



Department of Civil Service

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TO: All Health Benefits Administrators
FROM: Employee Benefits Division
SUBJECT: 2021 Empire Plan Participating Provider Directory (PPD) Postcards and Directories
DATE: July 2, 2021

Empire Plan Participating Provider Directory Postcards

We have begun mailing the 2021 PPD postcards to all Empire Plan enrollees across the United States and Puerto Rico to meet our mandate of making directories available to all enrollees. Once again this year, the postcards will be broken out into four separate mailings to more closely align with the availability of the 2021 printed directories that service the geographic areas in which enrollees live.

Postcards will be mailed as follows:

- June 25 New York City, Hudson Valley, Long Island and Upstate New York
- July 22 Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania,
- August 9 Northern Florida, Southern Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington DC/Maryland, Virginia and out-of-state directories for: Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming.
- August 27 Illinois, Arizona, Georgia and the remaining out-of-state directories for: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Northern California, Northern Texas, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Southern California, Southern Texas, Tennessee, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin.

Last year, we received over 58,000 book orders by November and nearly 5,000 additional copies were requested between then and spring 2021.

While we encourage the use of the online program directories available under the Find a Provider webpage because the data is updated more frequently, enrollees have three options for obtaining Empire Plan participating provider information:

- Use the Find a Provider search tool at NYSHIP Online:
www.cs.ny.gov/employee-benefits
- Call The Empire Plan at 1-877-7-NYSHIP and select the appropriate program administrator
- Return the reply postcard (with a stamp) to request a directory for their home ZIP code or another state/region

Larger Directories and Versions for 2021

As we announced last fall, Empire Plan enrollees have nationwide access to UnitedHealthcare's network of over 1.2 million medical providers, laboratories and other providers located throughout the U.S. as of January 1, 2021. This expansion has had a substantial impact on the printed directories, with the page count for many of them growing exponentially and the need to split the publication for some states due to size. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with these changes by reviewing the attachment to this memo that lists the counties included in the split directories for affected states. In general, almost all directories have grown in size due to the network expansion.

On the postcard, enrollees are offered check boxes to select a directory based on their home ZIP Code or they may print the name of another version. Once again this year, the New York and Florida directories are divided into separate books due to size (see attachment). New for this year, the books for California and Texas have also been split into separate northern and southern books due to size. If an enrollee would like to order any of these directories, we request that the county or counties where they will be seeking services be listed so the correct version can be mailed. In compliance with State law, languages spoken by providers and/or their staff and provider hospital affiliations are listed for the New York directories only.

Directory Distribution

The 2021 PPDs for New York will begin to mail to the homes of those who request them in mid-July. Directories for Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Northern Florida, South Carolina, Southern Florida, Pennsylvania, Washington DC/Maryland and Virginia will follow in August and September. The remaining out-of-state versions are currently scheduled to begin mailing in September/October.

We will send you one directory based on your agency location. In response to feedback from HBAs, we will no longer mail other versions to you automatically. If you would like to have reference copies for your agency, please order them on HBA Online. On the forms and publications page, the directory order form is located at the top of the page. We will add versions to the order form as they are printed and available in inventory.

Quick Order Packages

A reminder that a blank PPD postcard is included in the Quick Order packages that you may order on HBA Online for your new hires or new retirees who may want to request a printed directory.

If you need help accessing HBA Online, contact the ITS Service Desk at 844-891-1786, fixit@its.ny.gov or via chat at <https://chat.its.ny.gov>.

If you are unsure of how to order publications or have questions about this distribution, please call the EBD Communications Unit at 518-457-7577.

Attachment