

Medicare Fee-For-Service Public Provider Enrollment Files: Data Guidance

Last Updated:

February 3, 2025

FOREWORD

This document provides background information and data guidance for the Public Provider Enrollment Files (PPEF). The ensuing sections of this document are organized to provide policy and data context first, followed by a general overview of the data, followed by instructions for performing common data operations, and conclude with the limitations of the data to be kept in mind when using the files.

- Section 1, “Background,” provides basic background information pertaining to both policy and the source of the provider enrollment data.
- Section 2, “PPEF Data Contents,” provides an overview of the contents of the PPEF, including the scope of the data and descriptions of each file.
- Section 3, “Common Data Operations,” gives general methodological instructions for performing common data operations.
- Section 4, “Data Limitations,” lists the data limitations that should be kept in mind when using the PPEF.
- Appendix A, “Revision History,” tracks updates and additions related to the PPEF.

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1 BACKGROUND

This section provides background and context for understanding the PPEF. Section 1.1 describes the policy context and goals leading to the release of the PPEF. Section 1.2 provides information on the data source of the PPEF: the Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System (PECOS).

1.1 POLICY CONTEXT

After releasing 2012 service and payment claims information for individual providers, the Center for Program Integrity (CPI) at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began receiving data requests for provider enrollment data. Growing interest from the health care industry in this data stemmed from the need to identify Medicare-enrolled providers and their associations to groups/organizations. At the time, there was no avenue for anyone outside of CMS to validate and verify if an individual provider or organization was enrolled in Medicare. The Public Provider Enrollment Files (PPEF), which were released to the general public for the first time on February 22, 2016, aim to correct this and allow easy access to Medicare provider enrollment data.

The PPEF align with CMS' efforts to promote and practice data transparency for non-sensitive Medicare information. In addition to allowing users to easily access and validate provider information against Medicare data, the PPEF make key provider and supplier data available for use by the health care community for research and increase awareness in the provider and supplier community about the enrollment information CMS has on file. CMS' long-term goal for the PPEF is to expand the data elements available and to consolidate it with other public lists, such as the Ordering and Referring File, the Part D Prescribing File, and the Revalidation Lists.

1.2 DATA SOURCE

The source of this data is the Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System, or PECOS (pronounced pey-kohs). PECOS is an electronic Medicare enrollment system and national data repository for individual and organizational providers who have enrolled or are enrolling in Medicare. CMS' Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) enroll providers using PECOS. From these enrolling providers, the MACs through PECOS collect information related to the provider's identity, such as SSN or EIN, specialty, qualifications, practice locations, ownership, billing agency information, reassignment of benefits, and related organizations.

2 PPEF DATA CONTENTS

This section provides an overview of the contents of the PPEF. Section 2.1 describes the scope (i.e., population) of the data. Section 2.2 describes and explains the general purpose of each of the four relational data files included in the PPEF: **ENROLLMENT**, **REASSIGNMENT**, **PRACTICE_LOCATION**, and **SECONDARY_SPECIALTY**.

2.1 POPULATION

The Public Provider Enrollment Files (PPEF) include all provider enrollment applications, or enrollments, that were approved to bill or order and refer in Medicare as of the PECOS data version used to produce the files. This includes enrollments for:

- Individual practitioners, both physicians and non-physicians
- DME suppliers
- Part A providers, such as hospitals, hospices, and home health agencies
- Part B suppliers, such as clinics/group practices and ambulance providers
- Practitioners who only enroll to order and refer
- MDPP suppliers

The PPEF do not currently include information on providers who have opted out of Medicare, although opt out information is stored in PECOS.

2.2 RELATIONAL PROVIDER ENROLLMENT DATA

For each enrollment in the population specified in Section 2.1 (i.e., all approved enrollments), the PPEF contain basic provider enrollment information; reassignment of benefit information, if applicable; practice location city, state, and zip code, if applicable; secondary specialty information, if applicable. This information is stored in four separate relational data files. This is due to the one to many relationships between enrollment application information and reassignment of benefits information, practice location information, and secondary specialty information. A brief description of each file's contents is given below, and Section 3 describes common data operations associated with these files.

