



2018 ELIGIBLE HOSPITAL HARDSHIP EXCEPTION APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

MEDICARE 2018 ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD (EHR) INCENTIVE PROGRAM INFORMATION

- **Eligible Hospitals**, defined under 42 CFR §495.100 as "Subsection (d) hospitals" in the 50 states or DC that are paid under the Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS), may submit a Hardship Exception Application if the Hospital is unable to successfully demonstrate meaningful use in 2016 and criteria are met for a Lack of Infrastructure or Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Hardship Exception.
- Hospitals participating in the Medicare EHR program for the first time in 2016 and hospitals that have participated in the program prior to 2016, must successfully attest to meaningful use for the EHR Incentive Program during any continuous 90 day period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, and satisfy all other program requirements to avoid the Medicare payment adjustment in 2018.
- Hospitals must attest using 2014, 2015 or a combination of both Certified EHR Technology by **February 28, 2017**.
- If the hospital did not successfully meet meaningful use in 2016 and would like to apply for a Hardship Exception, it must submit an application no later than **July 1, 2017**.

Hospitals that do not need to submit this application:

- If the hospital successfully demonstrated meaningful use in 2016, it will be **exempt** from the payment adjustment and does not need to submit this application.
- **New Hospitals** - If the hospital is new **AND** obtained a new CMS Certification Number (CCN) during 10/01/2015 through 07/01/2017, it does not need to submit this application. The hospital will be granted a Hardship Exception and are automatically exempt from the 2018 payment adjustment based on the data in Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System (PECOS).



- **Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs)** – If the hospital is a CAH, it should *not* submit this application. A separate application for CAHs to apply for an exemption to the 2016 payment adjustment is posted to the CMS website.

BASIC APPLICATION INFORMATION

- To avoid the 2018 payment adjustment, this application must be submitted electronically or postmarked July 1, 2017.
- To file a Hardship Exception Application, the circumstance must be beyond the Hospital's control *and* the Hospital must explicitly outline how the circumstance significantly impaired the Hospital's ability to meet meaningful use.
- This application must be fully completed for any Hospital to formally file a Hardship Exception Application with the Medicare EHR Incentive Program.
- This application will be reviewed when the completed form and all required supporting documentation is received.
- If approved, this Hardship Exception is valid for the 2018 payment year only. If the Hospital needs to claim a Hardship Exception for the following payment year, a new application must be submitted.
- Determinations made by CMS or their designee regarding Hardship Exceptions are final and cannot be appealed.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION

- Electronic submission of this application is strongly recommended as submitting hardcopy or faxed applications may result in processing delays.
- Please download the application, and type in the dynamic form. You must save the application on your computer and attach it and any supporting documentation to the body of an email.
- This completed application and all supporting documentation must be attached to an email and sent to ehrhardship@provider-resources.com.
- All Hardship Exception determinations will be returned via email from ehrhardship@provider-resources.com to the email address provided on the application.
- If electronic submission is not possible, by any means, please TYPE or PRINT all information using blue or black ink; do not use pencil and submit this application via fax to **814-456-7132**.
- CMS will only accept documentation submitted in Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word Document (.doc), Microsoft Word Open XML Document (.docx), Microsoft Excel (.xls) or Microsoft Excel Open XML spreadsheet (.xlsx) formats. These documents must be directly accessible through the email attachment.
- Missing documentation or submissions in formats other than those listed above could result in a determination delay or in denial of the hardship exception.
- All documentation is required at the time of submission and additional documentation will not be accepted.
- Retain a copy of your completed hardship exception application for your records.