



Medicare Plan Payment Group

DATE: November 28, 2012

TO: All Prospective and Current Medicare Advantage and Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug (MA-PD) Plans, Part D Plans (PDPs), Cost-Based Organizations, and Demonstrations

FROM: Cheri Rice /s/
Director, Medicare Plan Payment Group

SUBJECT: **Designation of Individuals Authorized Access to CMS Computer Services (IACS) Plan User Approver/External Point of Contact (EPOC) - ACTION**

This letter describes the requirements and process that organizations must use to establish the staff that will be responsible for granting access to their data in the CMS systems.

Individuals Authorized Access to CMS Computer Services (IACS) is an Internet-accessible application that allows plan users to self-register for access to CMS MAPD systems or become a plan's designated approver of end users. IACS replaces the previous paper-based Enterprise Users Access system (EUA). Current users of the Health Plan Management System may still be required to use EUA to certify existing user IDs.

The person who serves as a plan's designated approver of end users is referred to as the External Point of Contact (EPOC). CMS recommends that plans select a responsible official, such as a manager or supervisor of the IT or Security organization, to be the EPOC. After providing the preliminary information described below to CMS, each EPOC self-registers for the appropriate contract numbers using IACS and CMS reviews the request. Once a request is approved, the EPOC is able to approve or reject plan and subcontractor users who register for access (plans should work closely with their subcontractors to identify users that need access to CMS systems and establish procedures for doing so).

Please note that CMS security policy requires separation of duties between system administrators and users. Because a portion of the EPOC's job is considered a system administrator function, **EPOCs cannot act as end users of CMS systems.** Therefore, any individual that registers as an EPOC will not be granted access to CMS systems as an end user.

EPOC Registration Process

1. The plan must submit a letter to CMS identifying and appointing the EPOC.
 - The letter must be on organizational letterhead.

- The letter must contain all of the following information for each EPOC:
 - Mailing address
 - Telephone number
 - E-mail address
 - Contract number(s) for which the EPOC will approve users (list ALL contract numbers under which this EPOC will approve users to work)
- A responsible officer of the organization must sign the letter.
- The name, title, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the company official signing the letter must be included.
- The original signed copy of the letter must be mailed to:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
CM/MPPG/DPO
7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop C1-05-17
Baltimore, MD 21244

Please note that an organization may submit one letter for all contract numbers, and may designate up to two EPOCs for the same (or different) contract numbers for your organization.

Once CMS receives the letter described above, the EPOC will be established in IACS.

2. The EPOC must complete her or his registration in IACS.
 - During the registration process, EPOCs should provide all of the contract numbers for which they will approve end users (they may add additional contracts later).
 - EPOCs must register using an e-mail address that is specific to her or his organization (not a publicly available e-mail account such as Yahoo or Hotmail).
3. CMS reviews the EPOC registration.
 - Once an EPOC registration is submitted in IACS, it proceeds through CMS' review process, which can take 48-72 hours to complete.
 - Once a registration is approved, the EPOC receives an e-mail containing the CMS IACS user-ID and temporary password, along with instructions for changing the password.

Any subsequent changes, additions, or deletions to a plan's EPOC designation require the plan to follow the instructions outlined above and provide CMS with a new letter that clearly identifies the changes and/or deletions. The new EPOC will then be able to self-register or add contracts to their registration in IACS. EPOCs that wish to remove contracts from their registration may also do this on their own. An EPOC cannot change her or his own e-mail address and should contact the MAPD Help Desk for assistance with this modification. The MAPD Help Desk also manages EPOC deletions. The MAPD Help Desk can be reached by telephone at 1-800-927-8069, or by e-mail at MAPDhelp@cms.hhs.gov.

Additional instructions regarding EPOC and end user registration can be obtained from the IACS User Guide on the Internet at: <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/mapdhelpdesk/Downloads/IACS-User-Guide-November-2012.pdf>, or by calling MAPD Help Desk.