

MCREf FAQ

1. Q. What is MCREf?
A. MCREf is the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing system. The portal allows Medicare Part A providers to electronically transmit (e-file) their cost report and supporting documentation directly to their respective Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC). Providers may e-file cost reports with fiscal year end (FYE) dates on or after 12/31/17 through MCREf.
2. Q. What is the web address for the Medicare Cost Report e-Filing system (MCREf)?
A. The web address is <https://mcref.cms.gov>

Cost Report Receipt & Acceptance:

3. Q. Will MCREf send emails to providers when cost reports are accepted?
A. No, the MCREf screens will indicate after submission whether the cost report has been “received.” “Received” means the cost report meets all MCREf system checks required to electronically save the cost report and forward it to the appropriate MAC for acceptance review. The MAC will communicate when your cost report is accepted.

E-Signature:

4. Q. Can we use the e-signature feature of our software if we are filing hard copy/CD and not e-filing?
A. Yes, you can use e-signature if mailing your cost report package.
5. Q. During the MCREf webcast, it was mentioned that (so long as the appropriate check box is marked) typing a name, printing, signing, or scanning a wet signature were acceptable uses of electronic signature. What about electronic signatures generated through systems such as DocuSign or Adobe Sign? If signed via one of these systems or similar (and checking the appropriate acknowledgment box), will this be considered a valid electronic signature use for MCREf purposes?
A. Yes, electronic signatures generated through a system such as DocuSign or Adobe Sign are valid electronic signatures. Please note that the encryption code on the ECR file must be present on the signed page.
6. Q. A provider prints and signs the signature page, checks the e-signature check box, and then uploads the signature page through MCREf. Is this a valid submission of an electronic signature?
A. Yes, this example constitutes a valid submission of an electronic signature. The ECR encryption code must be present on the signed cost report signature page, and you don't have to mail a copy of the wet signature page to your MAC.
7. Q. Can a provider submit a cost report through MCREf if the cost report version is not e-signature capable?

- A. Yes, you need to scan a copy of the signed signature page into MCR eF, and mail the wet signature page to the MAC, which must be received within 10 days of the cost report submission. The ECR encryption code must be present on the signed signature page.
8. Q. Will CMS or the MAC be verifying the signatory on the cost report to Medicare provider enrollment information on file or any other information that may be available to them?
- A. The process for signature verification has not changed.

Home Office Cost Statement

9. Q. How do Home Offices that do not have access to the PS&R system access MCR eF to electronically submit the Home Office cost statement?
- A. The provider's security official needs to register and create the home office organization in EIDM at <https://portal.cms.gov>. The External User Services (EUS) helpdesk approval process takes about 2 weeks.
10. Q. The Home office isn't available in the provider drop down. How can I add the Home office so that I can submit all my cost reports electronically?
- A. Please ask your Security Official (SO) or the Back-Up Security Officer (BSO) to add your home office number to the list of CCNs in EIDM. You should then be able to see the home office number in the MCR eF drop down after the SO adds the number.
11. Q. Will we be able to submit a signed Home Office Cost Statement electronically or will it still have to be mailed?
- A. The CMS Form 287 (Home Office Cost Statement) is not available for e-signature at this time. However, the Home Office Cost Statement can be submitted via MCR eF along with a scanned copy of the signed Schedule A. The Schedule A with the wet signature must be mailed and received by the MAC within 10-days of the MCR eF submission.

General

12. Q. Will there be a support line we can call if we need help while using MCR eF?
- A. Users should contact the EUS helpdesk. The EUS helpdesk information is:
Tel: 866-484-8049, 866-523-4759 TTY/TDD
Email: eussupport@cgi.com
Website: <https://eus.custhelp.com/app/answers/list>
13. Q. Is it true that only three people are allowed to submit cost reports through MCR eF - 1. Security Official (SO), 2. Back-up Security Official (BSO), and 3. MCR eF authorized users?
- A. Only the SO, BSO, and MCR eF authorized users can access the MCR eF system to submit a Medicare Cost Report package. The SO and BSO automatically inherit access to the MCR eF system. The SO or the BSO can approve users in their respective organizations for the MCR eF user role. An organization may have more than one MCR eF user.

