

## Electronic Statement of Deficiencies and Plan of Corrections

The purpose of this information sheet is to inform Federally Certified Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Nursing Facilities (NFs) that:

- The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is participating with the Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) electronic 2567 and plan of correction (ePOC) program;
- SNF/NFs **MUST** enroll in this process **NOW** in order to take advantage of this increased efficiency at your next Federal and State survey/complaint investigation.

### Overview

Alabama is pleased to be selected by CMS as one of the first states to implement ePOC. ADPH's participation is supported from representatives of Alabama's long term care industry. At this time, SNF/NFs are the only provider with the ePOC option. **All skilled nursing homes must participate.**

Once a SNF/NF is enrolled, ADPH will electronically issue 2567s. ADPH will utilize the ePOC process for review of all Federal SNF/NF plans of correction (POC) for recertification surveys, complaint surveys, Life Safety Code surveys, Revisit surveys, and Federal Monitoring Surveys.

Basic steps in the ePOC process are much the same as in the current paper-based process, but are completed using ePOC functionality in the Federal database and online applications. ADPH will use the ePOC process to issue statements of deficiencies to SNF/NFs and to review SNF/NFs submitted ePOCs. Providers will use a federal Web based application to review posted statements of deficiency (SODs) and letters, and will submit POCs to ADPH.

The ePOC system will provide automatic email notifications to facilitate communication between ADPH and providers. Reports will be available to track the 2567 and ePOC process.

### How can facilities enroll in the POC?

SNF/NFs must enroll to receive their statement of deficiencies electronically and to submit their POC electronically.

Enrollment involves registering for an ePOC account with CMS. Each facility will set up an ePOC CMS Net account with a log in and password. If the person who handles Minimum Data Set (MDS) submissions will also be involved with ePOC, they can use the same MDS account and will be able to activate ePOC on that account.

An individual with a SNF/NF without an MDS account can enroll now via a process identified on the CMSNet page of the [QTSO website](#). Select the first link under "Access Request Forms", fill out the request form, and follow the instructions to submit it to CMS.

DETAILED PROVIDER ENROLLMENT DIRECTIONS, including screen shots, are included below.

### **When can a SNF/NF provider enroll for ePOC?**

NOW.

### **How will I know that I've been activated?**

At the time of enrollment, enrollees must email ADPH at [epoc.signup@adph.state.al.us](mailto:epoc.signup@adph.state.al.us) so that we can enable your provider for ePOC in our internal database system.

You will receive confirmation at the completion of your registration. The system will generate an email confirmation to the email address entered on the registration form. Please be sure the email address given is a permanent email address.

### **How do I access CMS training for ePOC?**

CMS has a webinar for the ePOC. To access the webinar: Go to the [QTSO website \(https://www.qtso.com/\)](https://www.qtso.com/) and select Online Training.

- Select ePOC.
- Enter your name and email address to initiate the training.
- Select ePOC Provider Webinar and enter the webinar pass code `epocpvdr`

*Please note, it may take several minutes to download the WebEx webinar.*

### **Directions for SNF/NFs submitting ePOC:**

As SNF/NFs develop the plan of correction, the SNF/NF provider will have the option of submitting the plan for all tags at once or by individual tag. ***ADPH requests providers submit the plan of correction for all tags at one time and not individually for each tag.*** This will ensure the most efficient review.

### **What type of resources/support will be available for questions?**

ADPH will have computer support staff available for questions regarding the ePOC process itself. Emails can be sent to: [epoc.support@adph.state.al.us](mailto:epoc.support@adph.state.al.us).

For questions regarding your ePOC CMS Net account (login/password issues) or ePOC enrollment, please contact the CMS Net help desk at 1-888-238-2122.

**How will our facility re-activate an ePOC account that has expired?** Accounts will expire after 180 days of non-use. Reminder email messages will be sent out prior to these accounts actually expiring. Should an account expire, contact the CMS Net help desk at 1-888-238-2122.

## For existing MDS account users: Steps for using Access Update to add ePOC access to an existing MDS account

1. Login to the CMS system and access the ePOC User Registration. This can be done from from the CMS QIES System for Providers link. If you are unsure of how to get here, follow steps 3 through 8 above.
2. On the top of the registration page you should see a number of links.

- a. Click Access Update.

- b. Enter your MDS username and MDS password. Click submit. This should give you a confirmation that ePOC access has been added to your account.
3. You can now access the ePOC system by following the steps above starting with step 14.

