

**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)  
Research Application Guidelines for Requesting Limited Data Sets**

**1. Introduction**

- Title.
- Purpose:
  - Provide a detailed explanation of the research purpose of the project. The purpose must demonstrate the potential to improve the quality of life for Medicare beneficiaries or improve the administration of the Medicare program, including payment related projects. Under the Privacy Rule, permitted purposes include research, public health and/or health care operations.
  - What are the potential uses of this project to Medicare providers of service?

**2. Project Issues and Methods**

- List and describe the key issues to be studied.
- Describe the plan to analyze the data for the project, including the methodology and procedures that will be used.
- Provide an outline of project reports, including types of tabulations, aggregations, and other data presentations.
- Statement of whether any of the methodology or tools contain proprietary information (proprietary information is exempt from release requirements under the Freedom of Information Act if it falls within the scope of Exemption 4, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4)).

**3. Data Management Safeguards**

- Describe the procedures that will be used to protect the privacy and identity of an individual. For example, how will the privacy of information of beneficiaries in the files be safeguarded and guaranteed?
- Describe safeguards that would be followed for permitted disclosures of data, if applicable.

**4. Key personnel**

- List staff that will have access to the limited data set file(s) and their role in the project.

**5. Dissemination/Implementation**

- Describe how the findings will be used
- Briefly describe any data dissemination plan that includes how the findings and any reported data elements will be aggregated to a level that does not permit the identification of the individual.
- Describe the type of data that will be disseminated, if applicable.

**6. Proprietary Information**

- If the Research Application provided by the Requesting Organization contains proprietary information, a statement to that effect must be included in the Research Application submitted to CMS. Proprietary information is exempt from release under the Freedom of Information Act if it falls within the scope of Exemption 4, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4).