

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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MEDICARE PLAN PAYMENT GROUP

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TO: All Medicare Advantage Organizations, Prescription Drug Plans, Cost Plans, PACE Organizations, and Demonstrations

FROM: Jennifer Harlow /s/
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SUBJECT: Designation of Enterprise Identity Management (EIDM) Plan User Approver/External Point of Contact (EPOC) - ACTION

This letter describes the requirements and process that Medicare Advantage Organizations (MAO)/Prescription Drug Plans (PDP) (aka: a plan) must use to designate staff that will be responsible for granting access to their data in the CMS systems as well as the responsibilities of a MAO/PDP CMS External Point of Contact (EPOC).

Enterprise Identity Management (EIDM) is an Internet-accessible application that will allow a MAO/PDP employee the ability to self-register for access to CMS MAPD systems or become a designated approver for their company's end users.

CMS recommends that MAOs/PDPs select a responsible official, such as a manager or supervisor of the IT or Security organization, to be the EPOC. After providing the preliminary information described below to CMS, each EPOC self-registers for the appropriate contract numbers using EIDM. Once a request is approved by CMS, the EPOC is able to approve or reject their company's employee and subcontractors' access to CMS systems.

Please note that CMS security policy requires separation of duties between system administrators and users. Because a portion of the EPOC's job is considered a system administrator function, **EPOCs cannot register to access a CMS system.** Therefore, any individual that registers as an EPOC will not be granted access to any CMS system.

EPOC Registration Process

Step One – Submit EPOC Designation Letter to CMS

The plan must submit an official company letter to CMS identifying and appointing the EPOC. Please note that an organization may submit one letter for all contract numbers and may designate up to two (2) EPOCs for the same (or different) contract numbers for your organization. Any special requests for additional EPOCs will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to the letter, the plan must fill out and submit a signed EPOC Access Acknowledgement Form. The template for the EPOC Designation Letter and EPOC Access Acknowledgement Form can be found in the [Plan Connectivity Preparation](#) section of the MAPD Help Desk Web site.

The EPOC designation letter must:

- Be on original letterhead.
- Contain all of the following information for each EPOC:
 - Name(s) of designated EPOC
 - Mailing address
 - Telephone number and extension
 - E-mail address
 - Contract number(s) for which the EPOC will approve users (list ALL contract numbers under which this EPOC will approve users to work)
- Contain the signature of the responsible officer of the organization.
- Include the name, title, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the company official signing the letter.

A scanned copy of the EPOC designation letter and EPOC Access Acknowledgement Form should be emailed to DPOEPOCS@cms.hhs.gov and MAPDHELP@cms.hhs.gov

Step Two - The EPOC must complete registration in EIDM

- URL – <https://portal.cms.gov>
- During the registration process, EPOCs should provide all of the contract numbers for which they will approve end users (they may add additional contracts later).
- EPOCs must register using an e-mail account address that is specific to their organization (not a publicly available e-mail account such as Yahoo or Hotmail).
- The name used on the EPOC designation letter must match the name used to register in EIDM.
- EPOCs must enter a valid phone number and extension. This information is necessary in case an issue arises and CMS must contact an EPOC directly.

Step Three – Confirm receipt of CMS approval

- CMS will not approve access until the plan has completed steps one and two.
- Once CMS approves the registration, the EPOC will receive an e-mail from EIDM confirming access has been granted. Once the email is received, the EPOC can access the system and begin approving access requests.
*If a response has not been received via email, EPOCs should make sure to check spam folders for the email.

Any subsequent changes, additions, or deletions to a plan's EPOC designation require the plan to follow the instructions outlined above and provide CMS with a new letter that clearly identifies the changes and/or deletions. The EPOC will then be able to self-register or add contracts to their registration in EIDM. EPOCs that wish to remove contracts from their account may also do this on their own. The MAPD Help Desk also manages the deletion of EPOCs that no longer need access, however an EPOC should first attempt to remove all contracts from his/her role before contacting the Help Desk.

The MAPD Help Desk can be reached by telephone at 1-800-927-8069, or by sending an e-mail to MAPDHELP@cms.hhs.gov.

Annual Certification

A plan's EPOC is required to establish a procedure for maintaining plan user access under their authority. User review should occur twice a year. Part of the user review includes annual certification. EPOCs are required to certify all users under their authority annually. Extensions will not be granted to EPOCs who fall behind on annual recertification, as this is considered a security violation. If an EPOC chooses to bulk approve plan users during the certification process, the EPOC is verifying they have thoroughly reviewed the access on each user and access is still required and appropriate. Occasional reviews will be performed to ensure the process is followed properly.

Due to the frequent change in EPOC assignments and annual certification on all users, the EPOC Designation Letter and EPOC Access Acknowledgement Form are required to be submitted on an annual basis. EPOCs are also required to go through annual certification and these documents will justify continued access for EPOCs for the upcoming year. The deadline for submitting the letter is December 1st each year. Any EPOC who does not submit this information and/or does not initiate a request for annual certification in EIDM will not be approved for annual certification.

EPOCs are required to keep their accounts active and current. Failure to access the system within a 60 day period will lock an EPOC out of their account. CMS has the authority to remove access from any EPOC whose account is in a locked status. In the event of access being removed, the user must go through the complete EPOC registration process again.

Additional instructions regarding EPOC and end user registration can be obtained from the EIDM User Guide on the Internet at: <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/CMS-Information-Technology/EnterpriseIdentityManagement/Guides-and-Documentation.html>, or by calling the MAPD Help Desk.