

**Subject:** Advocacy Alert: CMS Issues New Emergency Preparedness Rule  
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**ADVOCACY ALERT**

DEDICATED TO OPTIMIZING  
THE HEALTH CARE  
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**CMS issues new emergency preparedness rule**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued new emergency preparedness requirements for health care facilities that will require emergency plans; policies and procedures; a communication plan; and training and testing. The requirements will take effect in 60 days, and ASHE is currently preparing resources to help members manage this change.

The new CMS rule will apply to 17 different provider types, including hospitals, critical access hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, long-term care facilities, intermediate care facilities, and rural health clinics.

The rule, which is 650 pages long, includes background on the original CMS proposal; a summary of public comments and CMS's response to those comments; and the final regulations. The regulations for hospitals begin on page 584. A section titled "provisions of the final regulations," which begins on page 269, outlines differences between the proposed rule and the final rule.

[Download the CMS Rule](#)

Previously, CMS had proposed new requirements for increased generator testing and on-site waste and sewage disposal. ASHE and the American Hospital Association (AHA) submitted public comments urging the agency not to take those steps, and CMS did not include those provisions in its final rule.

"We are pleased that CMS has taken a commonsense approach to ensuring patients continue to be cared for in times of disaster," said Ashley Thompson, AHA senior vice president for public policy analysis and development.

CMS proposed the rule—the first emergency preparedness rule ever proposed by the agency—in December 2013. CMS said in its final rule that the new requirements will "provide consistent emergency preparedness requirements, enhance patient safety during emergencies for persons served by Medicare- and Medicaid-participating facilities, and establish a more coordinated and defined response to natural and man-made disasters."

ASHE, a personal membership group of the AHA, will be thoroughly analyzing the rule in coming days and will be providing additional member resources. ASHE is currently working to produce a crosswalk showing members the differences between the new CMS rule, NFPA 99 requirements, and Joint Commission emergency preparedness standards. ASHE will also be answering frequently asked questions about the new requirements. If you have a question after reading the rule, please submit it using the following form.

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of the American Hospital Association**

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