

CMS EPCS Program Declared Disaster Exception Fact Sheet 2024 Measurement Year Declared Disasters

UPDATED: March 25, 2025

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Electronic Prescribing for Controlled Substances (EPCS) Program gives prescribers who must be compliant with its EPCS Program automatic exceptions in certain situations when they experience circumstances beyond their control that keep them from being compliant with the program's annual requirement. Automatic exceptions reduce prescriber burden by eliminating their need to submit a waiver application for a measurement year. CMS gives the automatic declared disaster exception to prescribers affected by natural disasters and public health emergencies in the measurement year. This fact sheet addresses the automatic declared disaster exception for measurement year 2024.

CMS updates this fact sheet when identifying additional events that trigger the declared disaster exception and making changes to already identified events.

Declared Disaster Exception

CMS automatically provides the declared disaster exception for the entire measurement year to prescribers in the geographic area of a disaster or an emergency as determined by CMS. CMS posts a list of the disasters and emergencies that qualify for the automatic exception for each measurement year on the [CMS EPCS Program webpage](#). This may include a [major disaster](#) designated by the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) or a [public health emergency](#) identified by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For eligible prescribers, CMS aims to reduce burden by eliminating the need to submit a waiver application and by granting an automatic exception for the entire measurement year.

CMS then identifies which CMS EPCS Program-eligible prescribers in CMS-designated areas were affected by a disaster or emergency, based on the prescriber's practice and mailing addresses in the Medicare Provider Enrollment, Chain, and Ownership System (PECOS) and in the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). Prescribers who are automatically identified will be granted an exception for the entire measurement year.

CMS makes every effort to accurately identify all prescribers who are eligible for this exception.

Prescribers should ensure that their practice and mailing addresses listed in PECOS and NPPES are up to date to ensure the declared disaster exception is applied correctly.

At the time of publication, CMS is granting the automatic declared disaster exception to prescribers in the following designated areas:

- The designated counties in Texas for Hurricane Beryl
 - [Texas: DR-4798-TX](#)
- The designated counties in Florida for Hurricane Debby (Counties updated October 15, 2024)
 - [Florida: DR-4806-FL](#)
- The designated parishes in Louisiana for Hurricane Francine (Parishes updated November 4, 2024)
 - [Louisiana: DR-4817-LA](#)
- The designated counties in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee for Hurricane or Tropical Storm Helene (Counties updated November 4, 2024)
 - [Florida: DR-4828-FL](#)
 - [Georgia: DR-4830-GA](#)
 - [North Carolina: DR-4827-NC](#)
 - [South Carolina: DR-4829-SC](#)
 - [Tennessee: DR-4832-TN](#) (Counties updated November 4, 2024)
- The designated counties in Florida for Hurricane Milton (Counties updated November 4, 2024)
 - [Florida: DR-4834-FL](#)

FAQ

Q. How do I find out which areas CMS has designated as being affected by a disaster or an emergency?

A. CMS communicates information about disasters and emergencies that trigger the automatic declared disaster exception through the CMS EPCS Program Listserv. You can stay informed by [subscribing to the Listserv](#).

In addition, CMS updates this fact sheet when it identifies additional events that trigger the declared disaster exception or to make changes to already identified events. You can find more information about designated disaster areas in this fact sheet and on [FEMA's disaster declarations webpage](#). [Appendix A](#) lists the counties and parishes in CMS-designated areas that have been affected by a disaster or an emergency in measurement year 2024.

Q. How can I confirm that I received the declared disaster exception?

A. Starting in September 2025, you can check your measurement year 2024 compliance status, including any automatic exceptions, on the [CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal](#).

Q. What happens if CMS grants me the declared disaster exception?

A. If CMS grants you the declared disaster exception, you're considered compliant with the CMS EPCS Program requirement for the measurement year, regardless of whether you met the program's EPCS compliance threshold.

Q. What should I do if I'm eligible for the declared disaster exception, but CMS didn't automatically grant me the exception?

A. If you believe that you qualify for the automatic declared disaster exception, but the exception isn't reflected in your compliance status on the [CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal](#), CMS recommends that you submit a waiver application for circumstances beyond your control through the EPCS Prescriber Portal.

The waiver application submission period is open for 60 days on the EPCS Prescriber Portal. For the 2024 measurement year, users may submit a waiver application for a prescriber from mid-September to mid-November 2025. Note that if users can't submit a waiver application online, CMS can help them submit one over the phone.

