



NATIONAL BOARD FOR
CERTIFIED COUNSELORS[®]
AND AFFILIATES



Medicare Mental Health
Workforce Coalition

Urgent Medicare Provider Information for Counselors

Whether You're Interested in Becoming a Medicare Part B Provider or Not, You Must Opt In or Out!



Eligibility for mental health counselors (MHCs) and marriage and family therapists (MFTs) to have their services covered under Part B of the Medicare program took effect Jan. 1, 2024, and it is **now mandatory for counselors to opt in or out of this status**. If you choose not to accept Medicare reimbursement for your services, **you can be fined for working with Medicare recipients** if you have not submitted the required documentation to opt out of Medicare provider status.

The information below will help you navigate the process to ensure that you are fulfilling this legal requirement.

For counselors who decide to **OPT IN** as Medicare Part B providers:

You may opt in by enrolling as a **Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) provider** through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) online application system (PECOS). After enrolling as an FFS provider, you may also enroll as a Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C) provider through the private insurance plan(s) with which you choose to contract. CMS has compiled a list of Medicare Advantage [plans](#) and their contact information to simplify this process.

If you have questions or difficulty enrolling, the Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) for your region can help. You'll find a list of all 12 MACs, their regions, and contact information [here](#).

For counselors who decide to **OPT OUT** as Medicare Part B providers:

The Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) for each region is now accepting affidavits from counselors who choose to opt out as providers, and each MAC has a form specific to their region. **Forms must be sent to your region's MAC via U.S. certified mail and cannot be faxed or emailed**. You'll find a list of all 12 MACs, their regions, and contact information [here](#).

It is important to understand that if you are currently working with Medicare beneficiaries and you choose to opt out as a Part B provider, **you are required to enter into a private contract with your Medicare-eligible clients**.

We encourage you to take this important action today to ensure that you are providing your services in accordance with this requirement. For more information about Medicare, visit [NBCC's website](#), where you'll find fact sheets, FAQs, and our webinar series.