14. Q. How do we request an MCREf user role?
A. Please note that MCREf is part of the PS&R/STAR application.
New users should follow these steps:
- Create an EIDM account at <https://portal.cms.gov>
 - Add the PS&R/STAR application
 - Click on 'my access'
 - Click on 'add a role'
 - This should display the role you have currently
 - Under 'select a group', providers should select 'I work for a provider'
 - Select 'MCREf user role' from the select a role drop down
- The request will be routed to the provider's security official for approval.
The URL to file cost reports is <https://mcref.cms.gov>
15. Q. Many providers have limited knowledge of the EIDM system. Is the system prepared for the anticipated influx of questions and support that will be needed by providers? If the system has a backlog which results in a provider not being able to submit a cost report timely, will providers be penalized for that?
A. See question 12 above regarding user support. The cost report must be received by its due date; e-Filing is optional. Providers still have the option of mailing or hand delivering their cost reports.
16. Q. When we choose a CCN to file a cost report in MCREf, will all other related CCNs get attached? For example, will the Rehab subunit CCN be automatically attached to the hospital's CCN?
A. Subunits do not file separate cost reports. CMS form 2552-10 is e-signature capable, and this is true regardless of the subunit types included on the cost report. Providers registered as a chain will see all their providers in the MCREf provider drop down.
17. Q. Do you use the same PS&R user ID and password to log into MCREf?
A. Yes, the user name and password are the same.

Other Questions

18. Q. I submitted the cost report and forgot to check the "I have read and agree with the above cert sentence above my signature". What do I do to get that corrected page submitted, please?
A. You can resubmit your cost report package in MCREf on the same day you submitted the cost report with the error if the cost report with the error is the first submission that day. Otherwise, you may need to wait until the next day. In addition, you should contact your MAC to ask them to deny the first submission due to an e-filing error. Failing to check the box is equivalent to forgetting to sign the cost report.
19. Q. Our Hospital has an A extension on its CCN number; will this cause an issue when submitting the cost report through MCREf? We currently cannot use Novitasphere submission process because of this issue.
A. An extension to a CCN number is for billing purposes only and should never be used when filing a cost report.
20. Q. Will providers be able to use MCREf for reopening requests?
A. No, a reopening request cannot be submitted through MCREf.

21. Q. Will the save date for the print image (PI) and electronic copy (EC) file be the same as the date and time created when uploaded?
- A. The cost report received date will be the date it was successfully submitted through MCRéF.
22. Q. Regarding the MCRéF capability, if a provider is located outside a MAC's Jurisdiction (or state) would the MAC be able to retrieve cost reports from the CMS MCRéF system for that provider? For example, Novitas jurisdiction (or states) includes Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Some of the hospitals under our corporate umbrella are located in other states such as Florida and California. Will Novitas be able retrieve the cost reports for the providers located in the states outside their jurisdiction such as California and Florida?
- A. Yes, the submitted cost reports packages will be forwarded to the MAC on record. The Provider/MAC assignment is contained within MCRéF.
23. Q. What should be done if a provider is unable to find Provider / Fiscal Year End listed in MCRéF?
- A. If you are unable to locate a provider in the MCRéF drop-down list of your providers, you should first confirm that the Security Official of the organization has properly registered the provider number (CCN) within EIDM. If confirmed, you should next confirm that you are associated to the provider organization with an EIDM role which grants e-filing privileges (either as a Security Official, Backup Security Official, or MCRéF authorized user role).
- If all of the above are confirmed and the provider still does not appear upon your next login to MCRéF, please contact your assigned MAC to verify the tie-in status of the provider in question. You may wish to reference the most recent Medicare enrollment information for the provider, as any recent changes in ownership or enrollment status may not yet have been communicated to the MAC's Audit and Reimbursement department and, therefore, may not yet be reflected in the system providing MCRéF with its information.
- If you do not see the FYE for which you wish to submit an e-filed cost report, you should first confirm that the FYE in question qualifies for e-filing (Providers with 12/31/17 FYE and later may e-file their cost report in MCRéF). If you believe that a qualified cost report FYE is not in MCRéF, contact your MAC to confirm that they are aware of the expected FY. If there have been any recent changes to your fiscal period, these may not have been communicated to your MAC's Audit and Reimbursement department, and, therefore, may not yet be reflected in the system providing MCRéF with its information.

Medicare Cost Report

24. Q. Will the state agencies have access to the cost reports submitted through MCRéF or will providers continue to send these directly to the agencies?
- A. No, State agencies will not have access to MCRéF. Providers will continue to send cost reports directly to the state agencies.
25. Q. For low and no utilization cost reports, requirements vary by MAC. How will this be handled?
- A. Please follow your MAC's requirement for filing low/no utilization.

26. Q. For cost reports with an amount due the program, how will the MAC and MCRéF coordinate posting the payment to ensure it is reflected when the tentative settlement is issued?
- A. Once a successful submission is made via MCRéF, your MAC will immediately receive the cost report and supporting documentation. The process of coordinating payments remains the same as before.
27. Q. How will payments for amount due the program be made? Checks to MAC or MCRéF?
- A. Checks for amounts due the program shall be sent to the address designated by each MAC. MCRéF does not change the current process in place. The MACs have processes in place to reconcile payments received and amounts due from providers.