

DMEPOS ACCREDITATION GUIDANCE

As part of CMS' longstanding and ongoing efforts to facilitate DMEPOS program integrity, DMEPOS suppliers must be accredited by a CMS-approved accrediting organization (AO) to enroll in and bill Medicare. The purpose of accreditation is to confirm that the supplier meets the DMEPOS quality standards. To address vulnerabilities that we believe have risen substantially in the CMS' DMEPOS accreditation program over the years and to strengthen the process, we have finalized a number of provisions in the Calendar Year (CY) 2026 Home Health Prospective Payment System (HH PPS) Final Rule (90 Federal Register 55342). The principal categories of provisions are as follows and are effective January 1, 2026, unless otherwise stated by CMS:

- ***Frequency of Surveys and Reccreditation*** – DMEPOS suppliers have long been required to be resurveyed and reaccredited at least every 36 months (3 years). The final rule reduces the survey and reccreditation period to at least once every 12 months.
 - **A DMEPOS supplier's annual resurvey and reccreditation cycle will not begin until the expiration of the supplier's current reccreditation 3-year cycle (if issued prior to the final rule effective date).** To illustrate, suppose a supplier was initially accredited or reaccredited for a 3-year period effective June 1, 2023. For purposes of the implementation of our new annual resurvey/reaccreditation requirement – June 1, 2026, is the date: (1) its current accreditation expired; and (2) on which its annual resurvey/reaccreditation cycle begins. Accordingly, the supplier would have to be resurveyed and reaccredited at least once by June 1, 2027, again by June 1, 2028, and so forth. The dates used in this example are not meant to imply that all accreditations must be in effect for exactly 3 years. AOs may issue reccreditation renewals prior to the expiration date of the current period.
 - In addition, DMEPOS suppliers obtaining **initial** accreditation for the first time on or after the effective date of this final rule must thereafter be resurveyed and reaccredited annually. If, therefore, a new supplier became initially accredited effective June 1, 2026, it would have to be resurveyed and reaccredited by June 1, 2027, and at least once every 12 months thereafter.
- ***Sampling*** - Sampling allows large chains to have a percentage of their locations surveyed.
 - **Large Chain:** : For purpose of sampling only, a large chain is considered an organization operating 25 or more practice locations.
 - **Sampling Authorization:** AOs may use statistical sampling for large chains with 25 or more locations. The sampling methodology may utilize percentage-based sampling of their total locations in lieu of on-site surveys at all locations. AOs must perform on-site accreditation surveys for 100% of all supplier locations if the supplier has less than 25 locations. Sampling can be applied to locations beyond the minimum of 25 total surveys.
 - **Minimum Threshold:** No sampling protocols shall be applied to organizations with fewer than 25 locations.
 - **Maximum Annual Cap:** Large chains are limited to a maximum of 100 surveys per calendar year, regardless of their total location count.
- ***Changes in Majority Ownership*** – Under new 42 CFR § 424.551, a DMEPOS supplier undergoing a change in majority ownership (as that term is defined in § 424.551) within 36 months after either the supplier's initial enrollment or its most recent change in majority ownership must – unless one of § 424.551's exceptions applies – be surveyed and accredited and enroll as a new DMEPOS supplier.
 - Regardless of whether the supplier is undergoing a change in majority ownership within 36 months following either its initial enrollment or its most recent change in

- majority ownership, DMEPOS suppliers must notify their AO within 30 days of the effective date of any change of ownership. Suppliers should be aware that accreditation does not automatically transfer after merger, acquisition, or sale and that an accreditation survey is required when a change in majority ownership occurs.
- Suppliers should note that NPE contractors may contact their AO directly during the enrollment process for accreditation verification purposes for ownership changes.
 - ***New Locations/ Changes of Location/Relocation*** - Under 42 CFR § 424.57(c)(23), a DMEPOS AO may accredit a new location for an existing DMEPOS supplier for 3 months after it is operational without requiring a new site visit. Suppliers should be aware that the final rule removes the 90-day temporary accreditation allowance from § 424.57(c)(23).
 - Existing suppliers can no longer receive accreditation for a new location for 3 months after it becomes operational without an accreditation survey.
 - AO's will conduct a survey of the new location prior to issuing an accreditation approval (unless permitted otherwise, such as statistical sampling for large chains).
 - DMEPOS suppliers must notify their AO within 30 days of a change of location/relocation. Suppliers should expect to undergo another accreditation survey at their new practice location prior to accreditation issuance.
 - ***Stricter Requirements for Becoming and Remaining a DMEPOS AO*** – The final rule contains provisions that strengthen CMS' oversight of the DMEPOS AOs. These include but are not limited to:
 - Increasing the amount, specificity, and frequency of data that AOs must submit to CMS
 - Outlining several new processes to which DMEPOS AOs must adhere to help ensure greater AO accountability
 - Expanding CMS' ability to closely monitor and review AOs' operations
 - Strengthening CMS' ability to respond to situations where AOs are performing in a substandard manner
 - Preventing DMEPOS AO conflicts of interest
 - ***Unannounced Surveys*** – The final rule reiterates the current practice that all DMEPOS AO surveys of DMEPOS suppliers must be unannounced.

