



**County of Los Angeles  
Department of Mental Health**

**Contract Providers Transition Project  
(CPTP)**

**EDI – Getting Started**

Version 1.0

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## DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

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# 1 Getting Started with EDI

## 1.1 Evaluate your options

You have a choice of how you will send and receive electronic data. Because HIPAA requires secure transactions to protect Personal Health Information (PHI), we can no longer use e-mail or old formats to exchange client information. HIPAA calls for new ways of encrypting information, then translating data back into meaningful data at your end.

In order to participate in electronic exchanges with L.A. County Department of Mental Health, either you need to:

- Select a hosted application that is installed at your facility, or
- Select an Application Service Provider (ASP) model with internet access to the application located at the vendor's location, or
- Contract with a clearinghouse that can translate your data into proper EDI format, or
- Hire a billing service that can process EDI transactions for you, or
- Invest in HIPAA-compliant interface software installed on your computer(s) with Internet access.

LACDMH has adopted the ValiCert digital certificate as a validation tool to protect the privacy of the transactions. Submission of an EDI claim file having the issued ValiCert digital certificate is a secure way of authenticating the file's origin – the computer and the sender, while in the process, applying data encryption and decryption to affirm PHI data privacy and integrity. The certificates are installed on the computers being used to submit the claim transactions. This process is done via an Internet connection.

DMH requires all software vendors to submit a Third Party Vendor certificate issued by HIPAA syntax validation agency such as Claredi or EDIFECS prior to obtaining the Digital Certificate and the DMH required forms. Please refer to the EDI Third Party Certification Provider list in the EDI Guides section.

## 1.2 Sign a trading partner agreement

The second step is to sign a trading partner agreement (TPA) with LAC-DMH prior to testing your chosen system. The TPA is a contract designed to identify the two relationships DMH must understand: (1) who the provider or trading partner is and (2) who will be submitting and receiving the compliant transactions to DMH for payment or adjudication.

You may download a copy of the TPA and its accompanying exhibits, called an **EDI Registration Packet**, online at [http://dmh.lacounty.info/hipaa/cp\\_SecureFile.htm](http://dmh.lacounty.info/hipaa/cp_SecureFile.htm)

### **1.3 Internet and DMH Network Access**

Your computer equipment must be Internet ready and user must be granted access to LA DMH network by obtaining a Secure ID Card and it must be tested with the appropriated DMH assigned user login ID.

### **1.4 Begin testing**

When you have completed the registration process, the DMH EDI Support Group will invite you to begin sending test transactions between your business and a secured test environment. While in the test environment, a DMH EDI Testing and Certification Unit staff will be available to provide assistance throughout the testing processes.

The EDI Support Group will validate the data files you submitted to verify they meet DMH requirements for HIPAA structure and business contents.