



CMS Regional Office

CMS NEWS ALERT: April 9, 2020 (COVID-19) NEWS ALERT

April 9, 2020

Here is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) actions taken in response to the COVID-19 virus, as part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, click here www.coronavirus.gov. For information specific to CMS, please visit the [CMS News Room](#) and [Current Emergencies Website](#). CMS updates these resources on an ongoing basis throughout the day; the information below is current as of April 9, 2020 at 2:30 p.m.

CMS Approves Over \$51 Billion for Providers with the Accelerated/Advance Payment Program for Medicare Providers in One Week

CMS delivered more than \$51 billion to the healthcare providers on the frontlines battling the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) to ensure they have the resources they need to combat this pandemic. This is an increase from the \$34 billion that CMS announced in an earlier press release. Processing times for a request of an accelerated or advance payment is now four to six days, down from the previous timeframe of three to four weeks. In a little over a week, CMS has already approved over 21,000 of the 32,000 requests it received from health care providers and suppliers seeking accelerated and advance payments. Prior to COVID-19, CMS had approved just over 100 total requests in the past five years, with most being tied to natural disasters such as hurricanes.

[Earlier Press Release](#)

Note: Payments are now up to \$51 billion. CMS approved over 21,000 of 32,000 requests received.

CMS Issues New Wave of Infection Control Guidance to Protect Patients and Healthcare Workers from COVID-19

CMS issued a series of updated guidance documents focused on infection control to prevent the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in a variety of inpatient and outpatient care settings. The guidance, based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, will help ensure infection control in the context of patient triage, screening and treatment, the use of alternate testing and treatment sites and telehealth, drive-through screenings, limiting visitations, cleaning and disinfection guidelines, staffing, and more.

[Press Release](#)

Coronavirus-Related Medicare Scam Alert Blog

The Social Security Administration featured a guest blog from CMS Administrator Seema Verma reminding Medicare beneficiaries to be vigilant and take precautions to avoid falling victim to healthcare fraud during the coronavirus pandemic.

[Social Security Matters Blog](#)

Artificial Intelligence Health Outcomes Challenge Pause

CMS will temporarily pause the Artificial Intelligence Health Outcomes Challenge and restart the Challenge on Monday, June 29, 2020. In the coming weeks, CMS will distribute a more detailed timeline for the remaining stages of the Challenge.

[Artificial Intelligence Health Outcomes Challenge](#)

Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport (ET3) Model Implementation Date Delay

As CMS seeks to support the community of organizations that are responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, CMS will delay the start of the ET3 Model from May 1, 2020 until Fall 2020. Selected applicants have been notified and will be required to complete a revised Participation Agreement reflecting the new implementation date.

[ET3 Web Page](#)

CMS Approves Additional State Medicaid Waivers and Amendments to Give States Flexibility to Address Coronavirus Pandemic

CMS continues to deliver urgent regulatory relief to ensure states can quickly and effectively care for their most vulnerable citizens during the COVID-19 crisis. For the first time, CMS has approved a COVID-related Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Disaster Amendment that brings relief for CHIP-covered children living in Maine. In addition, CMS approved COVID-related Medicaid Disaster Amendments that bring relief to North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Wyoming. These approvals help to ensure that states have the tools they need to combat COVID-19 through a wide variety of state plan flexibilities. CMS also authorized amendments to ensure emergency flexibilities in programs that care for the elderly and people with disabilities, including most recently in Delaware, Hawaii, Mississippi, New York, and North Dakota. These approved flexibilities support President Trump's commitment to a COVID-19 response that is locally executed, state managed, and federally supported.

All told, CMS has approved 49 emergency waivers, 26 state amendments, 7 COVID-19 related Medicaid Disaster Amendments and the first CHIP COVID-related Disaster Amendment in record time. States are using a [toolkit](#) CMS developed to expedite the application and approval of Medicaid state waivers and State Plan Amendments.

[Medicaid State Plan Amendments](#)

[Section 1135 Waivers](#)

[1915\(c\) Appendix K Waivers](#)

[CHIP State Plan Amendments](#)

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