

Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Hardship Exception Application Guide

2022 Final Document versus 2023 Final Document

Burden impact: The changes in this guide don't reflect policies in the CY 2024 Physician Fee Scheduled (PFS) final rule for the Quality Payment Program. There is no impact to burden as a result of the changes reflected in this crosswalk.

Change #1:

Location:

2022 – Page 1

2023 – Page 1

Reason for Change:

Alignment with current program year

2022 Final Document text:

Title: 2022 Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Guide

2023 Final Document text:

Title: 2023 Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Guide

Change #2:

Location:

2022 – Page 2

2023 – Page 2

Reason for Change:

Streamlined section names in table of contents.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Table of Contents

Content:

How to Use This Guide

Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions

Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Help, *Resources*, *Glossary* and Version History

Appendices

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Table of Contents

Content:

How to Use This Guide

Overview

Frequently Asked Questions
Application Steps
Help and Version History
Appendices

Change #3:

Location:

2022 – Page 4

2023 – Page 2

Reason for Change:

Moved location of document purpose to table of contents page, no change to purpose.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: How to Use This Guide

Content: Purpose: This guide will provide general information about the Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances (EUC) Exception application and provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete the application.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Table of Contents

Content: Purpose: This guide will provide general information about the Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances (EUC) Exception application and provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete the application.

Change #4:

Location:

2022 – Page 5

2023 – Page 5

Reason for Change:

Added MIPS to section title.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Change #5:

Location:

2022 – Page 6

2023 – Page 6

Reason for Change:

Updated dates for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

When UPDATE: The EUC Exception application to allow individuals, groups, virtual groups, and APM Entities the opportunity to request performance category reweighting due to the COVID-19 PHE deadline has been extended until 8 p.m. ET on March 3, 2023.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

When The MIPS EUC Exception application will close at 8 p.m. ET on January 2, 2024.

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Change #6:**Location:**

2022 – Page 7

2023 – Page 7

Reason for Change:

Updated dates for new year

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

If you submit Medicare Part B Claims measures during the performance year, this will override quality performance category reweighting. However, if you request and are approved for reweighting in all 4 performance categories and don't submit data for another performance category, your MIPS final score for the 2022 MIPS performance period would be equal to the performance threshold and you would receive a neutral payment adjustment in 2024.

When fewer than 2 performance categories can be scored (meaning 1 performance category is weighted at 100% of your MIPS final score, and the other performance categories are weighted at 0%), the MIPS final score for the 2022 MIPS performance period would be equal to the performance threshold and you would receive a neutral payment adjustment in 2024.

You will be scored in any performance category that's not included in your application, unless you qualify for reweighting through another policy.

For example:

- If you don't meet the case minimum for any cost measures, the cost performance category will be reweighted.
- You qualify for reweighting under the automatic Extreme and Controllable Circumstances policy.

- Review the 2022 Automatic Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Fact Sheet (PDF) for additional information.
- Certain clinician types and individuals, groups, and virtual groups with certain special statuses qualify for automatic reweighting of the Promoting Interoperability performance category.
 - For additional information on automatic reweighting on Promoting Interoperability, review the 2022 Promoting Interoperability Quick Start Guide (PDF).

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

If you submit Medicare Part B Claims measures during the performance year, this will override quality performance category reweighting. However, if you request and are approved for reweighting in all 4 performance categories and don't submit data for another performance category, your MIPS final score for the 2023 MIPS performance period would be equal to the performance threshold and you would receive a neutral payment adjustment in 2025.

When fewer than 2 performance categories can be scored (meaning 1 performance category is weighted at 100% of your MIPS final score, and the other performance categories are weighted at 0%), the MIPS final score for the 2023 MIPS performance period would be equal to the performance threshold and you would receive a neutral payment adjustment in 2025.

You will be scored in any performance category that's not included in your application, unless you qualify for reweighting through another policy.

For example:

- If you don't meet the case minimum for any cost measures, the cost performance category will be reweighted.
- You qualify for reweighting under the automatic Extreme and Controllable Circumstances policy.
 - Review the 2023 Automatic Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Fact Sheet (PDF) for additional information.
- Certain clinician types and individuals, groups, and virtual groups with certain special statuses qualify for automatic reweighting of the Promoting Interoperability performance category.
 - For additional information on automatic reweighting on Promoting Interoperability, review the 2023 Promoting Interoperability Quick Start Guide (PDF).

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Change #7:

Location:

2022 – N/A

2023 – Page 11

Reason for Change:

Updated based on policy changes for the 2023 performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content: N/A

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

Policies for Subgroups Reporting an MVP

Clinicians who register to report an MVP as a subgroup will inherit the performance category reweighting approved for their affiliated group.