ENROLLMENT – This file contains a unique listing of all provider enrollment applications that have been approved to bill or order and refer in Medicare. The enrollment ID (**ENRLMT_ID**) is the unique number assigned by PECOS to identify provider enrollment applications. This **ENRLMT_ID** field is used to link between the four data files included in the PPEF. This file contains the National Provider Identifier (NPI) associated with the enrollment and the PECOS-assigned identifier, PECOS Associate Control ID or PAC ID, which is used to identify enrolling providers. This file also includes the type of provider and name.

REASSIGNMENT – This file contains a unique listing of enrollment ID pairs of individual providers reassigning their benefits and providers receiving the reassignment of benefits. The practitioner enrollment ID that is reassigning benefits is given in the **REASGN_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID** field. The enrollment ID of the entity receiving the reassignment of benefits is given in the **RCV_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID** field. This file can be linked to the **ENROLLMENT** file using either of these enrollment ID fields.

PRACTICE_LOCATION – This file contains a unique listing of practice location city, state, and zip code for each enrollment. This file can be linked to the **ENROLLMENT** file using the **ENRLMT_ID** field.

SECONDARY_SPECIALTY – This file contains a unique listing of enrollment ID and secondary specialty pairs for practitioner and DME supplier enrollments. This file can be linked to the **ENROLLMENT** file using the ENRLMT_ID field.

3 COMMON DATA OPERATIONS

This section outlines how to use the PPEF to perform common data operations. The data operations described below are meant to be illustrative of how to use and link the files described in Section 2. Section 3.1 explains how to identify all enrollments for a provider based on PECOS Associate Control ID (PAC ID). Section 3.2 provides instructions for identifying an enrollment's provider type and specialty using the `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` and `PROVIDER_TYPE_DESC` fields. Section 3.3 explains how to use the **REASSIGNMENT** file to identify all providers to which an individual practitioner reassigns their benefits. Section 3.4 describes a similar operation, identifying all individual practitioners reassigning benefits to a provider. Section 3.5 provides details on determining practice location information by joining the **ENROLLMENT** file to the **PRACTICE_LOCATION** file. Finally, Section 3.6 explains the process for determining the practice locations for individuals reassigning benefits, leveraging the files produced in Sections 3.3 and 3.5.

3.1 IDENTIFYING ALL ENROLLMENTS FOR A PROVIDER

The PECOS Associate Control ID or PAC ID (`PECOS_ASCT_CNTL_ID`) is used to identify an enrolling provider. For most enrollment scenarios, the PAC ID maps closely to an SSN for individual providers and an EIN for organizational providers. A provider may enroll multiple times, under different enrollment scenarios. One common example is when a provider enrolls in multiple states to bill to Medicare in multiple states. For each enrollment, an enrollment ID (`ENRLMT_ID`) is issued and associated with the PAC ID of the enrolling provider. Therefore, one PAC ID may be associated with one or more enrollment ID. All enrollments in the **ENROLLMENT** file that share a PAC ID are associated with the same provider.

3.2 IDENTIFYING ENROLLMENT PROVIDER TYPE AND SPECIALTY

The `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` and `PROVIDER_TYPE_DESC` fields contain information on the type and specialty of each provider. The `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` field is structured such that the first two digits encode the type of enrollment submitted when the provider enrolled and the last two digits encode the enrollment specialty (the code pairs are separated by a hyphen).

The enrollment type (first two digits of the `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` field) can take on one of six values:

- '00' – PART A PROVIDER
- '12' – PART B SUPPLIER
- '14' – PRACTITIONER
- '30' – DME SUPPLIER
- '33' – ORDER AND REFERRING ONLY
- '53' – MDPP SUPPLIER

The specialty code (last two digits of the `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` field) takes on values specific to the enrollment type. See the data dictionary for the full list of specialty codes and descriptions.

Each enrollment is associated with only one enrollment type. However, depending on the enrollment type, each enrollment may have an unlimited number of specialties. Therefore, an enrollment may be associated with multiple `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` values. The primary `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` is found in the **ENROLLMENT** file. For practitioners and DME suppliers, all other, secondary `PROVIDER_TYPE_CD` values can be found by linking to the **SECONDARY_SPECIALTY** file by `ENRLMT_ID`.