The CMS EPCS Program waiver is specific to the Federal EPCS program. Check to see whether your State has additional EPCS requirements, including any waiver requirements.

Q. What should I do if I was impacted by a disaster that CMS didn't identify for its automatic declared disaster exception?

A. If you were unable to meet the CMS EPCS Program's requirement due to a disaster outside of those identified for the CMS EPCS Program, CMS recommends that the prescriber request a waiver for circumstances beyond the prescriber's control on the CMS EPCS Prescriber Portal.

CMS EPCS Program Support

CMS EPCS Program Webpage

The [CMS EPCS Program webpage](#) is the centralized location for program resources and updates.

CMS EPCS Program Listserv

To stay up to date on program information and updates, subscribe to the [CMS EPCS Program Listserv](#).

CCSQ Support Central

If you have any additional questions on the CMS EPCS Program, [email](#) or submit an [online ticket](#) to the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality (CCSQ) Support Central, and experts will assist you. You may also call CCSQ Support Central at 1-866-288-8292, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET. For those who are hearing impaired and for deaf individuals, call 711 for telecommunications relay services.

Version History Table

If CMS needs to update this document, changes should be noted here.

Date	Change Description
March 25, 2025	Original posting

Appendix A

The tables in this appendix list the counties/areas located in a CMS-designated region affected by a disaster during the 2024 CMS EPCS Program measurement year. This information is current as of the most-recent date in the version history table and might not reflect changes that have already been identified on [FEMA's disaster declarations webpage](#).

Texas Hurricane Beryl – Texas Counties		
The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Texas:		
FEMA Category: Public Assistance A (PA-A)		
Anderson	Hardin	Orange
Angelina	Harris	Panola
Aransas	Harrison	Polk
Austin	Hidalgo	Refugio
Bowie	Houston	Robertson
Brazoria	Jackson	Rusk
Brazos	Jasper	Sabine
Burleson	Jefferson	San Augustine
Calhoun	Kenedy	San Jacinto
Cameron	Kleberg	San Patricio
Camp	Lavaca	Shelby
Cass	Lee	Trinity
Chambers	Leon	Tyler
Cherokee	Liberty	Upshur
Colorado	Madison	Victoria
DeWitt	Marion	Walker
Fayette	Matagorda	Waller
Fort Bend	Milam	Washington
Freestone	Montgomery	Webb
Galveston	Morris	Wharton
Goliad	Nacogdoches	Willacy
Gregg	Newton	
Grimes	Nueces	

Texas Hurricane Beryl – Texas Counties – DR-4798-TX

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Texas:

FEMA Category: Public Assistance B (PA-B)

Anderson	Hardin	Orange
Angelina	Harris	Panola
Aransas	Harrison	Polk
Austin	Hidalgo	Refugio
Bowie	Houston	Robertson
Brazoria	Jackson	Rusk
Brazos	Jasper	Sabine
Burleson	Jefferson	San Augustine
Calhoun	Kenedy	San Jacinto
Cameron	Kleberg	San Patricio
Camp	Lavaca	Shelby
Cass	Lee	Trinity
Chambers	Leon	Tyler
Cherokee	Liberty	Upshur
Colorado	Madison	Victoria
DeWitt	Marion	Walker
Fayette	Matagorda	Waller
Fort Bend	Milam	Washington
Freestone	Montgomery	Webb
Galveston	Morris	Wharton
Goliad	Nacogdoches	Willacy
Gregg	Newton	
Grimes	Nueces	

Florida Hurricane Debby – Florida Counties – DR-4806-FL

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Florida:

PA-A

Alachua	Gilchrist	Pinellas
Baker	Hamilton	Sarasota
Bradford	Jefferson	St. Johns
Charlotte	Lafayette	Sumter
Clay	Leon	Suwannee
Columbia	Levy	Taylor
Dixie	Madison	Union
Duval	Manatee	Wakulla
Franklin	Nassau	

Florida Hurricane Debby – Florida Counties – DR-4806-FL

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Florida:

PA-B

Alachua	Hamilton	Okeechobee
Baker	Hardee	Orange
Bay	Hendry	Osceola
Bradford	Hernando	Pasco
Brevard	Highlands	Pinellas
Calhoun	Hillsborough	Polk
Charlotte	Holmes	Putnam
Citrus	Jackson	Santa Rosa
Clay	Jefferson	Sarasota
Collier	Lafayette	Seminole
Columbia	Lake	St. Johns
DeSoto	Lee	Sumter
Dixie	Leon	Suwannee
Duval	Levy	Taylor
Escambia	Liberty	Union
Flagler	Madison	Volusia
Franklin	Manatee	Wakulla
Gadsden	Marion	Walton
Gilchrist	Monroe	Washington
Glades	Nassau	
Gulf	Okaloosa	

