

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



Revised products from the Medicare Learning Network® (MLN)

- The “[Quick Reference Information: Home Health Services](#)” Educational Tool (ICN 908504) in downloadable format.

MLN Matters® Number: SE1417

Related Change Request (CR) #: N/A

Related CR Release Date: N/A

Effective Date: N/A

Related CR Transmittal #: N/A

Implementation Date: N/A

Implementation of Fingerprint-Based Background Checks

Provider Types Affected

This MLN Matters® Special Edition article is intended for providers and suppliers who submit claims to Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Administrative Contractors (DME MACs) and Home Health and Hospice (HH&H) MACs for services provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

Provider Action Needed



STOP – Impact to You

This Special Edition article is being provided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to announce the implementation of fingerprint-based background checks as part of enhanced enrollment screening provisions contained in Section 640 of the Affordable Care Act.

Disclaimer

This article was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This article may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents. CPT only copyright 2013 American Medical Association.

**CAUTION – What You Need to Know**

Once fully implemented, the fingerprint-based background check will be completed on all individuals with a 5 percent or greater ownership interest in a provider or supplier that falls under the high risk category. Note that the high level of risk category will be applied to providers and suppliers who are newly enrolling Durable Medicare Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) suppliers or Home Health Agencies (HHA). It will also be applied to providers and suppliers who have been elevated to the high risk category in accordance with enrollment screening regulations.

**GO – What You Need to Do**

See the Background and Additional Information Sections of this article for further details.

Background

As part of the enhanced enrollment screening provisions contained in the Affordable Care Act (see <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hr3590enr/pdf/BILLS-111hr3590-enr.pdf>), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is implementing fingerprint-based background checks. The fingerprint-based background checks will be used to detect bad actors who are attempting to enroll in the Medicare program and to remove those currently enrolled. Once fully implemented, the fingerprint-based background check will be completed on all individuals with a 5 percent or greater ownership interest in a provider or supplier that falls under the high risk category.

Please refer to 42 CFR 424.518(c)(3) at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=a39ae0804106965d82b5ac6413ba550e&node=42:3.0.1.1.11.12.5.11&rgn=div8> on the Internet and the "Medicare Program Integrity Manual" (Chapter 15 (Medicare Enrollment), Section 15.19.2.1C (Screening Categories-Background-High)) at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/pim83c15.pdf> on the CMS website.

Note: The high level of risk category will be applied to providers and suppliers who are newly enrolling Durable Medicare Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) suppliers or Home Health Agencies (HHA). It will also apply to providers and suppliers who have been elevated to the high risk category in accordance with enrollment screening regulations.

The fingerprint-based background check implementation will be phased in beginning in 2014. Initially, not all providers and suppliers in the “high” level of risk category will be a part of the fingerprint-based background check requirement.

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Applicable providers and suppliers will receive notification of the fingerprint requirements from their MAC. The MAC will send a notification letter to the applicable providers or suppliers listing all 5% or greater owners who are required to be fingerprinted. The notification letter will be mailed to the provider or supplier's correspondence address and the special payments address on file with Medicare. Generally, an individual will be required to be fingerprinted only once, but CMS reserves the right to request additional fingerprints if needed.

The relevant individuals will have 30 days from the date of the notification letter to be fingerprinted. If the provider or supplier finds a discrepancy in the ownership listing, the provider or supplier should contact their MAC immediately to communicate the discrepancy and take the appropriate action to update the enrollment record to correctly reflect the ownership information.

The notification letter will identify contact information for the Fingerprint-Based Background Check Contractor (FBBC). The relevant individual(s) are required to contact the FBBC prior to being fingerprinted to ensure the fingerprints are accurately submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and results are properly returned to CMS. Providers/suppliers may contact the FBBC by telephone or by accessing the FBBC's website. Contact information for the FBBC will be provided in the notification letter received from the MAC. Once contacted, the FBBC will provide at least three fingerprint locations convenient to the relevant individual's location. One of these locations will be a local, state, or federal law enforcement facility.

The relevant individuals who are required to undergo the fingerprint-based background check will incur the cost of having their fingerprints taken, and the cost may vary depending on location. **Once an individual has submitted his/her fingerprints, if that individual is subsequently required to undergo a fingerprint-based background check in accordance with 42 CFR 424.518(c), CMS will, to the extent possible, rerun the fingerprint-based background check rather than requiring resubmission of fingerprints.** You can review 42 CFR 424.518(c) at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=f14b263d1175a355d736e9f38f3a6baf&node=42:3.0.1.1.11.12.5.11&rgn=div8> on the Internet.

Fingerprinting can be completed on the FD-258 form or electronically at certain locations. CMS strongly encourages all required applicants to provide electronic fingerprints, but CMS will accept the FD-258 card instead. If the FD-258 form is submitted, the FBBC will convert the paper form to electronic submission to the FBI. You can review the FD-258 form at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/criminal-history-summary-checks/standard-fingerprint-form-fd-258> on the Internet.

Once the fingerprint process is complete, the fingerprints will be forwarded to the FBI for processing. Within 24 hours of receipt, the FBI will compile the background history based on the fingerprints and will share the results with the FBBC. CMS, through the FBBC, will assess the law enforcement data provided for the fingerprinted individuals. The FBBC will

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