



National Provider Identifier: Why Should You Have One?

Mandated by HIPAA to be issued to health care providers

Question: Who is a health care provider?

"Health care provider means a provider of services (as defined in section 1861(u) of the [Social Security] Act, 42 U.S.C. 1395x(u)), a provider of medical or health services (as defined in section 1861(s) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 1395x(s)), and any other person or organization who furnishes, bills, or is paid for health care in the normal course of business." *As defined by US Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, HIPAA Administrative Simplification document.*

Question: Do you want to be recognized as a health care provider?

1. The National Provider Identifier (NPI) is a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Administrative Simplification Standard. The NPI is a unique identification number for **covered health care providers**. Covered health care providers and all health plans and health care clearinghouses must use NPIs in the administrative and financial transactions adopted under HIPAA.
2. HIPAA rules apply to covered entities. Those defined as covered entities include health plans, health care clearinghouses, and **health care providers** who transmit any health information in electronic form in connection with a transaction covered by subchapter 45 C.F.R. §160.103.
3. The NPI is a unique identification number for **covered health care providers** who need a NPI to submit claims or conduct other transactions specified by HIPAA. Those who meet the definition of a covered entity under HIPAA must comply with HIPAA requirements to protect the privacy and security of health information. If an entity does not meet the definition of a covered health care provider, it does not have to comply with the HIPAA Rules.¹
4. **Covered health care providers** and all health plans and health care clearinghouses *must use* the NPIs in the **administrative** and financial transactions adopted under HIPAA.
5. As outlined in the Federal Regulation, HIPAA-covered providers must share their NPI with other providers, health plans, clearinghouses, and any entity that may need it for billing purposes.

¹ See 45 C.F.R. §160.103; see also <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/covered-entities/>

Question: I am not billing, or ever going to bill, so why do I want/need an NPI?

1. If you are working the secondary school or college/university setting, do you want to be able to receive personal health information (PHI) on your athletes? If you are not a recognized health care provider, you can be denied access to this information.
 - a. NPIs are only for health care providers; if you have an NPI, this constitutes proof that you are a health care provider as recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
2. Use of the NPI is a simple, factual way for the federal and state system to determine size and impact on health care system by AT profession. The following is approximate national data on the number of individuals in respective professions. As described below, athletic trainers are at a disadvantage for recognition due to the overall size of profession.
 - b. Physicians – 954,000
 - c. Physical Therapists – 198,600
 - d. Occupational Therapists – 108,800
 - e. Nurse Practitioners – 106,100
 - f. Physician Assistants – 70,400
 - g. Athletic Trainers – 45,000
 - i. Our fellow health care providers have achieved almost 100% compliance with NPI, whereas approximately only 50% of athletic trainers have been assigned a NPI. It is important for athletic trainers to move toward 100% NPI compliance to aid in the recognition of athletic trainers as health care providers.

Question: Do you have a Social Security Number (SSN)?

1. Of course you do. Without a SSN, you could not register for school, open up a bank account, get married, etc.
2. Think of the NPI as your professional SSN. Without it, in the electronic age of information transfer you will not be able to send or receive medical information, be recognized as a health care provider, bill for any appropriate services, or use a clearinghouse to assist you.

➤ **A NPI is a professional necessity in this age of electronic medical records!**

Question: How do I get a NPI?

- NPIs are issued by the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). As an individual provider, you may only have a single NPI, which will be associated with your unique, individual information. Once you login to NPPES, you will be able to complete your NPI application.
- To apply, visit: <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/Welcome.do>
 - Create a Login through the Identity & Access Management System (I&A).
 - Login to NPPES with your I&A Username and Password.
 - Complete the NPI application. (Estimated time to complete the NPI application form is 20 minutes).

Tips for filling out your application as an athletic training professional:

- **Provider Type 22**
(Respiratory, Rehabilitative & Restorative Service Providers)
- **Taxonomy Code 2255A2300X**
(Specialist/Technologist-Athletic Trainer)
- **Students** can, and should, get their NPI while in school. To do so:

- Enter 2 Taxonomy Codes to indicate you are a student of athletic training (You add a second code by clicking the 'Add Taxonomy'):
 - 390200000X Student in an Organized Health Care Education/Training Program
 - 2255A2300X – Specialist/Technologist – Athletic Trainer
- After Graduation and Certification: Upon graduation and the receipt your certification (and state license if applicable):
 - Log into your NPPES account.
 - Remove the 390200000X – Student taxonomy code.
 - Set your primary taxonomy code as “255A2300X – Athletic Trainer.”

Additional tips/assistance to expedite your NPI application:

- <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/StaticForward.do?forward=static.application.tips>
- NPI Customer Service: 1-800-465-3203

Visit [nata.org](https://www.nata.org) for more information about NPI.

For more information, and to start the process of getting your NPI, visit <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>.

For more information on the NPI, contact:

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