

Medicare Enrollment Requirements Waived During COVID-19 Health Emergency

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is expediting the Medicare enrollment process in hopes of increasing the number of healthcare workers available to combat the spread of the coronavirus. Following the declaration of a national emergency, CMS issued several blanket waivers under section 1135 authority which temporarily modify Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP requirements which remove certain administrative burdens for providers.

Any pending or new enrollment applications will be expedited until further notice and temporary Medicare billing privileges can be requested by physicians and non-physicians through toll-free hotlines run through MAC jurisdictions. CMS has waived application fees, fingerprint-based criminal background checks and site visits. Revalidation of Medicare enrollment has also been suspended during the health emergency.

Additionally, CMS has temporarily waived requirements that out-of-state providers be licensed in the state where they are providing services, as long as they are licensed in another state and the following conditions apply:

- The physician or non-physician practitioner is enrolled in Medicare
- The physician or non-physician practitioner is furnishing services (either in person or via telehealth) in a state where the emergency is occurring
- The physician or non-physician practitioner is not affirmatively excluded from practice in the State or any other State that is part of the 1135 emergency area.

CMS does not have the power of waiving State or local licensure requirements or any requirement specified by the State or a local government. Meaning, State requirements would continue to apply unless the State specifically requests to waive their licensure requirements. Thus far, 31 states have been granted 1135 waivers to allow out-of-state providers with equivalent licensing to provide health services during the emergency. (AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, HI, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MN, MO, MS, NC, ND, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OK, OR, PA, RI, SD, WA, WY)

For more details on provider enrollment relief from CMS: [CLICK HERE.](#)

As always, ADVOCATE will keep you up to date on this and all issues impacting medical groups as they become available.