If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please contact us in writing, the Alabama Department of Public Health, Health Care Facilities, 201 Monroe Street, Suite 710, Montgomery, Alabama, 36130-3017, [epoc.support@adph.state.al.us](mailto:epoc.support@adph.state.al.us) or by calling 334-206-5111.

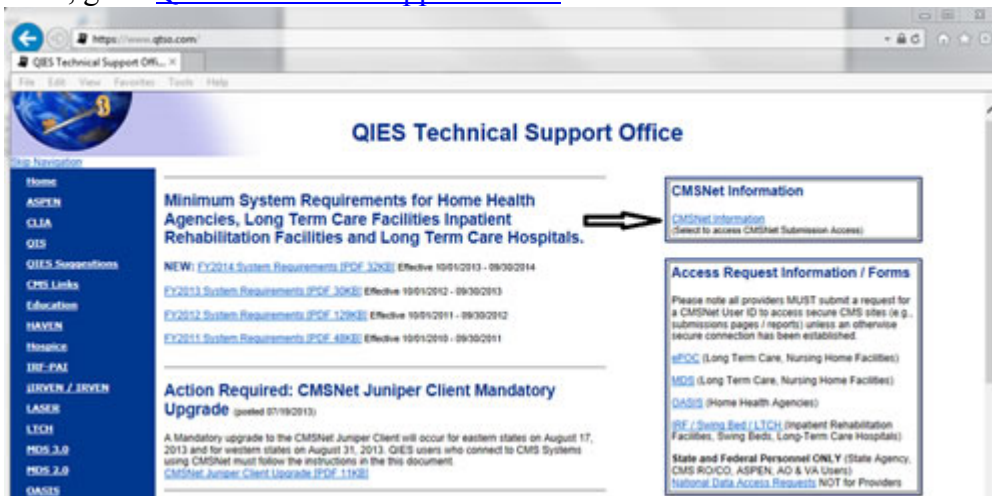
# Steps to Enroll in ePOC:

**Note:** There are two sections of instructions. One set of instructions is for those individuals who already have a MDS account and the second section is for those individuals who do not have a MDS account.

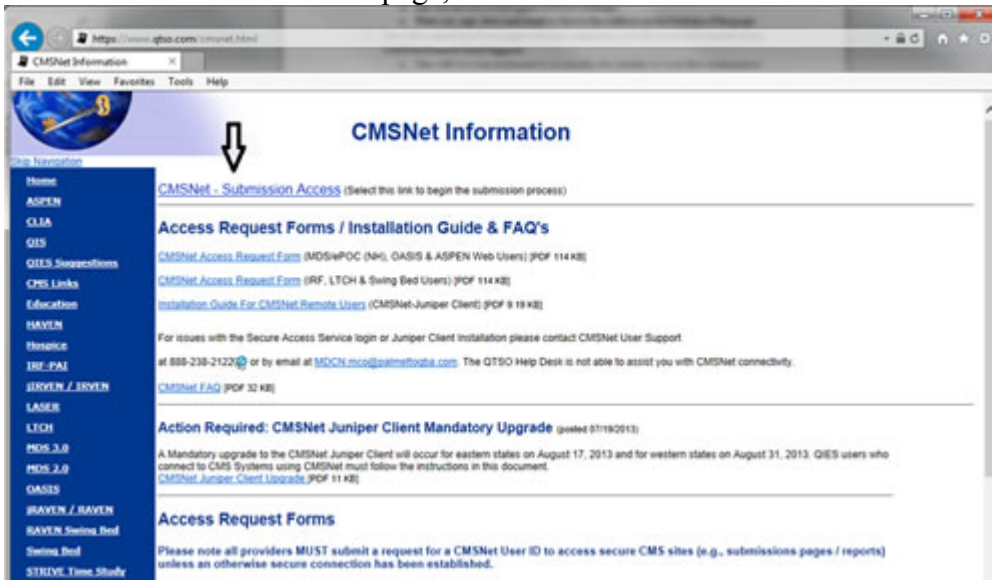
## For those individuals who do not have a MDS account.

To start the process to get access to ePOC, you must first submit the [CMSNet Access Request form \(PDF\)](#).

- a. Ensure that you select Create New Access.
  - b. Nothing needs to be input for the Existing User ID field.
  - c. On Provider Information you **MUST** check the ePOC box.
  - d. Fill out the rest of the application accordingly.
  - e. Print out, sign, date and email or fax to the CMSNet address on the bottom of the CMSNet Access Request form.
2. Once the request has been approved and completed, you will receive two emails from CMSNet Remote User Support:
- a. One will contain your username to access the site.
  - b. The second will contain your password, which will need to be changed upon first log in.
3. Next, go to [QIES Technical Support Office](#) and click on the CMSNet Information link.



