

# HealthCare.gov Testing to Be Confidential

## *Insurers Checking Website Are Banned From Publicly Discussing Their Findings*

By

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The new HealthCare.gov is set to open for broad testing by insurers on Tuesday, but they're not going to be publicly talking—or tweeting—about it.

On Monday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services emailed insurers that it would require “all testers to acknowledge the confidentiality of this process to access the testing environment,” according to a copy reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The agency didn’t require such an agreement of insurers last year ahead of the launch of HealthCare.gov, a CMS spokesman said.

Last fall, early hints about the [troubled launch of the federal marketplace](#) emerged weeks before it went live on Oct. 1. Insurance executives and other sources noted possible problems.

Testing this year is occurring earlier, and for a longer period than last year, and insurers haven’t finalized their plans, the spokesman said.

The testing ahead of the Nov. 15 launch “involves access to proprietary issuer information and secure systems...over several weeks, and we wanted to ensure testers understood to treat this information confidentially,” he said.

The email alert spells out exactly what is expected of participants: Insurance-industry officials “will not use, disclose, describe, post to a public form, or in any way share Test Data with any person or entity, including but not limited to the media,” unless the recipient also has agreed to the confidentiality provisions.

The new confidentiality agreement won’t just cover the industry data that will be included in the marketplace’s testing environment. It also includes “results of this testing exercise and any information describing or otherwise relating to the performance or functionality” of HealthCare.gov.

A spokesman for America’s Health Insurance Plans said, the insurers “engaged in testing are focused on avoiding the unfortunate experience that consumers faced last year and nothing more.”

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