Program Memorandum Intermediaries/Carriers	Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)
	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Transmittal AB-01-179	Date: DECEMBER 12, 2001

CHANGE REQUEST 1941

SUBJECT: **Zip Code File on the Direct Connect**

<u>SCOPE</u> This Program Memorandum (PM) furnishes instructions for ongoing maintenance of the zip code file used for pricing ambulance and other services.

<u>BACKGROUND</u> In several prior Program Memoranda, we have advised you about the availability of an updated zip code file used for pricing ambulance claims and jurisdictional pricing. This PM establishes the practice of regular quarterly updates of the zip code file and furnishes instructions for downloading the updated file.

Every 2 months, we obtain an updated listing of zip codes from the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). On the basis of the updated USPS file, we update the Medicare zip code file and make it available to contractors.

Beginning in April 2002, and every calendar quarter thereafter, we will upload an updated zip code file to the Direct Connect (formerly the Network Data Mover) and furnish notice of its availability via e-mail.

Approximately six weeks prior to the beginning of each calendar quarter (i.e., approximately 6 weeks prior to January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1), an email will be sent out notifying all carriers, intermediaries, and systems maintainers of the availability of the updated file.
The updated file will be available in early November for the January 1 release, early February for the March 1 release, early May for the July 1 release, and early August for the September 1 release.

The name of the file will be in the following format: <u>MU00.AAA2390.ZIP.LOCALITY.VCCYYQ</u>. Only the last 5 positions of the name (i.e., "<u>CCYYQ</u>") will vary (for century, year, and quarter). So, for example, the name of the file updated for April 2002 will be <u>MU00.@AAA2390.ZIP.LOCALITY.V20022</u>. The release number for this file is 20022, release 2 for the year 2002.

When the updated file is loaded to the Direct Connect, it will overlay the previous zip code file.

Note: Even the most recently updated zip code file will not contain zip codes established by the USPS after CMS compiled the file. Therefore, for zip codes reported on claims that are not on the most recent zip code file, follow the instructions in PM AB-00-88.

<u>IMPLEMENTATION</u>

1.   Once you receive e-mail giving notice of the availability of an updated zip code file, go to the Direct Connect and search for the file. Confirm that the release number (the last 5 digits) corresponds to the upcoming calendar quarter. If the release number (the last 5 digits) does not correspond to the upcoming calendar quarter, notify M. Barton Kershbaum at 410-786-3321.

2.   Once you have confirmed that the zip code file on the Direct Connect corresponds to the next calendar quarter, download the file and incorporate the file into your testing regime for the upcoming model release.

CMS-Pub. 60AB

The *effective date* for this PM is April 1, 2002.

The *implementation date* for this PM is April 1, 2002.

These instructions should be implemented within your current operating budget.

This PM may be discarded after April 1, 2003.

If you have any questions concerning carrier issues, contact Bart Kershbaum at (410) 786-3321.

If you have any questions concerning intermediary issues, contact Nicole Atkins at (410) 786-8278.