- Data submission by the affiliated group won't override performance category reweighting for the subgroup.
- Data submission by the subgroup won't override performance category reweighting for the affiliated group.

Clinicians who register to report an MVP as a subgroup can request performance category reweighting at the subgroup level by contacting the QPP Service Center.

- Subgroups won't be able to submit a MIPS EUC Exception application as outlined in this guide.

A subgroup's request for reweighting will be superseded by any reweighting approved for their affiliated group.

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Change #8:

Location:

2022 – Page 8

2023 – Page 8

Reason for Change:

Updated list of models for new program year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

APM Entities in the following models can submit an EUC application on behalf of their MIPS eligible clinicians:

- Medicare Shared Saving Program
- Vermont Medicare ACO Model
- Bundled Payments for Care Improvement (BPCI) Advanced Model
- Oncology Care Model (OCM)
- Maryland Total Cost of Care
- Independence at Home Demonstration
- Primary Care First (PCF)
- Value in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment (ViT)
- *Direct Contracting (DC)*
- Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement (CJR) Payment
- Kidney Care Choices (KCC)

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Overview

Content:

APM Entities in the following models can submit an EUC Exception application on behalf of their MIPS eligible clinicians:

- Medicare Shared Saving Program
- Vermont Medicare ACO Model
- Bundled Payments for Care Improvement (BPCI) Advanced Model
- *Enhanced* Oncology Model (EOM)
- Maryland Total Cost of Care
- Independence at Home Demonstration
- Primary Care First (PCF)
- Value in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment (ViT)
- *ACO Realizing Equity Access and Community Health (REACH) Model*
- Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement (CJR) Payment
- Kidney Care Choices (KCC)

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Change #9

Location:

2022 – Page 15

2023 – Page 16

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions

Content:

Are We Required to Submit Documentation with Our EUC Exception Application?

- No, you aren't required to submit documentation with your application.
- However, you should retain documentation of the circumstances supporting your application for your own records in the event that you are selected by CMS for data validation or an audit. See our *2022 MIPS Data Validation Criteria Guide (ZIP)* for information on the data validation and audit process.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions

Content:

Are We Required to Submit Documentation with Our EUC Exception Application?

- No, you aren't required to submit documentation with your application.
- However, you should retain documentation of the circumstances supporting your application for your own records in the event that you are selected by CMS for data validation or an audit. See our *2023 MIPS Data Validation Criteria Guide (ZIP)* for information on the data validation and audit process.

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Change #10:

Location:

2022 – N/A

2023 – Page 17

Reason for Change:

Added new questions based on service center inquiry analysis.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions

Content: N/A

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Frequently Asked Questions

Content:

Can we submit one MIPS EUC Exception application at the group level rather than separate applications for each individually eligible clinician?

- Yes, you can submit a group-level application instead of separate applications for each clinician if the EUC applies to the whole group. However, if the circumstances are specific to a subset of clinicians in the group, you'd need to submit individual applications for each of those clinicians.

Our third party intermediary experienced issues and is unable to submit data on our behalf. Can we submit an EUC Exception application for this issue?

- As noted in the Calendar Year 2018 Quality Payment Program Final Rule, extreme and uncontrollable circumstances, such as natural disasters, may affect a clinician's ability to access or submit quality measures via all submission mechanisms (effectively rendering the measures unavailable to the clinician), as well as the availability of numerous improvement activities. In addition, damage to a facility where care is provided due to a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, could result in practice management and clinical systems that are used for the collection or submission of data to be down, thus impacting a clinician's ability to submit necessary information via Qualified Registry, QCDR, CMS Web Interface, or claims.
- This policy doesn't include issues that third party intermediaries, such as Electronic Health Record vendors (EHRs), QCDRs, or Qualified Registries, might have submitting information to MIPS on behalf of a MIPS eligible clinician.
- Instead, this policy is geared towards events, such as natural disasters, that affect the MIPS eligible clinician's ability to submit data to the third party intermediary, which in turn, could affect the ability of the clinician (or the third party intermediary acting on their behalf) to successfully submit measures and activities to MIPS.

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Change #11:

Location:

2022 – Page 18

2023 – N/A

Reason for Change:

Deadline extension was specific to the 2022 performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: We've extended the 2022 MIPS EUC Exception application to allow individuals, groups, virtual groups, and APM Entities to submit an application requesting MIPS performance category reweighting due to the ongoing COVID-19 PHE. 2022 MIPS EUC Exception applications citing COVID-19 as the triggering event can be submitted until 8 p.m. ET on Friday, March 3, 2023.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: N/A

Content: N/A

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Change #12:

Location:

2022 – N/A

2023 – Page 22

Reason for Change:

Updated to align with current policy.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: N/A

Content: N/A

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: Note: If reporting an MVP with a subgroup, you must contact the QPP Service Center to request an Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception application.

