

authorities shall not be counted against the length of a brief.

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Mary Lu Jordan,

Chairman, Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 52

[CA 210-0118 EC; FRL-6336-6]

Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California State Implementation Plan Revision-South Coast Air Quality Management District; Reopening of Comment Period

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed rule; reopening of the comment period.

SUMMARY: EPA is reopening the comment period for a proposed rule published March 18, 1999 (64 FR 13372). On March 18, 1999, EPA proposed a limited approval and limited disapproval of revisions to the California State Implementation Plan controlling oxides of nitrogen emissions in the South Coast Air Quality Management District. This rule concerned South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1110.2.

At the request of the South Coast Air Quality Management District and other parties, EPA is reopening the comment period.

DATES: The comment period closes May 19, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted to: Andrew Steckel, Rulemaking Office (AIR-4), Air Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105-3901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ed Addison at (415) 744-1160.

Dated: April 21, 1999.

Lauri Yoshii,

Deputy Regional Administrator, Region IX.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

42 CFR Part 405

[HCFA-1002-N]

Medicare Program; Meetings of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on Ambulance Fee Schedule

AGENCY: Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), HHS.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, this notice announces the dates and locations for the third and fourth meetings of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on the Ambulance Fee Schedule. These meetings are open to the public.

The purpose of this committee is to develop a proposed rule that establishes a fee schedule for the payment of ambulance services under the Medicare program through negotiated rulemaking, as mandated by section 4531(b) of the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) of 1997.

DATES: The third meeting is scheduled for May 24, 1999 from 9:00 a.m. until 5 p.m. and May 25, 1999 from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. E.S.T. The fourth meeting is scheduled for June 28, 1999 from 9:00 a.m. until 5 p.m. and June 29, 1999 from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. E.S.T.

ADDRESSES: The 2-day May meeting will be held at Doyle's Hotel, 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; (202) 483-6000. The 2-day June meeting will be held at BWI Airport Marriott, 1743 West Nursery Road, Baltimore, MD. 21240; (410) 849-8300.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inquiries regarding these meetings should be addressed to Bob Niemann (410) 786-4569 or Margot Blige (410) 786-4642 for general issues related to ambulance services or to Lynn Sylvester (202) 606-9140 or Elayne Tempel (207) 780-3408, facilitators.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 4531(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget Act (BBA), Public Law 105-33, added a new section 1834(l) to the Social Security Act (the Act). Section 1834(l) of the Act mandates implementation, by January 1, 2000, of a national fee schedule for payment of ambulance services furnished under Medicare Part B. The fee schedule is to be established through negotiated rulemaking. Section 4531(b)(2) also provides that in establishing such fee schedule, the Secretary will—

- Establish mechanisms to control increases in expenditures for ambulance services under Part B of the program;

- Establish definitions for ambulance services that link payments to the type of services furnished;

- Consider appropriate regional and operational differences;

- Consider adjustments to payment rates to account for inflation and other relevant factors; and

- Phase in the fee schedule in an efficient and fair manner.

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on the Ambulance Fee Schedule has been established to provide advice and make recommendations to the Secretary with respect to the text and content of a proposed rule that establishes a fee schedule for the payment of ambulance services under Part B of the Medicare program.

The Committee held its second meeting on April 12, 13, and 14, 1999. At this meeting the Committee heard presentations from HCFA staff. The first presenter, a representative from HCFA's Actuarial and Health Cost Analysis Group, described the methodology used in determining how the payment cap under the fee schedule was calculated. The second presenter, a member of the HCFA negotiated rulemaking team, presented historical Medicare hospital and supplier ambulance billing data. The non-government members Committee finalized the private agreement with Project Hope to obtain ambulance cost data and reached consensus on the statements of the issues to be negotiated. Each Committee member presented the member's constituency's interests. Work began on the criteria for evaluating options for the fee schedule.

During the May meeting the Committee will work toward achieving consensus on the interests and on the criteria to be considered in evaluating options for the fee schedule. Discussions will then begin on the options.

The announced future meetings are open to the public without advanced registration. Interested parties can file statements with the Committee. *Mail written statements to the following address: Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, 2100 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20427, Attention: Lynn Sylvester.* Location of future meetings will be published in the **Federal Register** at a later date.

Public attendance at the meetings may be limited to space available. A summary of all proceedings will be