4. On the CMSNet Information page, click the CMSNet–Submission Access link.

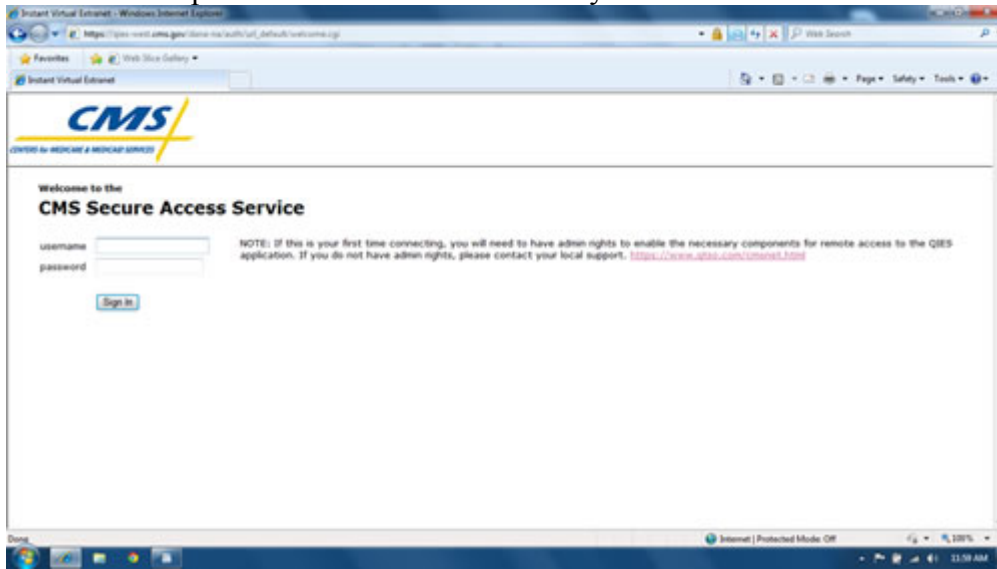


5. You will then be taken to a page with a map. Click on your state.

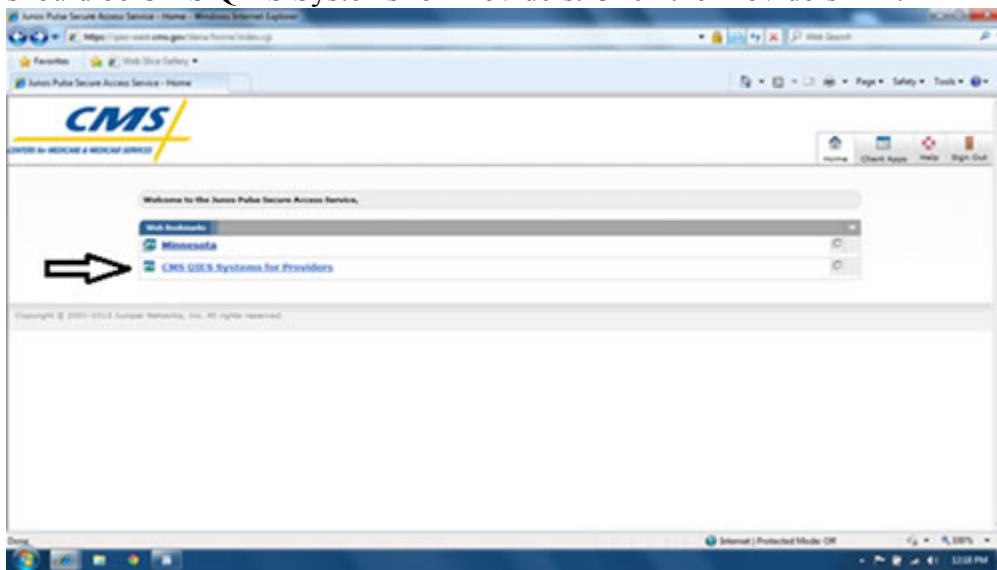


6. You'll then receive a warning that you're accessing a government website. Click proceed. You'll then be asked to login to the CMS Secure Access Service. Login using the

username and password that were emailed to you.



7. Once in you now have two choices, one being the state your facility is in and the other should be CMS QIES Systems for Providers. Click the Providers link.



