

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



DATE: September 18, 2020

TO: All Medicare Advantage, Prescription Drug Plan, Cost, PACE, and Demonstration Organizations Systems Staff

FROM: Jennifer R. Shapiro, Director, Medicare Plan Payment Group
Center for Medicare

Cathy Carter, Director, Enterprise Systems Solutions Group
Office of Information Technology

SUBJECT: Announcement of the October 2020 Software Release

This letter provides information regarding the planned release of systems changes scheduled for October 2020. The update described in this communication will be included in the upcoming Plan Communications User Guide scheduled for the end of October 2020.

As CMS continues to improve its procedures concerning software enhancements, and the communication thereof, CMS software release procedures will no longer utilize a quarterly scheduled (February, May, August, and November) timeframe and has moved to an agile methodology, which allows faster implementation. Because of this improvement, CMS will implement Medicare Advantage/Prescription Drug (MARx) and other system enhancements more frequently. Also, plans will no longer receive an advance notice letter for upcoming payment/premium releases; instead there will only be one detailed letter prior to the implementation of the release, giving plans time to adjust or update their systems.

The October 2020 software release will include the following:

- **Monthly Full Enrollment Data File to Include Race Code from SSA**

Plans are encouraged to contact the MAPD Help Desk for any issues encountered during the systems update process. Please direct any questions or concerns to the MAPD Help Desk at 1-800-927-8069 or e-mail at mapdhelp@cms.hhs.gov.

Monthly Full Enrollment Data File to Include Race Code from SSA

In May 2019, CMS began working to streamline payment data, while ensuring that it is comprehensive and organized. As a result, CMS removed the race code data from the Monthly Membership Report (MMR) because the code is not related to calculating a Part C or Part D monthly beneficiary level payment. In response to requests from MAOs, beginning November 2020, CMS will send the monthly Full Enrollment Data File (FEF) file layout so that it includes the beneficiary race code data received from the Social Security Administration (SSA).

One of the following values will be displayed in Field 21:

Field	Size	Position	Description
21. Race Code	1	75	0 = Unknown 1 = White 2 = Black 3 = Other 4 = Asian 5 = Hispanic 6 = North American Native Blank= spaces