The National Provider Identifier (NPI) is a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Administrative Standard. An NPI is a unique identification number for covered health care providers, created to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of electronic transmission of health information. Covered health care providers and all health plans and health care clearinghouses must use NPIs in their administrative and financial transactions.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) to assign these unique identifiers. For more information on how to apply for an NPI, visit https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do on the CMS website.

This fact sheet provides guidance for organization health care providers who wish to apply for NPIs or submit updates to the NPPES on behalf of their employed health care providers.

**NOTE:** The process on page 2 is NOT the process for Electronic File Interchange (EFI) for bulk enumeration. Instead, an organization that is a health care provider should follow these steps when applying for an employee’s NPI on an individual record-by-record basis.
1 CONFIRM EMPLOYEE’S CURRENT NPI STATUS

Ensure the health care providers for whom the organization will apply do not already have NPIs.

2 VERIFY AGREEMENT WITH HEALTH CARE PROVIDER EMPLOYEES

Determine if an agreement exists between the organization and its health care provider employees that give the organization the appropriate legal authority to act on behalf of those health care providers in taking actions such as completing NPI applications and updating transactions on their behalf. You may need legal counsel to determine if an existing agreement covers these types of actions. If such an agreement exists, it may not be necessary for the organization to take the actions described in items 3–5 below.

3 NOTIFY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER EMPLOYEES OF COLLECTED INFORMATION


4 VALIDATE NPI APPLICATION DATA

Share the NPI application data with the health care providers represented in the application to ensure complete and correct data. The same applies to updating information.

5 RETAIN NPI DOCUMENTS

Ask the health care providers to sign a document indicating that you took the above actions, and retain those documents as proof the health care providers knew about the actions taken on their behalf.

6 DESIGNATE CONTACT PERSON FOR NPI CONFIRMATION

The NPPES sends an email to the “Contact Person” entered on a health care provider’s NPI application. This email informs the Contact Person of the enumerated health care provider’s NPI, and contains some of the identifying information about the health care provider (including provider name, address, and Healthcare Provider Taxonomy Code and description).

If the organization submits an NPI application on behalf of a health care provider employee, the Contact Person designated by the organization receives the NPI notification email from the NPPES. The Contact Person must forward that NPI notification (or a copy) to the health care provider employee. This notification confirms that the NPPES assigned the health care provider employee an NPI and contains the NPI.

Organization health care providers may feel it appropriate to have their legal counsel review this process.
Resources

For more information about the NPI, visit [http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/HIPAA-Administrative-Simplification/NationalProvIdentStand](http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/HIPAA-Administrative-Simplification/NationalProvIdentStand) on the CMS website, or scan the Quick Response (QR) code on the right with your mobile device. Table 1 provides resources for additional information.

### Table 1. Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPPES</td>
<td><a href="https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do">https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PECOS Identity and Access Management (I&amp;A) System</td>
<td><a href="https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/PecosIAConfirm.do?transferReason=CreateLogin">https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/PecosIAConfirm.do?transferReason=CreateLogin</a></td>
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