

## CMS EPCS Program Waiver Application Fact Sheet

Section 2003 of the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT Act) mandates that Schedule II, III, IV, and V controlled substance prescriptions under Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage prescription drug (MA-PD) plans be prescribed electronically.

In compliance with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Electronic Prescribing for Controlled Substances (EPCS) Program, prescribers must electronically prescribe at least 70 percent of their Schedule II-V controlled substance prescriptions under Medicare Part D, after exceptions. Each measurement year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. CMS EPCS waiver applications will be open from mid-September through mid-November of each year. For more information, please visit the program website at <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/e-health/eprescribing/cms-eprescribing-for-controlled-substances-program>.

### Where can I view my prescribing and compliance data and the waiver application?

Go to the Clinician Quality Reporting (CQR) website at <https://cqr.cms.gov/> and navigate to the CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal, or access the CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal directly at <https://cqr.cms.gov/epcs/landing>. Users will access the CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal by logging in via their HCQIS Access Roles and Profile (HARP) account. For assistance with HARP, please visit [HARP Help](#). The Portal is for prescribers of controlled substances under Medicare Part D and their support staff to view EPCS compliance status, submit waiver applications, and manage waiver applications.

### Am I eligible to submit a waiver application?

A prescriber who experienced extraordinary circumstance(s) that prevented the prescriber from meeting the CMS EPCS Program requirement during the measurement year is eligible to submit a waiver application.

Below are a few examples of possible circumstances beyond control. A prescriber may select one or multiple reasons if applicable.

1. Technological limitations not within control of the prescriber

If the prescriber has technological limitations due to circumstances outside the prescriber's control, such as the service area lacks broadband internet access and/or a software vendor did not install an e-prescribing system, the prescriber or their representatives should consider submitting a waiver application.

2. Other circumstances outside the prescriber's control

CMS recommends a prescriber or representative submit a waiver application for any extraordinary circumstance(s) beyond the prescriber's control, such as experiencing an

extraordinary event, e.g., cyberattack, flood, or fire, or a disaster that is not included in the automatic Declared Disaster Exception, e.g., tornado, landslide, or winter storm (the examples provided are not inclusive). Waiver applications under this option will be reviewed and determined on a case-by-case basis.

## How do I submit a waiver application?

The [CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal & Waiver Application User Guide](#) contains detailed instructions on how to submit a waiver application for a prescriber that has not met or exceeded the 70 percent threshold for EPCS for the measurement year. The guide provides step-by-step instructions along with screenshots that help in navigating the Portal.

## What supporting material is needed for the waiver application?

Each prescriber or a representative must provide in the waiver application a detailed explanation/documentation of the circumstance(s) beyond the prescriber's control that prevented the prescriber from meeting the CMS EPCS Program requirement. Additional supporting materials may be uploaded to the waiver application (e.g., letter from your e-prescribing system vendor, newsletter of a local disaster). Please note that all supporting materials submitted with an CMS EPCS waiver application will be reviewed by CMS on a case-by-case basis. Prescribers should retain supporting materials for their own records in the event they are asked to provide it to CMS for a final determination regarding the waiver application.

## How do I check the status of my waiver application?

After submitting your waiver application, you will receive a confirmation email from [EPCS-EPrescribe@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:EPCS-EPrescribe@cms.hhs.gov). Once CMS has reviewed your waiver application, you will receive another email with the status of your waiver application (i.e., approved or denied). You may also check the status of the waiver application by logging into the CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal and checking the NPI compliance status and waiver application status.

## How do I get help?

Contact the CMS EPCS Service Center:

- Visit the following site to create a service center ticket online:  
[https://cmsqualitysupport.servicenow.com/ccsq\\_support\\_central](https://cmsqualitysupport.servicenow.com/ccsq_support_central)
- Email [EPCS-EPrescribe@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:EPCS-EPrescribe@cms.hhs.gov).
- Call 1.866.288.8292, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.– 8 p.m. Eastern Time (ET). For those who are hearing impaired, please dial 711 for TRS Communications Assistant.
  - To receive assistance more quickly, please consider calling during non-peak hours—before 10 a.m. and after 2 p.m. ET.