8. You will then see a link for MDS and ePOC User Registration. Click on that link.

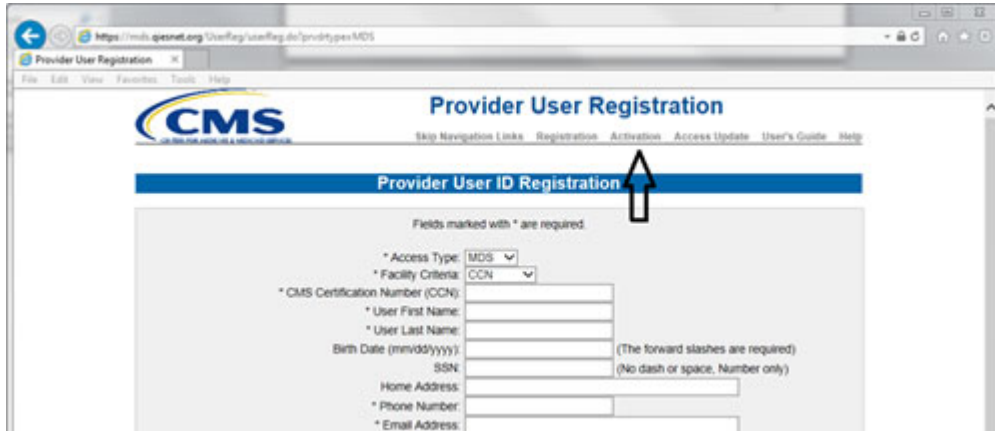


9. You should now see a Provider User ID Registration page.

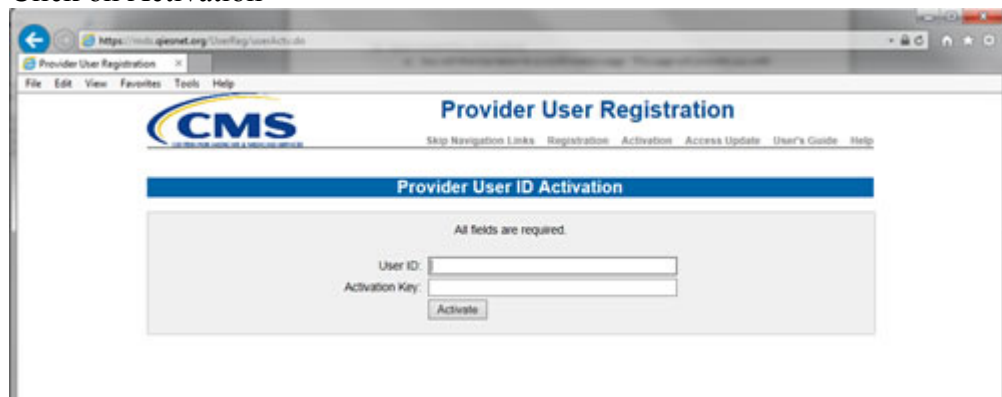


- a. At the beginning of the form there is a drop down box, click and highlight ePOC
  - b. Your CCN is your federal Medicare Provider number or your PTAN number.
  - c. Fill out all information boxes with an asterisk with your work information (work email address, work phone number)
  - d. Follow the Password Rules for establishing your password (as this will be your password to access your ePOC account)
  - e. Answer the questions accordingly.
10. Upon completion, click submit.
    - a. You will then be taken to a confirmation page. This page will provide you with your ePOC user id (MDSxxxxxxx). Please write down this id or print this page.
    - b. The system will also generate an email to the email address entered in the registration form. In that email you will receive a 32 character activation key.
    - c. Check your email (you will have to sign out to access your email). It can sometimes take several minutes for this email to appear.

- d. Copy this activation key and paste it somewhere you can easily access (such as a notepad or Word document).
- 11. Log back into the [CMS website](#) and go to the registration page again by **following steps 3 through 8**.
- 12. You should be back on the Registration page. At the top you should see a number of links.

