

or carrier from a provider or supplier of an approved Medicare payment amount before a determination of the amount of the overpayment exists.

[61 FR 63745, Dec. 2, 1996]

§ 405.371 Suspension, offset, and recoupment of Medicare payments to providers and suppliers of services.

(a) *General.* Medicare payments to providers and suppliers, as authorized under this subchapter (excluding payments to beneficiaries), may be—

(1) Suspended, in whole or in part, by CMS, an intermediary, or a carrier if CMS, the intermediary, or the carrier possesses reliable information that an overpayment or fraud or willful misrepresentation exists or that the payments to be made may not be correct, although additional evidence may be needed for a determination; or

(2) Offset or recouped, in whole or in part, by an intermediary or a carrier if the intermediary, carrier, or CMS has determined that the provider or supplier to whom payments are to be made has been overpaid.

(b) *Steps necessary for suspension of payment, offset, and recoupment.* Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, CMS, the intermediary, or carrier suspends payments only after it has complied with the procedural requirements set forth at § 405.372. The intermediary or carrier offsets or recoups payments only after it has complied with the procedural requirements set forth at § 405.373.

(c) *Suspension of payment in the case of unfiled cost reports.* If a provider has failed to timely file an acceptable cost report, payment to the provider is immediately suspended until a cost report is filed and determined by the intermediary to be acceptable. In the case of an unfiled cost report, the provisions of § 405.372 do not apply. (See § 405.372(a)(2) concerning failure to furnish other information.)

[61 FR 63746, Dec. 2, 1996]

§ 405.372 Proceeding for suspension of payment.

(a) *Notice of intention to suspend—(1) General rule.* Except as provided in paragraphs (a)(2) through (a)(4) of this section, if the intermediary, carrier, or

CMS has determined that a suspension of payments under § 405.371(a)(1) should be put into effect, the intermediary or carrier must notify the provider or supplier of the intention to suspend payments, in whole or in part, and the reasons for making the suspension.

(2) *Failure to furnish information.* The notice requirement of paragraph (a)(1) of this section does not apply if the intermediary or carrier suspends payments to a provider or supplier in accordance with section 1815(a) or section 1833(e) of the Act, respectively, because the provider or supplier has failed to submit information requested by the intermediary or carrier that is needed to determine the amounts due the provider or supplier. (See § 405.371(c) concerning failure to file timely acceptable cost reports.)

(3) *Harm to Trust Funds.* A suspension of payment may be imposed without prior notice if CMS, the intermediary, or carrier determines that the Medicare Trust Funds would be harmed by giving prior notice. CMS may base its determination on an intermediary's or carrier's belief that giving prior notice would hinder the possibility of recovering the money.

(4) *Fraud or misrepresentation.* If the intended suspension of payment involves suspected fraud or misrepresentation, CMS determines whether to impose the suspension and if prior notice is appropriate. CMS directs the intermediary or carrier as to the timing and content of the notification to the provider or supplier. CMS is the real party in interest and is responsible for the decision. CMS may base its decision on information from the intermediary, carrier, law enforcement agencies, or other sources. CMS determines whether the information is reliable.

(b) *Rebuttal—(1) If prior notice is required.* If prior notice is required under paragraph (a) of this section, the intermediary or carrier must give the provider or supplier an opportunity for rebuttal in accordance with § 405.374. If a rebuttal statement is received within the specified time period, the suspension of payment goes into effect on the date stated in the notice, and the procedures and provisions set forth in