



**CENTER FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES**

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**DATE:** September 25, 2026

**TO:** Medicare Advantage Organizations

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**SUBJECT:** Updates to the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) Medicare Advantage (MA) Provider Directory Process

To better assist MA organizations, CMS will update the MPF provider directory process as follows:

1. CMS will release the Contract Year (CY) 2027 MA plan-supplied provider directory data on MPF on **Friday, October 9, 2026**.<sup>1</sup>
2. Beginning tomorrow, Saturday, September 26, 2026, CMS will add a **second** daily validation run to give MA plans more opportunities to test their files.
  - a. The first crawl will kick-off at 12:00 midnight ET. We expect validation reports to be delivered to HPMS by 6:00 a.m. ET.
  - b. The second crawl will kick-off at 2:00 p.m. ET. We expect validation reports to be delivered to HPMS by 8:00 p.m. ET.

CMS will modify the HPMS validation report interface and API to retrieve two reports per day. At this time, MA plans will receive the most recent validation report available at the time of retrieval.

3. To improve the handling of non-standard addresses, CMS has implemented a “rooftop” geocoding service to supplement the existing geocoding process. This enhancement has already produced a noticeable increase in our address verification success rate.

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<sup>1</sup> The display of MA provider directory data on MPF will be suspended between October 1, 2026 and October 9, 2026 to facilitate the application’s migration from SunFire to the data supplied by MA plans through this new process.

4. Thinking ahead to the daily production cycle, CMS is establishing a fall back process to aid MA plans that encounter a fatal error that would effectively suppress their provider directory data on MPF. See **Appendix A** for the list of Level 1 codes that will trigger a fall back.

Example: On Monday, an MA organization's provider directory data appears in MPF because their individual/practitioner and facility records were ingested successfully by CMS. On Monday afternoon, they update one or more of their JSON files, which are then flagged during the overnight crawl. However, CMS is unable to download the JSON file(s) due to a Level 1 error, such as C4001 (HTTPCommunicationsError). Rather than suppress the organization's data on Tuesday, CMS will populate MPF with the organization's last successful provider directory dataset that had been shown in MPF on Monday.

CMS has established distinct fault tolerance levels for the machine-readable JSON vs. FHIR-based JSON options. Because a single machine-readable JSON file can stand alone, CMS will fall back to the last successful dataset if 20% or more of the JSON files listed in the index file fail (e.g., if one out of five files fail, the fall back will be used).

Other than limits on file size and the number of files, CMS provided MA plans with significant flexibility regarding the construction of the individual FHIR-based JSON files that make up the directory. Because of the interdependencies that are inherent in FHIR, and the countless ways in which an MA organization can build their individual JSON files, CMS has adopted a zero fault tolerance for the FHIR-based JSON option. If at least one FHIR-based JSON file listed in the index file fails, CMS will fall back to the last successful dataset.

For the fall back to work, the MA organization must have individual/practitioner and facility records that were successfully ingested by CMS. If an organization does not have a viable prior successful dataset, their provider directory data will be suppressed on MPF until CMS is supplied with a fully successful dataset.

The following error codes have been added to support the fall back approach:

|                          |                                                                                             |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Code:</b>             | C4020                                                                                       |
| <b>Name:</b>             | CrawlAbortedNoFallback                                                                      |
| <b>Description:</b>      | Exceeded crawl failure threshold, but failed to revert back as there is no prior data.      |
| <b>Fields Displayed:</b> | ContractID                                                                                  |
| <b>Plan Action:</b>      | Review and correct the failing file(s) so that CMS can retrieve the full set of JSON files. |

  

|                     |                                                                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Code:</b>        | C4021                                                                                |
| <b>Name:</b>        | CrawlAbortedWithFallback                                                             |
| <b>Description:</b> | Exceeded crawl failure threshold and successfully reverted to last ingested dataset. |

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fields Displayed:</b> | ContractID                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Plan Action:</b>      | Review and correct the failing file(s) so that CMS can retrieve the full set of JSON files. MPF will display your last ingested dataset until CMS is supplied a new fully successful dataset. |

As a reminder, MA plans are expected to correct errors or update data as soon as possible. For data changes, plans are required by regulation to update their provider directory within 30 days of being notified about the change. However, plans must correct Level 1 validation errors immediately as this type of error prevents CMS from processing the provider directory data.

5. CMS is also considering whether to suppress Level 3 informational warnings on validation reports. As explained in prior guidance, an informational warning notes where there is a **potential** issue for plan review. Flagged records are still shown on MPF. Removing these warnings could improve the readability of the validation reports and highlight the Level 1 and 2 errors that do require a resolution. CMS will send a separate communication if there is a decision to proceed with these report modifications. **In the meantime, MA plans should focus on Level 1 and 2 errors, not Level 3, as the first two levels are critically important for ensuring your data appears on MPF.**

For technical assistance with the machine-readable JSON and FHIR-based JSON files and validation results, contact [support@cms-mapnet.zendesk.com](mailto:support@cms-mapnet.zendesk.com).

For technical support with HPMS (e.g., provider directory URLs, online validation reports, plan attestation, and plan previews), contact the HPMS Help Desk at either 1-800-220-2028 or [hpms@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:hpms@cms.hhs.gov).

For technical support for the HPMS provider directory validation API, contact [hpmstechsupport@triafed.com](mailto:hpmstechsupport@triafed.com).

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we strive to improve the beneficiary experience on MPF.

## Appendix A – Level 1 Errors for Fall Back

| Level | Error Code | Validation Name                 |
|-------|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1     | C4001      | HTTPCommunicationsError         |
| 1     | C4002      | X509CertError                   |
| 1     | C4003      | FileRetrievalError              |
| 1     | C4004      | InvalidJSONSyntax               |
| 1     | C4011      | MissingURL                      |
| 1     | C4012      | MissingFileDownloadURL          |
| 1     | C4013      | InvalidIndexFileFormat          |
| 1     | C4014      | ImproperURL                     |
| 1     | C4015      | InvalidPlanDataFile             |
| 1     | C4016      | InvalidDataFileMR               |
| 1     | C4017      | InvalidPlanDataFileFHIRResource |
| 1     | C4018      | InvalidPlanDataFileFHIRBundle   |