

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN FORMULARY AND PHARMACY NETWORK PUBLIC USE FILE METHODOLOGY

This monthly Public Use File (PUF) is comprised of 8 separate files. Each file is flat (ASCII) with pipe (|) delimiters and a header record that contains the field name. Sample files are included for the larger files so that users can examine the fields before processing.

The PUF is built from data included in the first new posting for a given month on the Medicare Plan Finder (MPF) tool available at <https://www.medicare.gov/>¹. Pharmacy network and drug pricing data are updated on the MPF tool every two weeks, thus the data in this PUF may not match exactly what currently appears on the MPF tool. Each PUF has a naming convention of YYYY_YYYYMMDD.zip. The first four digits of the zip file's name corresponds to the contract year (CY) of the data included in the PUF. The final eight digits correspond to the date posted to the CMS website.

Three types of Part D plans appear in the PUF. "Local Medicare Advantage" plans are identified by a CONTRACT_ID that begins with the letter H. "Regional Medicare Advantage" plans are identified by a CONTRACT_ID that begins with the letter R. Stand-alone "Prescription Drug Plans" are identified by a CONTRACT_ID that begins with the letter S. Each plan is uniquely identified by the combination of CONTRACT_ID, PLAN_ID, and SEGMENT_ID (note that SEGMENT_ID is always zero for R and S contracts). The following Plans are not included in this Public Use File:

- Non-Part D Plans
- National PACE Plans
- Employer Sponsored Plans
- Demonstration Plans

Plans whose drug pricing, pharmacy network, and/or formulary data has been suppressed in MPF during the PUF reporting period appear in the Plan Information file with the PLAN_SUPPRESSED_YN field set to "Y". They do not appear in any other files.

As noted in the June 23, 2026 HPMS memo titled "Extended Part D Pricing Data Submission Calendar", beginning in CY 2026, the MPF drug pricing data submission cycle will be extended through December, instead of concluding in September for the current CY. Starting in CY 2027, there will be concurrent PUFs produced for the current CY and the upcoming CY between October and December. The PUFs will be distinguished by the first component in the zip file title indicating the CY. For example:

2028_20271015.zip would be the file name for a CY 2028 file posted on October 15, 2027.

2027_20271015.zip would be the file name for a CY 2027 file posted on October 15, 2027.

The PUF contains the following files:

1. Plan Information File - Includes information for each plan (name, contract ID, plan ID, service area, etc.).
2. Geographic Locator File - Includes the Medicare Advantage (MA) and Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) Region codes and county codes.

¹ Refer to the MPF posting schedule in the Pricing Data Guidelines and Calendar:

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/coverage/prescription-drug-coverage/formulary-guidance>

3. Basic Drugs Formulary File - Includes formulary details for each plan including National Drug Codes (NDCs), tier level, and indicators for step therapy, quantity limits, prior authorization, and a selected drug flag.
4. Excluded Drugs Formulary File - Enhanced alternative plans may elect to provide a supplemental benefit and cover excluded drugs. File includes formulary details for excluded drugs that are covered by the plan (for enhanced alternative plans only).
5. Beneficiary Cost File - Plan level cost sharing details for preferred and standard retail and mail-order network pharmacies.
6. Pharmacy Network File - National Provider Identifier (NPI) numbers for each retail and mail-order network pharmacy including preferred, retail, and mail-order indicators, and brand, generic, and selected drug dispensing fees for 30/60/90 days supply, respectively.
7. Indication Based Coverage Formulary File - Includes drugs covered based on FDA-approved indication for each plan.
8. Insulin Beneficiary Cost File - Plan level copay and coinsurance amounts for insulin at preferred and standard retail and mail-order network pharmacies.

Please refer to the Record Layout for file layouts and field values.