

## **CMS Issues Sweeping Regulatory Changes to Help U.S. Healthcare System Address COVID-19 Patient Surge**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today is issuing an unprecedented array of temporary regulatory waivers and new rules to equip the American healthcare system with maximum flexibility to respond to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The changes complement and augment the work of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and state and local public health authorities by empowering local hospitals and healthcare systems to rapidly expand treatment capacity that allows them to separate patients infected with COVID-19 from those who are not affected. CMS's waivers and flexibilities will permit hospitals and healthcare systems to expand capacity by triaging patients to a variety of community-based locales, including ambulatory surgery centers, inpatient rehabilitation hospitals, hotels, and dormitories. Transferring uninfected patients will help hospital staffs to focus on the most critical COVID-19 patients, maintain infection control protocols, and conserve personal protective equipment.

The [press release](#) and [additional background information](#) documents are available online.

For more information on the COVID-19 waivers and guidance, and the Interim Final Rule, please go to the [CMS COVID-19 flexibilities webpage](#), which includes links to the following documents:

- Summary of COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Waivers & Flexibilities for Health Care Providers
- Blanket Waivers of Section 1877(g) of the Social Security Act (Physician Self-Referral Law)
- Medicare Interim Final Rule With Comment Period: Revisions in Response to the COVID-10 Public Health Emergency (CMS-1744-IFC)
- Provider Burden Relief Frequently Asked Questions
- Provider Enrollment Relief Frequently Asked Questions
- Updates for State Surveyors and Accrediting Organizations (EMTALA and Infection Control)
- Reprioritization of PACE, Medicare Parts C and D Program, and Risk Adjustment Data Validation (RADV) Audit Activities (HPMS Memo).
- 1135 Blanket Waivers
- What Do I Need to Know About 1135 Blanket Waivers?

To keep up with the important work CMS is doing in response to COVID-19, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).