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Change #13:

Location:

2022 – Page 25

2023 – Page 27

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: Provide a brief description about the data collection challenges that you experienced due to the extreme and uncontrollable event and how your 2022 performance data will be impacted.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: Provide a brief description about the data collection challenges that you experienced due to the extreme and uncontrollable event and how your 2023 performance data will be impacted.

Change #14:

Location:

2022 – Page 25

2023 – Page 27

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content:

See our 2022 MIPS Data Validation Criteria for information on the data validation and audit process.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content:

See our 2023 MIPS Data Validation Criteria for information on the data validation and audit process.

Change #15:

Location:

2022 – 27

2023 – Page 29

Reason for Change:

Updated screenshot disclaimer to replace the URL with “QPP website” in alignment with current style guide preferences.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: Once you are done with your application, review the disclosures, then select the Submit for Review button.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception Application Process: Application Steps

Content: Once you're done with your application, review the disclosures, then select the Certify & Submit button.

Change #16:

Location:

2022 – Page 29

2023 – Page 31

Reason for Change:

Updated section break title in alignment with changes to table of contents.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Help, Resources, Glossary, and Version History

Content: Help, *Resources*, *Glossary*, and Version History

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Help and Version History

Content: Help and Version History

Change #19:

Location:

2022 – Page 30

2023 – Page 32

Reason for Change:

Updated service center contact information to account for a new contact option and revisions to standardized language.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Help, Resources, Glossary, and Version History

Content: Contact the Quality Payment Program at 1-866-288-8292, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. ET or by e-mail at: QPP@cms.hhs.gov.

- Customers who are hearing impaired can dial 711 to be connected to a TRS Communications Assistant

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Help and Version History

Content: Contact the Quality Payment Program Service Center by email at QPP@cms.hhs.gov, create a [QPP Service Center ticket](#), or by phone at 1-866-288-8292 (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET).

- Customers who are hearing impaired can dial 711 to be connected to a TRS Communications Assistant

Change #20:

Location:

2022 – Page 31

2023 – N/A

Reason for Change:

Additional resources section deemed superfluous as links to these resources are included earlier in the document. (Standardized change across all resources.)

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Help, Resources, Glossary, and Version History

Content: The Quality Payment Program Resource Library houses fact sheets, measure specifications, specialty guides, technical guides, user guides, helpful videos, and more. We will update this table as more resources become available.

- 2022 Automatic Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Policy Fact Sheet (PDF)
- 2022 MIPS Promoting Interoperability Hardship Exception Application Guide (PDF)

2023 Final Document text: N/A

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Change #21:

Location:

2022 – Page 34

2023 – Page 35

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix A1: 2022 Performance Year MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies for Individual Clinicians, Groups, Virtual Groups, and APM Entities Reporting Traditional MIPS

The table below illustrates the 2022 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to clinicians, groups, and virtual groups reporting traditional MIPS.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix A1.

2023 Performance Year MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies for Individual Clinicians, Groups, Virtual Groups, and APM Entities Reporting Traditional MIPS or MVPs

The table below illustrates the 2023 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to clinicians, groups, and virtual groups reporting traditional MIPS or MVPs.

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Change #22:

Location:

2022 – Page 36

2023 – Page 37

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix A2. MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies Under Traditional MIPS Finalized for the 2022 Performance Year: Small Practices

The table below illustrates the 2022 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to small practices.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix A2. MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies Under Traditional MIPS Finalized for the 2023 Performance Year: Small Practices

The table below illustrates the 2023 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to small practices.

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Change #23:

Location:

2022 – Page 38

2023 – Page 39

Reason for Change:

Updated for new performance year.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix B. 2022 Performance Year MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies for APM Entities and APM Participants Reporting the APP

The table below illustrates the 2022 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to APM Entities reporting traditional MIPS and to individual clinicians, groups and APM Entities reporting via the APP.

2023 Final Document text:

Section: Appendices

Content: Appendix B. 2023 Performance Year MIPS Performance Category Weight Redistribution Policies for APM Entities and APM Participants Reporting the APP

The table below illustrates the 2023 performance category weights and reweighting policies that CMS will apply to APM Entities reporting traditional MIPS and to individual clinicians, groups and APM Entities reporting via the APP.

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Change #24:

Location:

2022 – Pages 6, 15, 17 – 28

2023 – Pages 6, 15, 16, 19 – 30

Reason for Change:

Updated language for referring to QPP website.

2022 Final Document text:

Section: throughout the guide

Content: qpp.cms.gov

2023 Final Document text:

Section: throughout the guide

Content: [QPP website](#)