



# HFWA Documentation Standards:

## Signature Guidelines

The Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS), the federal agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that administers the Medicare program and works in partnership with state governments to administer Medicaid, provides quality regulations for providers regarding signatures on documentation. For services rendered, providers must authenticate documentation through use of their signature. The method used must be a hand written or an electronic signature. A handwritten or electronic signature is a mark or sign by an individual on a document to signify knowledge, approval, acceptance, or obligation.

Providers need to know:

- A "Signature on File" statement does not meet signature requirements
- Stamped signatures do not meet signature requirements
- Signatures typed in script font does not meet signature requirements
- With electronic signature systems, like the magellanprovider.com web portal, providers need to be aware of the potential for misuse or abuse. The software program the provider uses must be set up to ensure the following:
  - Signer must maintain the integrity of the electronic signature (include log-in information like MIS number) because the electronic signature acts as the authentication of the documentation,
  - There is verification of the signer's identity at the time the signature was generated; and
  - Certainty that the document has not been altered since it was signed.
- The use of Magellanprovider.com by anyone other than the person to whom the MIS is assigned, is in not recommended by Magellan

Reference Material

[www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance](http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance)

HFWA Documentation Standards: Signature Guidelines