

EXHIBIT A

AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTER QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM (0938-1270) CY 2026 OPPS/ASC FINAL RULE CHANGE CROSSWALK

REGULATIONS	CHANGES TO REGULATIONS/GUIDANCE	EXPLANATION
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§416.310 Data collection and submission requirements under the ASCQR Program

(d) Extraordinary circumstances exceptions. CMS may grant an exception with respect to quality data reporting requirements in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the hospital, such as when an act of nature affects an entire region or if CMS determines that a systemic problem with one of its data collection systems directly affected the ability of the hospitals to submit data. CMS may grant an exception as follows:

- (1) Upon request of the ASC. Specific requirements for submission of a request for an exception are available on the CMS website.
- (2) At the discretion of CMS. CMS may grant exceptions to ASCs that have not requested them when CMS determines that an extraordinary circumstance has occurred.

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(d) Extraordinary circumstance exception (ECE).

(1) General rule. CMS may grant an ECE with respect to the reporting requirements under this section in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the ASC. For purposes of this paragraph (d), an extraordinary circumstance is an event beyond the control of an ASC (for example, a natural or man-made disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, terrorist attack, or bombing) that affected the ability of the ASC to comply with one or more applicable reporting requirements with respect to a calendar year.

(2) Process for requesting an ECE.

- (i) An ASC may request an ECE within 60 calendar days of the date that the extraordinary circumstance occurred by submitting the information specified by CMS at QualityNet or a successor website.
- (ii) CMS notifies the ASC of its decision on the request, in writing, via email. In the event that CMS grants an ECE to the ASC, the written decision specifies whether the ASC is exempted from one or more reporting requirements or whether CMS has granted the ASC an extension of time to comply with one or more reporting requirements.

(3) Authority to Grant an ECE. CMS may grant an ECE to one or more ASCs that have not requested an ECE if CMS determines that—

- (i) A systemic problem with a CMS data collection system directly impacted the ability of the ASC to comply with a quality data reporting requirement; or
- (ii) An extraordinary circumstance has affected an entire region or locale. Any ECE granted under this paragraph (d) (3) specifies whether the affected ASCs are exempted from one or more reporting requirements or whether CMS has granted the ASCs an extension of time to comply with one or more reporting requirements.

Updated the extraordinary circumstance exception policy to clarify that CMS has the discretion to grant an extension as a form of ECE relief (in addition to exceptions).