

# CMS Announces Relief for Participants in Quality Reporting Programs in Response to COVID-19

March 23, 2020 – Dorsey Health Law

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On March 22, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced in a [press release](#) that it is granting exceptions from reporting requirements and extensions for upcoming data submission and measure reporting deadlines for Medicare quality reporting programs. The exceptions and extensions are intended to reduce data collection and reporting burdens for entities that are responding to COVID-19 so that they can continue to focus on caring for patients. CMS states that this is “unprecedented relief for the clinicians, providers, and facilities participating in Medicare quality reporting programs including the 1.2 million clinicians in the Quality Payment Program and on the front lines of America’s fight against the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).”

The CMS programs impacted by this “extreme and uncontrollable circumstances” policy exceptions and extensions include, among others, the Quality Payment Program–Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), and various hospital quality reporting programs (e.g., Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program). CMS provided a table in the press release indicating how both 2019 and 2020 data submissions are impacted.

For programs that have data submission deadlines in April and May 2020, this submission will be optional. In addition, *no data reflecting services provided from January 1 through June 30, 2020 will be used in CMS’s calculations for value-based purchasing programs and Medicare quality reporting*. CMS stated as follows: “CMS recognizes that quality measure data collection and reporting for services furnished during this time period may not be reflective of their true level of performance on measures such as cost, readmissions and patient experience during this time of emergency and seeks to hold organizations harmless for not submitting data during this



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period.”

For other Dorsey publications on Medicare’s Quality Payment Program, see [here](#) and [here](#).