

Provider Relief Funding – What you Need to Know

Last Updated 10/07/21

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has announced the availability of \$25.5 billion in new funding for health care providers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Providers who serve rural Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or Medicare patients will receive \$8.5 billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) resources, and an additional \$17 billion will be allocated from the Provider Relief Fund (PRF).
- PRF Phase 4 allocations will be based on lost revenues and expenditures associated with the pandemic between July 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 and will reimburse smaller providers operating on lower margins and working with underserved populations at a higher rate compared to other providers. Phase 4 will also include bonus payments for those serving Medicaid, CHIP, and/or Medicare patients. A single application will be used to apply for both programs; the application portal will open on September 29, 2021.
- The deadline to submit completed applications is Oct. 26, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Both funding opportunities are available through a single application portal. Eligible providers can be considered for payments from both programs simultaneously. Payments from both programs can be used by recipients to cover lost revenues or eligible expenses dating back to Jan. 1, 2020.

Key information from HRSA on the grace period:

- HHS will provide a final 60-day grace period for providers to complete the first period reporting requirements, which, before the grace period, was September 30, 2021. During the grace period, HHS will not initiate collection activities or similar enforcement actions for noncompliant providers.
- **Important Details from HHS:**
 - While you will be out of compliance if you do not submit your report by September 30, 2021, recoupment or other enforcement actions will not be initiated during the 60-day grace period (October 1 – November 30, 2021).
 - The grace period begins on October 1, 2021 and will end on November 30, 2021.
 - Providers who are able are strongly encouraged to complete their report in the PRF Reporting Portal by September 30, 2021.
 - Providers should return unused funds as soon as possible after submitting their report. All unused funds must be returned no later than 30 days after the end of the grace period (December 30, 2021)

Helpful Resources

- Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) announced a series of educational webinars in response to the new PRF funding and ARP Rural applicants, which will feature guidance on eligibility and the application process
 - Webinars will be on October 13 and October 21 at 3pm ET – for more information or to register, visit <https://www.hrsa.gov/provider-relief/future-payments>.
- Learn more about the agency at www.HRSA.gov
- PRF landing page: <https://www.hrsa.gov/provider-relief>
- Phase 4 and ARP rural info: <https://www.hrsa.gov/provider-relief/future-payments>
- Phase 4 and ARP rural application instructions: <https://www.hrsa.gov/provider-relief/futurepayments/phase-4-arp-rural>
- FAQs: <https://www.hrsa.gov/provider-relief/faq/general-distribution>
- Application and attestation portal: <https://cares.linkhealth.com/#/>
- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Definition of Rural: <https://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about-us/definition/index.html>

Please note that the information provided in this document is to be used as a guide only. The CSRO encourages practices to reach out directly to HHS and HRSA with your questions.