

COA Report

For COA Members!

Orthopaedic Alerts

California Orthopaedic Association

TO: COA Members

Medicare News

File for Meaningful Use Hardship Exemption

Deadline: **March 15, 2016**

Because the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized their regulations for Stage 2 Meaningful Use on October 16, 2015 – less than 90 days from the end of 2015 – it is possible for physicians to file for a Meaningful Use Hardship Exemption if they are unable to comply with the Stage 2 requirements for 2015. **The CMS EHR help desk advised that even if you did not qualify for Stage 1 of Meaningful Use, you can still apply for the 2015 exemption.**

S 2425 – the Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act was passed and was signed into law granting CMS the authority to grant hardship exemptions to physicians, hospitals and other affected providers for 2015 who are unable to comply due to the lateness of when CMS finalized the regulation.

CMS can only grant the exemption on a case-by-case basis, so physicians have to apply for the exemption.

CMS instructions and application for the hardship exemption for single and multiple eligible providers:

https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/EHRIncentivePrograms/paymentadj_hardship.html

Go to section 2.2 Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances and check 2.2d EHR Certification/Vendor Issues. If you read this exemption carefully, you will see the exemption based on “issues related to insufficient time to make changes to the CEHRT to meet CMS regulatory requirements for reporting in 2015.”

CMS initially set the deadline to apply for a hardship exemption at February 29, 2016. Congress later extended the deadline to **March 15, 2016**. CMS is still in the process of updating their instructions and application forms.

Filing for an exemption, does not preclude physicians from receiving an incentive payment if they end up meeting the meaningful use requirements for 2015. But applying for an exemption can serve as a safety net and possibly help to avoid a penalty in 2017, should you not be able to comply.

California Orthopaedic Association

"Keeping you Active"

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2016 Annual Meeting/QME Course

/C-Bones Annual Meeting

May 19-22, 2016

The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel – Dana Point, CA
AnnualMeeting.coa.org



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