

March 28, 2020

**ILLINOIS HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION  
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: Chief Financial Officers, Member Hospitals and Health Systems  
Other Finance Staff

FROM: Cassie Yarbrough, Director, Medicare Policy

SUBJECT: Update: Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment Program; March 29 NGS Hotline

**National Government Services (NGS) is expanding its COVID-19 hotline hours to Sunday, March 29, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Central Time, to answer provider questions about accelerated/advance payments related to COVID-19.**

As a follow up to our earlier memo, we are providing new, updated information on sources of direct federal funding for hospitals needing immediate financial assistance. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) existing Accelerated and Advance Payment Program was expanded and modified under the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136), a summary of which can be found [here](#). Offered in circumstances such as national emergencies, CMS is authorized to provide accelerated or advance payments during the COVID-19 public health emergency to any Medicare provider or supplier that submits a request to the appropriate Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) and meets the required qualifications. CMS issued a fact sheet, which can be found [here](#).

**Eligibility:** Providers must meet the following criteria to be eligible for accelerated/advance payments:

- Have billed Medicare for claims within 180 days immediately prior to the date of signature on the provider's request form;
- Not be in bankruptcy;
- Not be under active medical review or program integrity investigation; and
- Not have any outstanding delinquent Medicare overpayments.

**Application Information:** Qualified providers will be asked to request a specific amount using an Accelerated or Advance Payment Request form provided on each MAC's website. The National Government Services application is [here](#). The Wisconsin Physician Services application is [here](#).

All required information must be included with the initial submission in order for forms to be reviewed and processed. The provider must complete the entire form, including the following:

- Provider/supplier identification information:
  - Legal Business Name/ Legal Name;
  - Correspondence Address;
  - National Provider Identifier (NPI);
  - Other information as required by the MAC.
- Amount requested based on your need:
  - Inpatient acute care hospitals, children’s hospitals, and certain cancer hospitals are able to request up to 100% of Medicare payments for a six-month period. Critical access hospitals (CAH) are able to request up to 125% of their payment amount for a six-month period. Most other providers and suppliers will be able to request up to 100% of the Medicare payment amount for a three-month period.
- Reason for request:
  - Please check box 2 (“Delay in provider/supplier billing process of an isolated temporary nature beyond the provider’s/supplier’s normal billing cycle and not attributable to other third party payers or private patients.”); and
  - State that the request is for an accelerated/advance payment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Signature:
  - The form must be signed by an authorized representative of the provider/supplier.
- Request submission: Electronic submission will significantly reduce the processing time; however, requests may be submitted to the appropriate MAC by fax, email, or mail.

**Processing Time:** Each MAC will review and issue payments within seven calendar days of receiving the request.

**Repayment:** CMS extended the repayment of these accelerated/advance payments to begin 120 days (4 months) after the date of issuance of the payment. Hospitals will have up to one year from the date the accelerated payment was made to repay the balance.

**Additional Information:** CMS has established COVID-19 hotlines at each MAC. These hotlines are operational Monday through Friday.

NGS is available 8:00am – 4:00pm central time at 1-888-802-3898. **NGS is expanding its COVID-19 hotline hours to Sunday, March 29 from 8:00am – 4:00pm Central Time to answer provider questions about accelerated/advanced payments related to COVID-19.** We have asked NGS if they plan to continue offering expanded hotline hours over future weekends, and we expect an answer early next week. We will send out additional information as we receive it.

Wisconsin Physician Services is available 7:00am – 4:00pm central time at 1-844-209-2567.

For more information regarding applying for accelerated Medicare payments, please refer to IHA's [document](#) on federal funding opportunities for hospitals. Note, this funding document will be updated as more information on federal funding sources is available.

If you have any questions, please contact Cassie Yarbrough, director of Medicare policy, at 630-276-5516 or [cyarbrough@team-iha.org](mailto:cyarbrough@team-iha.org).