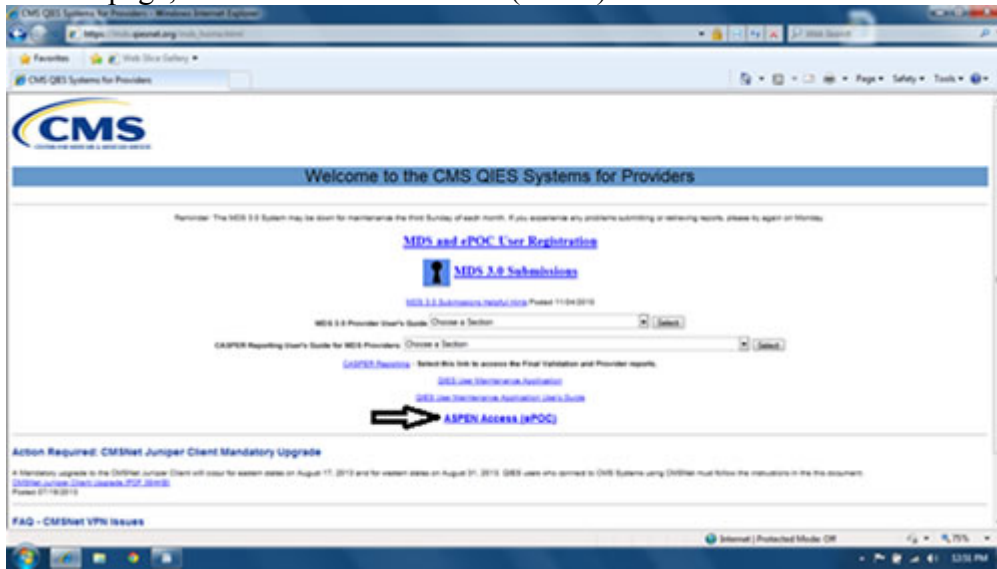


- a. Click on Activation

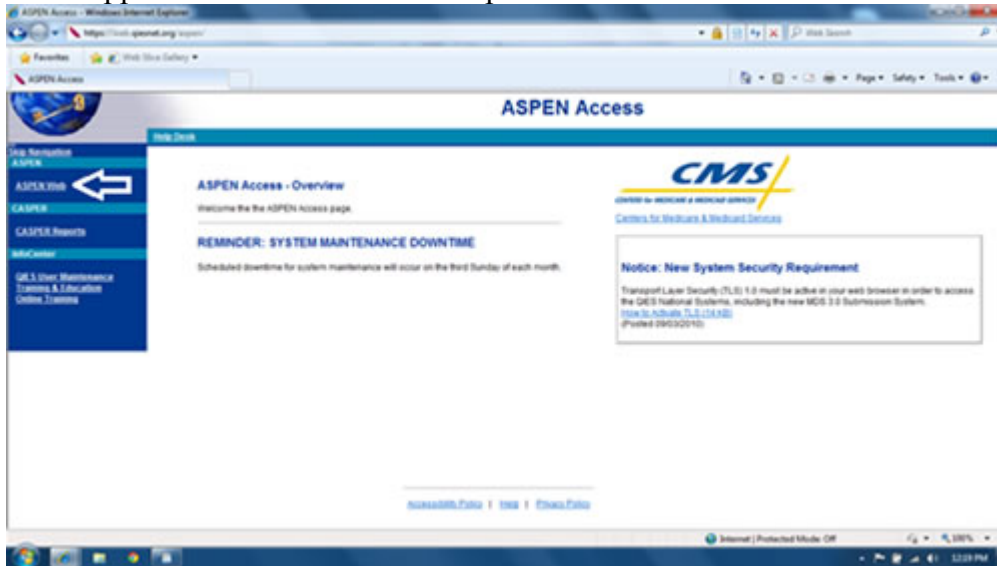


- b. Type in your ePOC user id (MDSxxxxxxx) which you would have gotten from the confirmation page on step 10a.
- c. Copy your activation key from your document from step 10d.
- d. Click Activate. You should then receive a confirmation that your account has been activated.
- 13. Once the activation is accepted, you are now able to access the ePOC system.
- 14. To get to the ePOC system, go back to the CMS QIES Systems for Providers page. See steps 3-7 above if you are unsure how to get back here.

