

# NPIs and Taxonomy Codes: Who? What? When? Where? and Why?

## Background

Before the promulgation of the [HIPAA Administrative Simplification: Standard Unique Health Identifier for Health Care Providers](#) final rule in 2004, healthcare providers often had several different billing identification numbers within a health plan, and across the healthcare system. There was no standardization among health plans, and it often led to confusion. Identifier (NPI)

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## What is an NPI?

A National Provider Identifier or NPI is a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Administrative Simplification Standard. It is a unique, intelligence-free numeric identifier used to identify healthcare providers in standard transactions, such claims, eligibility inquiries and responses, claim status inquiries and responses, referrals, and remittance advices.

## Who must apply for an NPI?

All HIPAA-covered entities: health plans, health care clearinghouses, and health care providers who electronically transmit any health information in connection with transactions for which HHS has adopted standards. For more information, please see this [Dear Provider letter](#) from the CMS Administrator.

## How do you apply for an NPI?

There are three ways healthcare providers may apply for an NPI. See [here](#)

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|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
|               | treatment, and recovery of persons with the disease of addiction.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                    |
| ACTIVE - 2009 | An anesthesiologist who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of addictions.                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Addiction Medicine |
| ACTIVE - 2009 | A family medicine physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of addictions.                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Addiction Medicine |
| ACTIVE - 2007 | An internist doctor of osteopathy that specializes in the treatment of addiction disorders. A doctor of osteopathy that is board eligible/certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine can obtain a Certificate of Added Qualifications in the field of Addiction Medicine. | Addiction Medicine |
| ACTIVE - 2007 | A doctor of osteopathy board eligible/certified in the field of Psychiatry by the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry is able to obtain a Certificate of Added Qualifications in the field of Addiction Medicine.                                                            | Addiction Medicine |

ACTIVE - 2007

Addiction Psychiatry is a subspecialty of psychiatry that focuses on evaluation and treatment of individuals with alcohol, drug, or other substance-related disorders,

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## **NPIs and Taxonomy Codes: Who? What? When? Where? and Why?**

According to the NUCC, “the source of the definition for the provider code is a specific professional organization or credentialing Board. You do not need to have that source's certification to choose the code. The sources for the definitions are only to cite who authored the definition. The definitions were chosen because they were identified as an overall description of the provider.”

### **Where can I find out more information about taxonomy codes?**

National Uniform Claim Committee (maintains code set and applications for new codes):

<http://www.nucc.org/index.php>

CMS: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/medicareprovidersupenroll/taxonomy.html>