

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

550 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90020

Reply To: (213) 639-6391
Fax: (213) 351-2491

Date _____

Dear _____

New Hire: Mental Health Physician/ Mental Health Non-Physician Provider:

In compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Department of Mental Health (DMH) is requesting you apply for a National Provider Identifier (NPI) in the event that you do not have an NPI. By applying for an NPI and/or providing your NPI to DMH, you are ensuring DMH is able to submit timely HIPAA compliant claims for purposes of obtaining reimbursement for services you provide as an employee of the Department.

This letter explains what the NPI is, what your responsibilities are in regards to the NPI, and how to apply for an NPI.

Please provide DMH with your NPI within thirty (30) days, or less, from your hire date/continuing service date. To provide the Department your NPI, complete the enclosed Rendering Provider Form to the best of your ability. On your first day of employment with DMH provide the completed Rendering Provider Form, along with a copy of your NPI confirmation letter to: _____. The rendering provider form will be reviewed to ensure it is complete and accurate.

NPI

NPI is a unique health identifier for health care providers for use in the health care system, and is a requirement under HIPAA. Congress included provisions to address the need for a standard unique health identifier for health care providers and other health care system needs in the Administrative Simplification provisions of HIPAA. The final rule concerning the NPI was published in the January 23, 2004, Federal Register, 45 CFR, Part 162 .

The NPI is fully portable within the application of the HIPAA legislation. The NPI is assigned for life and is deactivated only under the most extreme circumstances:

- Identity theft where the first NPI has been fraudulently used;
- The provider's death; and
- The provider's retirement.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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All health care providers are eligible to be assigned an NPI. Health care providers that are covered entities, or are employed by a covered entity, are required to apply for and obtain an NPI. A Covered Entity is a health plan, health care clearinghouse, or health care provider, who transmits any health information in electronic form in connection with a transaction. DMH is a covered provider and is required to ensure that all health care providers under its employee comply with the NPI Final Rule.

The NPI is a 10-position numeric identifier, with a check digit in the 10th position, and no intelligence about the health care provider is in the number. No intelligence in the number means that by looking at the number, NPI, no one can tell:

- the location where the provider is practicing;
- the group or organization in which the provider is practicing;
- the provider's taxonomy code;
- if sanction data exists, i.e., there are not any sanction data indicators; and
- any other such information.

The NPI is a number that is assigned randomly.

Issuance of an NPI will not eliminate the need to be separately credentialed with each health plan (i.e., Medicare, Medi-Cal, Blue Cross Plans, etc.).

The required and permitted uses of NPIs

The required and permitted uses of NPIs are:

- NPI is used to identify the provider on all standard transactions that the provider conducts where required.
- The provider is required to disclose its NPI, when requested, to any entity that needs the NPI to identify that covered health care provider in a standard transaction.
- NPI is used to communicate to the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) any changes in its required data elements in the NPPES within thirty days (30) of the change.

NPPES

The NPI application process is the means by which health care provider organizations and individuals become uniquely identified in a national database known as the NPPES, formerly known as National Provider System. The NPPES is an enumeration process only and NOT an enrollment process with any Medicare contractor, Medi-Cal contractor

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or third-party payer. NPPES is not a claims payment processing system and that is why claims processing information is not captured.

When applying for an NPI the applicant will need to establish a user ID and a password. The NPPES is not a read only system. One should keep his/her user ID and password secured for his/her use only to prevent any unauthorized changes in NPPES data.

Information that is to be captured by NPPES:

- The mailing address and one physical location address for each health care provider.
- An individual, health care provider's license number (if appropriate), the State which issued the license (multiple occurrences of both data element(s), and the credential designation(s).
- Numbers used to report income taxes will be useful in uniquely identifying health care providers.
- Health care taxonomy codes will also be useful in uniquely identifying health care providers.

A provider is required to communicate to NPPES any changes in its required data elements in the NPPES within thirty (30) days of the change. The provider is liable for civil monetary fines on a per violation basis for failure to comply with the requirement to communicate changes to NPPES within thirty (30) days of the change.

Information changes that do not require the issuance of a new NPI include:

- Name
- Address
- Tax identification numbers
- Healthcare provider taxonomy classification;
- State of licensure
- State license number.

The Application Process

DMH encourages the use of the web application. The Enumerator's web application processing time, including response is approximately five (5) days to twenty (20) business days. The advantage of web-based application is that there is real-time gap or missing information checking at the end of the application process on line. Without complete information, the web application cannot be filed/submitted.

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Web applications may be obtained through the following address:

<https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do>

The estimated time required to complete a web application is approximately 20 minutes.

When completing the application, it is important to include all taxonomy codes related to the services you provide. The web site above provides a list of taxonomy codes. Should you have questions or need assistance in identifying the taxonomy codes to use, please contact Judith Miller (213) 639-6391.

You need to keep a copy of your application and all communication with NPPES. To ensure you have a copy of your application, you need to print each screen as you proceed or before your final submission (attestation of the accuracy of information provider and penalties for fraud). This information may be needed for clarification purposes or in the event of a compliance audit. Also, print a copy of the page acknowledging your application and the tracking number of your application. You will need the tracking number in the event you need to follow-up on your application.

You may contact Judith Miller at (213) 639-6391 should you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Director of Mental Health

MJS: jlm

Enclosures

c: Robin Kay, Ph.D.
Roderick Shaner, M.D.
Susan Moser
Robert Greenless
Judith Miller