



Center for Medicaid and State Operations

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Ref: S&C-03-14

**DATE:** February 13, 2003

**FROM:** Director  
Survey and Certification Group

**SUBJECT:** Clarification of Instructions for form CMS-671, Long Term Care Facility Application for Medicare and Medicaid

**TO:** Survey and Certification Regional Office Management (G-5)  
State Survey Agency Directors

This memorandum directs survey agencies to ensure that certified nursing homes are correctly completing the data fields on the form CMS-671.

The form CMS-671 is provided by survey teams to nursing homes for completion during standard surveys. The data collected is then uploaded to the CMS database and becomes part of our Online Survey and Certification and Reporting (OSCAR) system. Since we have begun to use some of the staffing information contained in the form CMS-671 to compare with the number of residents listed on the form CMS-672, Resident Census and Conditions of Residents, we have discovered an inaccuracy in the way some facilities are completing the form CMS-671. **Both of these forms are to be completed by facilities using totals from the certified facility only and not the entire building, if part of the building is not certified.** This has always been the case for these two long-standing forms.

We have found that some facilities are erroneously providing staffing information on the form CMS-671 based on the entire building, not just the certified facility. Since staffing and resident data are now being presented to the public as an indication of staffing level, the facilities that are completing the staffing fields incorrectly on the form CMS-671 are being shown with inflated staffing levels instead of the true level.

This situation is unfair to facilities that are completing both forms correctly, as their correct staffing levels can look low in comparison. Therefore, I am asking all survey agencies to immediately make their survey teams aware of this problem so that they can ensure every nursing home is completing the information correctly.

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We are reissuing the form CMS-671 and instructions with the following extra line of clarification under the title of the first page of instructions as follows:

**For the purpose of this form “the facility” equals certified beds (i.e., Medicare and/or Medicaid certified beds).**

Specifically, this clarification relates to the completion of page two of the form concerning Facility Staffing, i.e., Fields F33 through F71.

Survey agencies may continue to use the stock of forms CMS-671 they currently have until the corrected version is shipped out. For the convenience of your survey teams, I am attaching the revised form CMS-671 and instructions with the additional language described above. Note that the form now has a 12/02 approval date. I am asking that survey teams provide this page to the facility with an explanation that both the forms CMS-671 and 672 must be completed for the certified facility only.

The form and the revised instructions are also available on the CMS website at [www.cms.hhs.gov/forms/cms671.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/forms/cms671.pdf). You can print the revised instructions directly from this website.

**Effective Date: February 13, 2003.**

**Training:** This memorandum should be shared with all survey and certification staff, surveyors, their managers, and the state/regional training coordinators.

Steven A. Pelovitz

Attachment