

## **Medicare Enrollment Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is PECOS?**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has created a way for providers to enroll in Medicare online. The system for enrolling online is called the Internet-based Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System (PECOS). If you choose not to complete an enrollment application online, when you submit a paper application to your local contractor they will create an electronic PECOS enrollment record for you.

### **Do I need to Enroll in PECOS?**

All providers and suppliers enrolled with Medicare prior to March 23, 2011, must “revalidate” their enrollment information, but only after receiving notification from their Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC). To revalidate your enrollment information, you may complete this process either via PECOS or the paper CMS-855 process. Please note, if you have never submitted the CMS-588 Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Agreement, you will also have to do this as part of this process.

### **How can I check to see if I have an enrollment record in PECOS?**

You can log into PECOS at: <https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/login.do> to see whether you have an existing enrollment record. To log into the system you must have an active National Provider Identifier (NPI) and have a web user account (User ID/Password) established in the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System <<https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/>>.

### **Can I still submit a paper enrollment application?**

Although CMS is strongly encouraging providers to use the online enrollment process, all providers will continue to have the option of submitting paper enrollment applications. As noted above, when you submit a paper application, your contractor will then create an electronic record for you in PECOS.

### **What are the deadlines for enrolling?**

Between now and March 23, 2015, MACs will send out notices on a regular basis to begin the revalidation process for each provider. Providers must wait to submit the revalidation only after being asked by their MAC to do so. Once a revalidation request is received, the provider only has 60 days to respond to their contractor’s request. Providers who do not respond to a revalidation request could face revocation of their billing privileges.

### **What happens if I don’t submit an updated enrollment application when requested?**

As noted previously, your billing privileges could be revoked if you do not respond to the revalidation request. Ensuring that CMS has up to date provider enrollment information also impacts other Medicare programs. To participate in Medicare’s EHR incentive program, you must have an enrollment record in PECOS.

**I heard that doctors who order or refer for services have to have an enrollment record in PECOS by a certain date, is this accurate?**

CMS had previously indicated that all providers who order or refer for services would need to have an updated enrollment record in PECOS by July 2011. However, due to concerns raised by the provider community, CMS has delayed this requirement indefinitely.

**What if I don't want to have funds deposited electronically to my bank account?**

Federal regulations require that providers and suppliers receive electronic funds transfer (EFT) at the time of enrollment, revalidation, change of Medicare contractors or submission of an enrollment change request. Providers must submit the CMS-588 form to receive Medicare payment via electronic funds transfer.

**I am concerned that the federal government will have access to both deposit and withdraw funds from my account. What should I do?**

Providers often will set up a separate bank account for Medicare payments which is separate from other funds.

**If I receive funds electronically am I also required to bill Medicare electronically?**

If you have fewer than 10 full time equivalent employees in your office you are not required to bill electronically. If you have more than 10 full time equivalent employees in your office you are required to bill electronically.

**How will I know if I received a request to revalidate from my contractor?**

CMS is instructing contractors to release revalidation requests in colored envelopes so that the communication will easily stand out. In bold at the top of the revalidation notice it says "this is a revalidation notice." The document describes the actions to take. A sample revalidation letter is accessible at:

<https://www.cms.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/Downloads/SampleRevalidationLetter.pdf>

Please note, CMS is also working on developing a webpage that will list all the providers who have received a revalidation request. Look for updates on this project in the future.

**When did this process start?**

In the last two weeks of September CMS sent out 89,000 revalidation requests. Doctors who did not have a record in PECOS were the first to be targeted for revalidation.

**Where will CMS mail the revalidation requests?**

CMS is sending revalidation letters to two addresses: the doctor's "special payments" address and "correspondence" address simultaneously. If both addresses are the same the second letter will go to practice location.

## **Does the Medicare enrollment fee apply to doctors of chiropractic?**

No, the enrollment fee does not apply to doctors of chiropractic or any Medicare Part B physician or non-physician. Doctors of chiropractic who wish to enroll as DME suppliers will be subject to the enrollment fee.

### **Resources**

CMS Enrollment Information

<https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovidersupenroll/>

CMS Overview of Revalidation:

<http://www.cms.gov/MLN MattersArticles/downloads/SE1126.pdf>

CMS Overview of PECOS:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/Downloads/OrganizationOverview.pdf>

Accessing PECOS:

[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/04\\_InternetbasedPECOS.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/04_InternetbasedPECOS.asp#TopOfPage)

#### **ITEMS TO REMEMBER**

- Medicare Administrative Contractors will be sending out requests to providers to “revalidate” enrollment information. Be on the lookout for this contractor request. Notify your staff of this effort.
- Do not start the revalidation process until contacted by your Medicare Contractor.
- If you make any changes to your enrollment information, you must apply for EFT.
- If you receive a request to revalidate your enrollment record from your Medicare contractor respond promptly. Failure to update your record when requested by the contractor can result in a loss of billing privileges.