For more detailed information about our new DMEPOS AO regulatory provisions – including summaries of the stakeholder comments we received on the proposed rule as well as our responses to these comments -- please see the CY 2026 HH PPS Final Rule at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/12/02/2025-21767/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-calendar-year-2026-home-health-prospective-payment-system-hh-pps-rate>.

QAs

Q1: In the CY 2026 HH PPS Final Rule, did CMS finalize all of the DMEPOS accreditation provisions it proposed in the CY 2026 HH PPS Proposed Rule?

A: With two very minor exceptions, we finalized all of the DMEPOS accreditation provisions we proposed.

Frequency of Surveys and Reccreditation

Q2: How often must my DMEPOS supplier location be resurveyed and reccredited?

A: Under the final rule, you must be resurveyed and reccredited at least once every 12 months (annually), rather than the previous 36-month (3-year) cycle.

Q3: When does my annual reccreditation cycle begin?

A: Your annual resurvey and reccreditation cycle begins when your current 3-year accreditation period expires (if you were accredited before the final rule effective date).

For example: If you were initially accredited or reccredited for a 3-year period effective June 1, 2023, your current accreditation expires on June 1, 2026. This is when your annual resurvey/reccreditation cycle begins. You would need to be resurveyed and reccredited by June 1, 2027, again by June 1, 2028, and so forth.

Q4: I'm a new supplier seeking initial accreditation after the final rule effective date. How often will I need to be reccredited?

A: If you become initially accredited on or after the effective date of the final rule, you must be resurveyed and reccredited annually. For example, if you became initially accredited on June 1, 2026, you would need to be resurveyed and reccredited by June 1, 2027, and at least once every 12 months thereafter.

Changes in Majority Ownership

Q6: My organization is undergoing a change in ownership. What do I need to know about accreditation?

A: You must notify your AO and NPE within 30 days of the effective date of any change in ownership. Accreditation does not automatically transfer after a merger, acquisition, or sale. An accreditation survey is required for all changes in majority ownership.

Q7: What is considered a "change in majority ownership"?

A: As defined in 42 CFR § 424.551 – and for purposes of this requirement only -- , a change in majority ownership occurs when an individual or organization acquires more than a 50 percent direct ownership interest in a DMEPOS supplier during the 36 months following the DMEPOS supplier's initial enrollment into the Medicare program or the 36 months following the DMEPOS supplier's most recent change in majority ownership (including asset sale, stock transfer, merger, and consolidation). This includes an individual or organization that acquires majority ownership in a DMEPOS supplier through the cumulative effect of asset sales, stock transfers, consolidations, or mergers during the 36-month period after Medicare billing privileges are conveyed or the 36-month period following the DMEPOS supplier's most recent change in majority ownership.

Q8: Do I need to enroll as a new supplier if my ownership changes?

A: If you are undergoing a change in majority ownership within 36 months of your initial Medicare enrollment or from your last change in majority ownership, you must be surveyed and accredited and enroll in the Medicare program as a new DMEPOS supplier (unless one of the exceptions in § 424.551 applies). Also, if you are changing your Tax Identification Number (TIN), you must be surveyed and accredited and enroll in the Medicare program as a new DMEPOS supplier.

Q10: Who verifies my accreditation during the ownership change enrollment process?

A: NPE (National Provider Enrollment) contractors may contact your AO directly during the enrollment process for accreditation verification purposes for ownership changes.

New Locations and Relocation

Q11: Can I be accredited at a new location for 90 days before getting it surveyed?

A: No, the final rule removes the 90-day temporary accreditation allowance from § 424.57(c)(23). Existing suppliers can no longer receive accreditation for a new location for 3 months after it becomes operational without an accreditation survey.

Q12: What must I do before opening a new DMEPOS location?

A: You must notify your AO and NPE when opening a new DMEPOS location. Your AO will conduct a survey of the new location prior to issuing an accreditation approval (unless permitted otherwise, such as statistical sampling for large chains).

Q13: My organization is relocating an existing practice location. What are my accreditation requirements?

A: You must notify your AO within 30 days of a change of location/relocation. Your AO will survey your new practice location prior to accreditation issuance.(unless permitted otherwise, such as statistical sampling for large chains).

Q14: Will NPE contractors contact my AO about my new or relocated location?

A: Yes, NPE contractors may contact your AO directly during the enrollment process for accreditation verification purposes for location changes.

General

Q15: If I have questions about these provisions and how they might affect me, who should I contact?

A: Please email the CMS DMEPOS Accreditation mailbox at dmeaccreditation@cms.hhs.gov for any questions related to the DMEPOS accreditation provisions. For questions specific to your Medicare enrollment or your current accreditation with a particular AO, however, you should contact your National Provider Enrollment Contractor (NPEC) or DMEPOS AO, respectively.

Q17: Does this final rule impact any of the accreditation exemptions that currently exist?

A: No, please visit this [MLN Fact Sheet](#) for more information about the DMEPOS accreditation and enrollment process, including information about accreditation exemptions.