

Date: April 2, 2020

From: Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Organizational Excellence (10E)

Subj: COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process  
(VIEWS #02628389)

To: Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors (10N1-23)  
VA Medical Center Directors (00)

Thru: Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) *TC*

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to notify Network Directors of additional initiatives to enhance Temporary and Expedited Appointment Requirements. Effective March 30, 2020 and applicable through the end of the Presidentially Declared State of Emergency due to COVID-19. Guidance for steps specific to the following is attached:
  - a. Temporary Appointment process for licensed independent practitioners; and
  - b. Expedited Appointment process for non-licensed independent practitioners.

2. Credentialing and Privileging Specialists are asked to contact their Medical Staff Office liaison if they have questions related to the attached guidance:

Margarita Barabash	<a href="mailto:Margarita.Barabash@va.gov">Margarita.Barabash@va.gov</a>	VSHO and HRC
Sherry Corn	<a href="mailto:Sherry.Corn@va.gov">Sherry.Corn@va.gov</a>	VISNs 7, 8, 9,16
Susan Fogarty	<a href="mailto:Susan.Fogarty@va.gov">Susan.Fogarty@va.gov</a>	VISNs 4, 10, 12
Yvonne Horton	<a href="mailto:Yvonne.Horton@va.gov">Yvonne.Horton@va.gov</a>	VISNs 6, 18, 19, 22, 23
Ristene Mockel	<a href="mailto:Ristene.Mockel@va.gov">Ristene.Mockel@va.gov</a>	VISNs 15, 17, 20, 21
Damaris Noifeld	<a href="mailto:Damaris.Noifeld@va.gov">Damaris.Noifeld@va.gov</a>	VISNs 1, 2, and 5
Denise Bazzey	<a href="mailto:Denise.Bazzey2@va.gov">Denise.Bazzey2@va.gov</a>	VACO

3. Questions related to general content of this guidance in the following areas should be directed to Credentialing and Privileging:  
[10E1FMSAACTIONGROUP@va.gov](mailto:10E1FMSAACTIONGROUP@va.gov).

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Gerard R. Cox, MD, MHA  
Deputy Under Secretary for Organizational ...

Gerard R. Cox, MD, MHA

# COVID-19 Temporary/ Expedited Appointment Credentialing Process

## Guide for Credentialing Specialists

### Change in Temporary and Expedited Appointment Requirements:

**Effective March 30, 2020, and applicable through the end of the Presidentially Declared State of Emergency due to COVID-19:**

- Temporary Appointment process for licensed independent practitioners (Category 1 in VetPro: e.g., physicians, dentists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, clinical pharmacy specialists) will only require:
  - validation of one active license;
  - verification of one clinical reference; and
  - enrollment in the NPDB Continuous Query.
- Expedited Appointments for non-licensed practitioners (Category 2, 3, and 4 in VetPro: e.g., Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Respiratory Therapists, non-clinical pharmacists) will only require:
  - verification of an active license;
  - provision of a clinical reference (though verification is not required unless requested at a local level); and
  - enrollment in the NPDB Continuous Query Program (for Category 2) or a single Query (for Category 3 and 4 providers)

***NOTE: Providers who have a history of licensure action or a malpractice history meeting one or more of the following thresholds must be fully credentialed to ensure clinical competence and patient safety:***

- Three or more medical malpractice payments in payment history
- A single medical malpractice payment of \$550,000 or more
- Two medical malpractice payments totaling \$1,000,000 or more

### Whom does it Apply To?

This process may be used for providers who are new to the VA system or who have left the VA system and are returning to assist with COVID-19 clinical needs. This may be used for providers returning to a facility where they were previously credentialed.

### How does it work?

Credentialing specialists will use the new “COVID-19 Temporary Enrollment” screen in VetPro to enroll the new/returning provider and to verify the required items listed above. Once completed, the provider will be considered appointed (in relation to credentialing) for a period of 120 days. The credentialing specialist must contact the provider to submit a full credentialing application in VetPro within 30 days of the Temporary/Expedited Appointment. The credentialing specialist will then have 120 days to complete the full credentialing.