3.3 IDENTIFYING REASSIGNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Individual practitioners can allow other entities to bill Medicare on their behalf. This arrangement, referred to as reassignment of benefits, is stored in PECOS and can be found in the PPEF. To identify the entities that an individual reassigns their benefits to, the **REASSIGNMENT** file is used. The practitioner enrollment ID that is reassigning benefits is given in the `REASGN_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID` field. The enrollment ID of the entity receiving the reassignment of benefits is given in the `RCV_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID` field. To get the NPI, PAC ID, and name for each provider involved in the reassignment relationship, this file can be linked to the **ENROLLMENT** file first by matching `REASGN_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID` or `RCV_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID` to `ENRLMT_ID`.

3.4 DETERMINING PRACTICE LOCATION INFORMATION

Practice location information is obtained by joining the **ENROLLMENT** file, which is unique by enrollment ID (`ENRLMT_ID`), to the **PRACTICE_LOCATION** file, which is unique by enrollment ID and practice location, together by `ENRLMT_ID`. There are a couple of important things to note after performing this linkage:

- The resulting file may contain duplicate information for a PAC ID. This is a consequence of practice location information being stored at the enrollment ID level in PECOS. The resulting file can be aggregated to the entity level by removing duplicate `CITY_NAME`, `STATE_CD`, and `ZIP_CD` observations by PAC ID.
- Not all individual enrollments (i.e., first character of enrollment ID is an 'I') will have practice locations. This is a consequence of a number of enrollment scenarios that do not require practice locations (e.g., the individual provider enrolls as order and referring only).

3.5 DETERMINING REASSIGNMENT PRACTICE LOCATION INFORMATION

To determine the practice locations for individuals reassigning benefits, the resulting files from Section 3.3 and Section 3.4 are combined. That is, the reassignments of NPIs of interest are first determined using the logic in Section 3.3. Then, the enrollment IDs that are found in the `RCV_BNFT_ENRLMT_ID` field are linked to the `ENRLMT_ID` field in the **PRACTICE_LOCATION** file to obtain the practice location information for individual practitioners reassigning benefits or providers receiving reassigned benefits.

4 DATA LIMITATIONS

Although the PPEF marks an unprecedented release of provider enrollment data, the extract has a few limitations that are worth noting. These data limitations are detailed below.

4.1 MULTIPLE NPIS PER ENROLLMENT

Organizational providers often have valid enrollment scenarios that would necessitate multiple NPIs per enrollment. For ease of use and to keep the **ENROLLMENT** file unique by enrollment ID, the **ENROLLMENT** file lists just a single NPI per enrollment. CP 575 NPIs are prioritized when available.

4.2 NO HISTORICAL ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

The provider enrollment data included in the PPEF does not contain historical enrollment information. While PECOS contains a complete history of provider enrollment data, the PPEF data files are restricted to data considered to be current.

4.3 ADDITIONAL ENROLLMENT RESTRICTIONS

In addition to restricting the PPEF to all provider enrollments that are currently approved to bill or order and refer only in Medicare, the files omit a small number of enrollments known to have PECOS data quality issues. Data quality issues include, but are not limited to:

- Missing a primary enrollment specialty
- Missing both an organizational name and an individual name
- Missing an NPI or does not contain a valid NPI
- Organizational enrollments without an address in the practice location file
- Individual enrollments without an address in the practice location file and without a reassignment of benefits

APPENDIX A – REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Date	Name	Description of Modification
7	2022-09-30	CPI-PEOG	Updates to methodology.
6	2020-07-17	CPI-PEOG	Removal of Appendix A containing terms and codes used to decipher data. This information will be imported into a separate data dictionary document.
5	2018-05-01	CPI-PEOG	Addition of MDPP Suppliers.
4	2016-07-21	CPI-PEOG	Creation of Secondary Specialty file.
3	2016-07-21	CPI-PEOG	Updates to data dictionary.
2	2016-01-05	CPI-PEOG	Addition of PROVIDER_TYPE_CD/DESC fields and updated text.
1	2015-12-15	CPI-PEOG	Baseline document.