



Related MLN Matters Article #: SE0528

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CMS Announces the National Provider Identifier (NPI) Enumerator Contractor and Information on Obtaining NPIs

Keywords

NPI, National, Provider, Identifier, HIPAA, Standard, Transactions, Enumerator, Application, Process, 2005, 2008, 2007, SE0528, Contractor, Final, Rule

Provider Types Affected

All health care providers - Medicare and non-Medicare

Key Points

Important Note: Medicare fee-for-service has instituted a contingency plan for NPI implementation that delays the requirement for the NPI beyond May 23, 2007. For details regarding this delay, please see MLN Matters article MM5595 at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5595.pdf> on the CMS website.

- MLN Special Edition article SE0528 announces the availability of a new health care identifier for use in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) standard transactions.
- HIPAA mandated that the Secretary of Health and Human Services adopt a standard unique health identifier for health care providers.
- On January 23, 2004, the Secretary published a Final Rule that adopted the NPIs as this identifier.
- The NPI will identify health care providers in the electronic transactions for which the Secretary has adopted standards after the compliance dates.
- The transactions include claims, eligibility inquiries and responses, claim status inquiries and responses, referrals, and remittance advices.
- The NPI will replace health care provider identifiers that are in use currently in standard transactions.
- Implementation of the NPI will eliminate the need for health care providers to use different identification numbers for identifying themselves when conducting HIPAA standard transactions with multiple health plans.

- All health plans and health care clearinghouses must accept and use NPIs in standard transactions by May 23, 2007. (See **Important Note above.**)
- Small health plans have until May 23, 2008 to accept and use NPIs in standard transactions.
- Health care providers may begin applying for an NPI on May 23, 2005.
- Explicit instructions on time-frames and implementation of the NPI for Medicare billing will be issued later in 2006.
- All health care providers, including individuals such as physicians, dentists, and pharmacists and organizations, such as hospitals, nursing homes, pharmacies, and group practices are eligible to apply for and receive an NPI.
- Once the process begins, health care providers should apply for their NPI before the compliance date of May 2007 because health plans could require the use of the NPI before that date. (See **Important Note above.**)
- An NPI may be applied for in one of following three ways:
 - Beginning May 23, 2005, through the web-based application process at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the CMS website.
 - Beginning July 1, 2005, by completing a paper application and sending it to the Enumerator. A copy of the application and the Enumerator's mailing address can be obtained at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> or by calling at: 1-800-465-3203 or TTY 1-800-692-2326.
 - Beginning the fall of 2005, with the provider's permission, a professional association, or perhaps a health care provider who is their employer, may submit their application in an electronic file.
- Health care providers may use only one of the above methods when applying for an NPI.

Important Links

The related MLN Matters article can be found at

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0528.pdf> on the CMS website.

For additional information on NPIs, visit

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProviderStand/06_implementation.asp on the CMS website.

Beginning May 23, 2005, providers may visit <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do> or call the Enumerator at 1-800-465-3203 or TTY 1-800-692-2326.

For HIPAA information, providers may call the HIPAA Hotline at 1-866-282-0659, or write to

AskHIPAA@cms.hhs.gov.