



California Department of Public Health Announces Change to Processing Office and Timeline for Facility Applications and Change Requests

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Applications and change requests for all facilities licensed by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) are being transitioned to the Centralized Applications Unit and may take upwards of six months to process.

On October 20, 2016, the CDPH issued a letter to all facilities titled “Centralized Applications Unit: Processing Facility Applications and Report of Change Requests.”¹ The letter notified all California providers licensed by the CDPH that the CDPH Licensing and Certification Program (L&C) “is consolidating the processing of licensing applications and report of change requests to the Centralized Applications Unit (CAU) in Sacramento.”

Timeline for Centralization

Per the CDPH, this centralization process has already been underway, and CDPH is slated to achieve “complete centralization by February 1, 2017.” Ten districts had already transitioned to processing through the CAU as of the date of the letter:

■ Los Angeles (four offices)	■ Santa Rosa	■ San Jose	■ Bakersfield
■ Chico	■ East Bay	■ Riverside	
■ Fresno	■ San Francisco	■ San Bernardino	

The remaining districts are scheduled to transition on a rolling basis by February 1, 2017:

Ventura.....November 1, 2016
 Orange.....December 1, 2016
 San Diego North & South.....January 1, 2017
 Sacramento.....February 1, 2017

Relevant Applications and Change Requests

Once the transition occurs in a district, the corresponding District Office will no longer process the following, which must instead be submitted to the CAU for all facility types

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initial/Renewal Applications ■ Change of Ownership (CHOW) ■ Indirect Changes in Ownership ■ Change of Stock ■ Change of Beds ■ Adding/Deleting Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Change of Mailing Address ■ Change of Location ■ Change of Name ■ Change of Administrator or Designee ■ Change of Officers ■ Change of Director of Patient Care Services Designee
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¹ Letter from Jean Iacino, Deputy Dir., Cal. Dep’t of Pub. Health, to All Facilities (Oct. 20, 2016), available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/facilities/Documents/LNC-AFL-16-15.pdf>.

Timeline for Processing Applications and Change Requests

Although the letter does not address how the CAU will manage the additional workload or what impact this centralization will have on processing time, the CDPH website provides additional detail.²

The website states that “[t]he CAU has increased staffing and is actively implementing efficiencies to improve the timeliness of processing applications,” and cites “ensur[ing] standardization and consistency of the state licensing and federal certification application process” as the “mission” of the CAU.

However, it also cautions that **all requests**—from new applications to changes for existing facilities (such as name changes, bed number updates, etc.)—“**may take up to 6 or more months to process**, subject to the completeness of the application upon submittal.”³ It goes on to emphasize that any changes that require on-site surveys by a District Office may take “an additional 3-6 month processing time.”

Affected Facility Types

Facility types affected by this change include the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adult Day Health Center ■ Affiliate Primary Care Clinic ■ Chronic Dialysis Clinic (End Stage Renal Dialysis) ■ Congregate Living Health Facility ■ General Acute Care Hospital ■ Home Health Agency ■ Hospice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adult Day Health Center ■ Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled ■ Management Company - Hospital ■ Management Company - Skilled Nursing Facility or Intermediate Care Facility ■ Primary Care Clinics ■ Rural Health Clinics (Non-Urbanized Area) ■ Skilled Nursing Facilities or Intermediate Care Facilities
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Facilities that are licensed by the CDPH should be aware of how long it may take to process any applications or change requests and consider working closely with the CAU for clarification on which changes require prior approval before implementation as facilities may face a significant gap period between filing and completion of processing.

² See *Centralized Applications Unit (CAU)*, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/PROGRAMS/LNC/Pages/CentralApplicationsUnit.aspx> (last visited Nov. 10, 2016).

³ Emphasis added.

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