Louisiana Hurricane Francine – Louisiana Parishes DR-4817-LA

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following parishes in Louisiana:

PA-A

Ascension	Orleans	St. Martin
Assumption	Plaquemines	St. Mary
East Baton Rouge	St. Bernard	St. Tammany
East Feliciana	St. Charles	Tangipahoa
Iberville	St. Helena	Terrebonne
Jefferson	St. James	Washington
Lafourche	St. John the Baptist	West Feliciana
Livingston		

PA-B

Ascension	Orleans	St. Martin
Assumption	Plaquemines	St. Mary
East Baton Rouge	St. Bernard	St. Tammany
East Feliciana	St. Charles	Tangipahoa
Iberville	St. Helena	Terrebonne
Jefferson	St. James	Washington
Lafourche	St. John the Baptist	West Feliciana
Livingston		

Florida Hurricane Helene – Florida Counties – DR-4828-FL

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Florida:

PA-A

Alachua	Gulf	Manatee
Baker	Hamilton	Marion
Bradford	Hernando	Nassau
Charlotte	Hillsborough	Pasco
Citrus	Jefferson	Pinellas
Collier	Lafayette	Putnam
Columbia	Lee	Sarasota
Dixie	Leon	Sumter
Duval	Levy	Suwannee
Franklin	Liberty	Taylor
Gadsden	Madison	Union
Gilchrist		Wakulla

PA-B

Alachua	Gulf	Monroe
Baker	Hamilton	Nassau
Bay	Hernando	Okaloosa
Bradford	Hillsborough	Pasco
Calhoun	Holmes	Pinellas
Charlotte	Jackson	Putnam
Citrus	Jefferson	Santa Rosa
Collier	Lafayette	Sarasota
Columbia	Lee	Sumter
Dixie	Leon	Suwannee
Duval	Levy	Taylor
Escambia	Liberty	Union
Franklin	Madison	Wakulla
Gadsden	Manatee	Walton
Gilchrist	Marion	Washington

Georgia Hurricane Helene – Georgia Counties – DR-4830-GA

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Georgia:

PA-A

Appling	Evans	Montgomery
Atkinson	Franklin	Oglethorpe
Bacon	Gilmer	Pierce
Banks	Glascocock	Pike
Ben Hill	Glynn	Pulaski
Berrien	Grady	Putnam
Bleckley	Greene	Rabun
Brantley	Habersham	Richmond
Brooks	Hancock	Screven
Bryan	Hart	Stephens
Bulloch	Irwin	Taliaferro
Burke	Jackson	Tattnall
Butts	Jasper	Telfair
Camden	Jeff Davis	Thomas
Candler	Jefferson	Tift
Charlton	Jenkins	Toombs
Chatham	Johnson	Treutlen
Clinch	Lamar	Turner
Coffee	Lanier	Twiggs
Colquitt	Laurens	Ware
Columbia	Liberty	Warren
Cook	Lincoln	Washington
Dawson	Long	Wayne
Decatur	Lowndes	Wheeler
Dodge	Lumpkin	White
Dooley	McDuffie	Wilcox
Echols	McIntosh	Wilkes
Effingham	Mitchell	Wilkinson
Elbert	Monroe	Worth
Emanuel		

Georgia Hurricane Helene – Georgia Counties – DR-4830-GA

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Georgia:

PA-B

Appling	Evans	Montgomery
Atkinson	Franklin	Oglethorpe
Bacon	Gilmer	Pierce
Banks	Glascok	Pike
Ben Hill	Glynn	Pulaski
Berrien	Grady	Putnam
Bleckley	Greene	Rabun
Brantley	Habersham	Richmond
Brooks	Hancock	Screven
Bryan	Hart	Stephens
Bulloch	Irwin	Taliaferro
Burke	Jackson	Tattnall
Butts	Jasper	Telfair
Camden	Jeff Davis	Thomas
Candler	Jefferson	Tift
Charlton	Jenkins	Toombs
Chatham	Johnson	Treutlen
Clinch	Lamar	Turner
Coffee	Lanier	Twiggs
Colquitt	Laurens	Ware
Columbia	Liberty	Warren
Cook	Lincoln	Washington
Dawson	Long	Wayne
Decatur	Lowndes	Wheeler
Dodge	Lumpkin	White
Dooly	Madison	Wilcox
Echols	McDuffie	Wilkes
Effingham	McIntosh	Wilkinson
Elbert	Mitchell	Worth
Emanuel	Monroe	