# Step-By-Step: The COVID-19 Temporary/Expedited Credentialing Process

## Step 1:

### Providers New to VHA:

Enroll the provider using the Enrollment screen as usual. Information required is: Social Security Number, Parent Facility, Date of Birth, Residential Address. Once entered, click "Save". You will then see the "Temporary" (COVID-19 only) button at the bottom of the screen.

### Former VHA providers returning to work:

Submit a VetPro Help Desk ticket to obtain access to the provider's credentialing file and go to the Enrollment Screen. You will see the "Temporary" (COVID-19 only) button at the bottom of the screen.

The screenshot displays two provider enrollment forms side-by-side. The left form is for a provider with the following details: Address: 660 HICKEY BLVD APT, City: PACIFICA, State: CALIFORNIA, Zip: 94044, Country: United States of America, Phone: 480-766-1443, and Email: AANEN42@MSN.COM. The right form is for a provider with the following details: Address: 4150 CLEMENT STREE, City: SAN FRANCISCO, State: CALIFORNIA, Zip: 94121, Country: United States of America, and Phone: 415-221-4810. Both forms have a 'Temporary (COVID-19 only)' button highlighted with a blue arrow. Other buttons include 'Credentialing Letter', 'Save', 'Refresh Provider User ID', and 'Reset'.

The following steps apply to all providers:

## Step 2: Note the Occupation Category of the Provider

Note the Occupation Category of the Provider. The Occupational Category is assigned based upon the provider's occupation and qualification requirements, specifically if they are categorized in VetPro as:

Category 1: Licensed Independent Practitioners (e.g., physicians, dentists, optometrists, psychologists, podiatrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, clinical pharmacy specialists)

Category 2: Occupations Requiring Education and Licensure (e.g., Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, social workers, physical therapists)

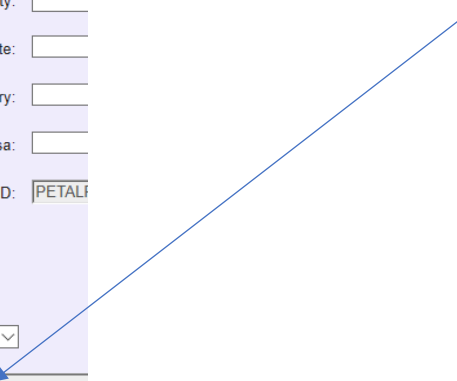
Category 3: Occupations Requiring Registration/ Certification (e.g., Diagnostic Radiology Tech, Pharmacy Technician, dietician, dental assistant)

Category 4: Other Healthcare Occupations (e.g., unlicensed social workers and unlicensed psychologists (those just finishing training but have not yet met licensure requirements))

**Enrollment**

ions: The Primary and Secondary address State fields will automatically correct a mismatched Country field  
: a complimentary State selected will clear or automatically correct the State field. Choosing an occupation  
with the actual occupation title.

*SSN: 000-00-3433	*Facility: Develop
Title: <input type="text"/>	*Birth Date: 10/09/1
*First Name: ROSE	Birth City: <input type="text"/>
Middle: <input type="text"/>	Birth State: <input type="text"/>
*Last Name: PETAL	Birth Country: <input type="text"/>
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	US Citizenship/Visa: <input type="text"/>
Gender: <input type="radio"/> Male <input checked="" type="radio"/> Female	User ID: PETALF
*Occupation: LPN/LVN	
Occ. Cat.: Occupations Requiring Education & Licensure	



### Step 3: Enter the Required Information on Behalf of the Provider

Category 1: Must enter one active license and name of a clinical reference who can attest to their current clinical ability. **NOTE: For physician assistants, the certification information is required.**

Category 2: Must enter one active license and name of a clinical reference who can attest to their current clinical ability.

Category 3: Must enter Certification or Registration information and name of a clinical reference who can attest to their current clinical ability.