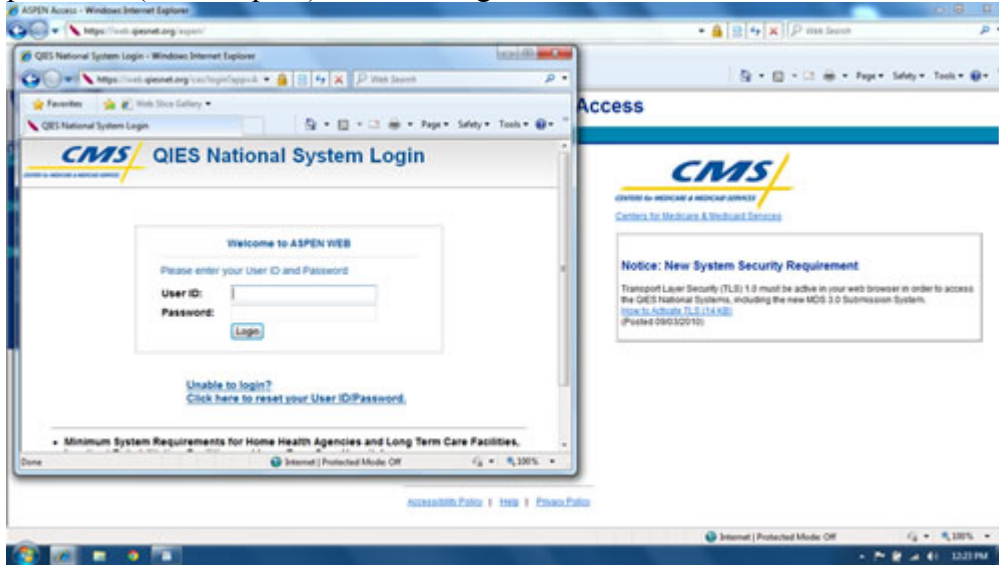
15. On this page, click the ASPEN Access (ePOC) link.



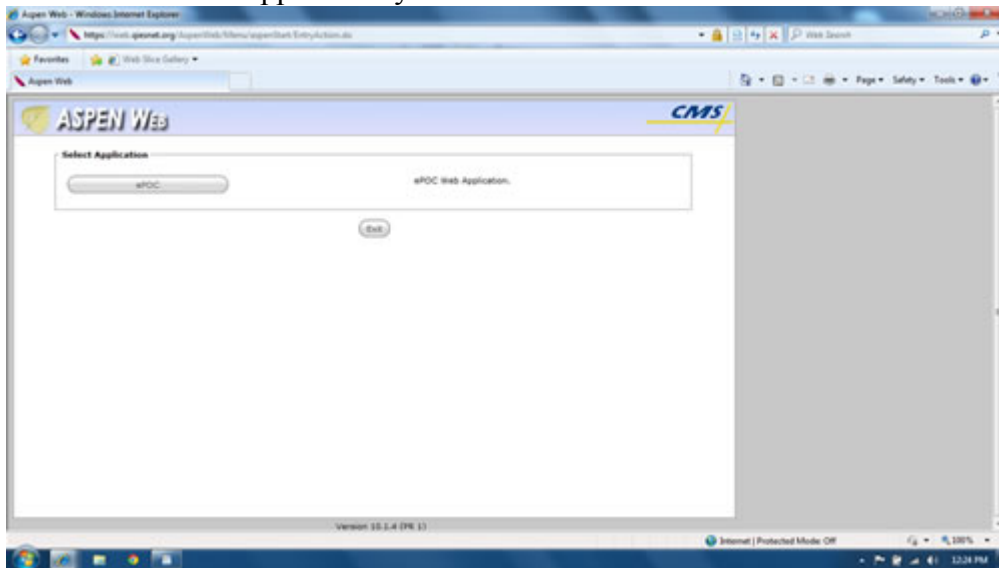
16. In the upper left hand corner click Aspen Web.



17. You will then be prompted to login using your ePOC user id (from step 10a) and password (from step 9d) and click login.



18. A new screen will appear and you should Click the ePOC tab.



19. At the time of enrollment, enrollees must email ADPH at [epoc.signup@adph.state.al.us](mailto:epoc.signup@adph.state.al.us) so that we can enable your provider for ePOC in our internal database system.
20. Congratulations and welcome to the online ePOC.



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Donald E. Williamson, MD  
State Health Officer

**IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ IMMEDIATELY**

February 11, 2014

Dear Administrator:

RE: Electronic Plans of Correction (ePOC)

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is pleased to inform you that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is allowing Alabama to be the fourth state to implement the ePOC process for certified nursing home providers. This will allow the ADPH to send the statements of deficiencies to the provider electronically. The provider will then submit the plan of correction to ADPH electronically. Communication will be facilitated through the use of email correspondence.

Enclosed with this letter is information giving an overview of the process and how to enroll. **It is extremely important that all certified nursing homes enroll now.** CMS requires that all providers enroll at the beginning of implementation of the ePOC process.

We have heard providers ask for this capability and we are thrilled that Alabama has been selected to participate. Please enroll now. If you have questions please call Pamela Carpenter or Mia Sadler at 334-206-5111.

Sincerely,

*Mia Sadler, RN*

Mia Sadler, RN  
State Program Director

Enclosures

JP/MS