

How Do I Respond to a CERT Request for Initial Information?

Hi everyone, today we're breaking down something that can feel a little confusing if you've never dealt with it before—how to respond to a CERT request for initial documentation.

If you've ever opened your mailbox and found a letter from CERT and thought, "What is this, and what am I supposed to do?"—don't worry. I've got you covered.

So, let's start with the basics.

CERT stands for Comprehensive Error Rate Testing. It's a program created by CMS to check whether Medicare Fee for Service claims were paid or denied correctly.

To do this, they select random claims for review and will ask you for documentation to support those claims.

And importantly — these requests come by mail, and they go to the address you have on file with your enrollment contractor.

If you receive a CERT letter, the first step is simple:

Read the letter carefully and send exactly what they ask for.

Inside the envelope, you'll find a fax cover sheet. This cover sheet is important — make sure you include it when you send your documents back. It helps CERT match your paperwork to the right claim.

You may get a call from the CERT contractor if you have not responded to the request. They may call to try to get the requested information before they write their decision.

The DME MAC will reach out to you, by phone or by email, for denials for missing documentation. You will also receive a letter from the CERT coordinators for any non-response or billing issues.

Make sure to respond to any emails or phone calls you receive. Failure to respond may result in a final denial of your claim and recoupment of funds.

How do you know what's needed? You'll want to head over to the CERT C3Hub website.

The address is c3hub.certrc.cms.gov.

Once you're on the site:

1. Click on "Claim Status Search" on the left side of the page.
2. Enter your CID—that's your Claim Identifier—and press enter.

This will show you the review status and documentation status of your claim:

- when CERT requested information



- if they received anything
- and the dates actions were taken

Right under that search box, you'll also see a link to the CGS website and the contact information for your CERT Coordinator. If you have questions, that's the person who can help you.

Go ahead and click the link to the CGS website.

This takes you directly to the CERT page for your jurisdiction—JB or JC.

On this page, you'll find:

- more details about the CERT program
- links back to the C3Hub
- CMS CERT data and reports
- and the CERT Claim Identifier Tool

Click one of the links for the Claim Identifier Tool—they both go to the same place—and enter your CID again.

This tool will show you:

- whether the claim is in error
- which HCPCS code was reviewed
- and the current status

If the tool shows that documentation is still missing, go ahead and send the missing information to the CERT Contractor. Use the same cover letter sheet you used before.

If you don't have the cover sheet anymore, just email the CERT Coordinator.

Be sure to include:

- your CID
- an email or fax number where they can send the cover sheet
- and a phone number where they can reach you directly

One last piece of advice: respond as quickly as possible.

Even if you don't have everything, send what you do have. Doing nothing is the worst option.

If CERT doesn't get the requested documentation, they can instruct the DME MAC to recoup the money paid on the claim.

But if you send the information promptly, and it supports the claim, you may avoid recoupment altogether. Even if recoupment has already happened, funds may be returned to you if the documentation that was submitted satisfies the audit.

And that's it!

That's how you handle a CERT request from start to finish.

If this video has helped you, go to our website and fill out a survey! Don't forget to like, subscribe, and share it with someone who might need it.