Category 4: Enter the name of a clinical reference who can attest to their clinical ability.

Click “Save” – The buttons to complete the Primary Source Verification will appear.

The screenshot shows a web form interface. At the top left, there is a label "\*Reason for Temporary:" followed by a dropdown menu containing the text "COVID-19 Emergency Staffing". To the right of this is a "Comments:" label followed by a text input area. Below these elements is a "Save" button. At the bottom of the form, there are three buttons: "Temporary License ROC", "Temporary Certification ROC", and "Temporary Reference ROC". Below these three buttons is an "Add New Record" button. A blue line points from the text "The buttons to complete the Primary Source Verification will appear." to the three ROC buttons.

### Step 4: Primary Source Verification

Category 1 Providers: One active license must be verified as well as one clinical reference. This is done through a Report of Contact.

Category 2 and 3 Providers: The license, registration, or certification (as applicable) must be primary source verified. Clinical reference verification is not required unless requested at the facility level.

Category 4 Providers: No verifications are required.

### Step 5: Obtain National Practitioner Data Bank Report and Review for Licensure Actions, Malpractice History, and other significant “Red Flags”

Category 1 and 2 Providers: Enroll in the National Practitioner Data Bank Continuous Query Program.

Category 3 and 4 Providers: Complete a “one-time” NPDB Query.

**Step 6: Enter the Temporary (for Category 1) Appointment (for Category 1, 2, 3 and 4) on the Appointment Screen**

## Appointment

*Facility appointments for the provider*

<u>Select</u>	<u>Facility</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Expire</u>
No Records Found			

**Appointment Information**

**\*Appoint to Facility:**

Decision:

Appoint

Temporary Appointment

Expedited Appointment

Do Not Appoint (Explain)

Comments:

**If Appointed:**

**\*Effective Date:**

**\*Expiration Date:**

**\*Service / Product Line:**

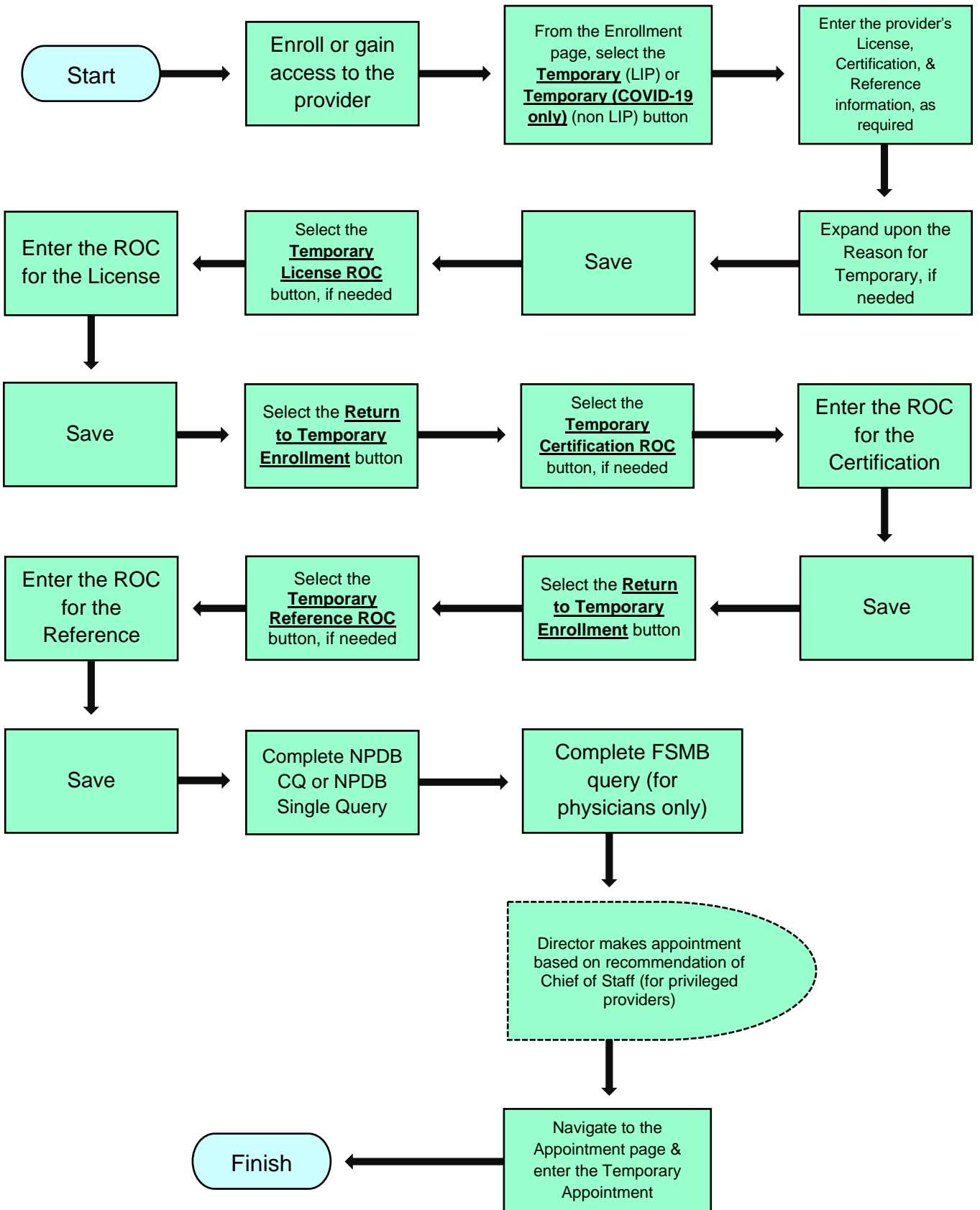
**\*Type of Appointment:**

**\*Name of Director:**

**\*Signature Location:**

**NOTE: Expiration date will default to 120 days unless you enter a shorter date.**

# Flow Chart



# Reports and Tracking

It is critical to track the temporary and expedited appointments to ensure timelines are met and providers don't "fall through the cracks. The following are the critical timelines:

- Providers must enter their full credentialing application in VetPro within 30 days of the temporary or Expedited Appointment **NOTE: Try to obtain this information as soon as possible – it will become increasingly difficult to obtain once the provider has left your facility**
- Full credentialing must be completed within 120 days of the provider submitting their full credentialing application in VetPro

## Reports to Use:

### 1. Un-submitted Providers by Facility, Specialty, and Date Range (under "Reports")

Purpose: To monitor those who have not yet submitted their full application

**Un-Submitted Providers by Facility, Specialty and Date Range**

\*Facility:

Last Name:  Last Name Compare:

First Name:  First Name Compare:

SSN:  SSN Compare:

Occupation Category:  Occupation:

Specialty:

From Date:

To Date:

Displaying 3 out of 3 records that matched your query

*Providers matching the search criteria*

Select	Last Name	First Name	SSN	Facility	Occupation	File Status	Cred Start
<input type="checkbox"/> Select Row	DFAF	FDFA	432-**-****	Development Test Facility (999)	Physician	Credentialing - (Un-Submitted)	Mar 31
<input type="checkbox"/> Select Row	FROZEN	ELSA	111-**-****	Development Test Facility (999)	Registered Nurse	Credentialing - (Un-Submitted)	Mar 31
<input type="checkbox"/> Select Row	.....	.....	000-**-****	Development Test	.....	Credentialing - (Un-Submitted)	.....



## 2. Current Expedited Appointments and Current Temporary Appointments (under “Messages”)

Purpose: To monitor those providers at your facility who are currently on an Expedited Appointment or on a Temporary Appointment along with their expiration dates so you can prioritize workload accordingly.

## 3. Expired Expedited Appointments and Expired Temporary Appointments (under “Messages”)

Purpose: Provides a list of providers who are operating under expired appointments and who have not been fully credentialed and appointed within the required timeframe.

