perform the action being verified and that the required separation is workable. Record who is assigned and any conflict needing resolution.

The verifier obtains evidence without using the performer's assurance as the result. Identify the governing criterion, approved method and actual finding. Do not touch or manipulate equipment, enter a restricted area or alter a document merely to make a checking exercise possible.

Record the as-found condition, item or document revision, verifier and time under the required process. Compare it with the acceptance criterion. Keep any mismatch or incomplete check on hold for authorized disposition, required re-verification and communication to those relying on the result.

Stop and reassess

Hold for compromised independence, unavailable safe verification, ambiguous identity, a changed condition or disagreement with the requirement. Notify the designated authority and preserve the evidence while maintaining the task's safe state. Do not convert a failed verification into a passing signature. Required release remains a separate authorized decision.

Ask the crew

1. What preserves independence for this particular task?
2. How will the verifier establish the condition without changing it?
3. What happens to an as-found mismatch before release?

Use the task plan and required specialist decisions before exposure.

Sources: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 2, pp. 41, 46–48; OSHA Hazard Prevention and Control.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/independent-verification-as-found-condition

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