

Hurricane recovery waivers – Following the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS's) [declaration](#) of a public health emergency (PHE) in Georgia in response to Hurricane Idalia, effective Aug. 30, HHS has [announced](#) the availability of certain emergency waivers for impacted providers:

- **1135 Waiver** – The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is [permitting](#) Georgia facilities impacted by Hurricane Idalia to submit requests for 1135 waivers using an [online form](#). The 1135 waiver program gives CMS the authority to temporarily waive or adjust certain Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) requirements. Information about the 1135 waivers and how to submit the waiver are available on CMS's [emergencies webpage](#).
- **Waiver of HIPAA Penalties** – The Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which enforces the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), has [announced](#) that it is [waiving](#) certain penalties if a hospital that is operating under a disaster protocol does not comply with these provisions of the HIPAA Privacy Rule:
 - The [requirement](#) to obtain a patient's agreement to speak with family members or friends or to honor a patient's request to opt out of the facility directory;
 - The [requirement](#) to distribute a notice of privacy practices; and
 - The patient's [right](#) to request privacy restrictions or confidential communications.