North Carolina Tropical Storm Helene – North Carolina Counties – DR-4827-NC

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in North Carolina:

PA-A

Alexander	Forsyth	Nash
Alleghany	Gaston	Polk
Ashe	Graham	Rowan
Avery	Haywood	Rutherford
Buncombe	Henderson	Stanly
Burke	Iredell	Surry
Cabarrus	Jackson	Swain
Caldwell	Lee	Transylvania
Catawba	Lincoln	Union
Cherokee	Macon	Watauga
Clay	Madison	Wilkes
Cleveland	McDowell	Yadkin
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Mecklenburg	Yancey
	Mitchell	

PA-B

Alexander	Forsyth	Nash
Alleghany	Gaston	Polk
Ashe	Graham	Rowan
Avery	Haywood	Rutherford
Buncombe	Henderson	Stanly
Burke	Iredell	Surry
Cabarrus	Jackson	Swain
Caldwell	Lee	Transylvania
Catawba	Lincoln	Union
Cherokee	Macon	Watauga
Clay	Madison	Wilkes
Cleveland	McDowell	Yadkin
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Mecklenburg	Yancey
	Mitchell	

South Carolina Hurricane Helene – South Carolina Counties – DR-4829-SC

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in South Carolina:

PA-A

Abbeville	Edgefield	Newberry
Aiken	Fairfield	Oconee
Allendale	Greenville	Orangeburg
Anderson	Greenwood	Pickens
Bamberg	Hampton	Richland
Barnwell	Jasper	Saluda
Beaufort	Kershaw	Spartanburg
Berkeley	Lancaster	Union
Calhoun	Laurens	Williamsburg
Catawba Reservation	Lexington	York
Cherokee	McCormick	
Chester		
Colleton		

PA-B

Abbeville	Edgefield	Newberry
Aiken	Fairfield	Oconee
Allendale	Greenville	Orangeburg
Anderson	Greenwood	Pickens
Bamberg	Hampton	Richland
Barnwell	Jasper	Saluda
Beaufort	Kershaw	Spartanburg
Berkeley	Lancaster	Union
Calhoun	Laurens	Williamsburg
Catawba Reservation	Lexington	York
Cherokee	McCormick	
Chester		
Colleton		

Tennessee Tropical Storm Helene – Tennessee Counties – DR-4832-TN

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Tennessee:

PA-A

Carter	Hamblen	Sullivan
Claiborne	Hawkins	Unicoi
Cocke	Jefferson	Washington
Grainger	Johnson	
Greene	Sevier	

PA-B

Carter	Hamblen	Sullivan
Claiborne	Hawkins	Unicoi
Cocke	Jefferson	Washington
Grainger	Johnson	
Greene	Sevier	

Florida Hurricane Milton – Florida Counties – DR-4834-FL

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in Florida:

PA-A

Brevard	Highlands	Osceola
Charlotte	Hillsborough	Palm Beach
Citrus	Indian River	Pasco
Clay	Lake	Pinellas
Collier	Lee	Polk
DeSoto	Manatee	Putnam
Duval	Marion	Sarasota
Flagler	Martin	Seminole
Glades	Miccosukee Indian Reservation	St. Johns
Hardee	Nassau	St. Lucie
Hendry	Okeechobee	Sumter
Hernando	Orange	Volusia

PA-B

Alachua	Hendry	Okeechobee
Baker	Hernando	Orange
Bradford	Highlands	Osceola
Brevard	Hillsborough	Palm Beach
Broward	Indian River	Pasco
Charlotte	Lafayette	Pinellas
Citrus	Lake	Polk
Clay	Lee	Putnam
Collier	Levy	Sarasota
Columbia	Madison	Seminole
DeSoto	Manatee	St. Johns
Dixie	Marion	St. Lucie
Duval	Martin	Sumter
Flagler	Miami-Dade	Suwannee
Gilchrist	Miccosukee Indian Reservation	Taylor
Glades	Monroe	Union
Hamilton	Nassau	Volusia
Hardee		

California Wildfires – California Counties – DR-4856-CA

The CMS EPCS Program declared disaster exception applies to the following counties in California:

PA-A

Los Angeles

PA-B

Los Angeles