



## Colorado Rural Health Center

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# Location requirements for Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Rural Health Clinic Certification

In order to be eligible for Rural Health Clinic certification in the U.S. and in Colorado, the prospective clinic address:

- Cannot be located in a U.S. Census Bureau defined Urbanized Area.
- Must be located in a Medically Underserved Area (MUA) or Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), or in an area designated as underserved by the state's Governor.

**Urban** – The U.S. Census Bureau classifies Urbanized Areas (UA's) through a complex formula, which includes denoting Urban Areas as regions with 50,000 or more people. The UA classification is not county-based. The Census Bureau does not identify or classify entire counties as urban or rural. Geographic entities such as places, counties, Metropolitan Areas, etc., are often split between urban and rural territory. Based on the 2000 census, Colorado has ten Urbanized Areas.

**Rural** - Territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban are considered rural.

### Am I Rural?

For clinics seeking Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Rural Health Clinic Certification, the determination as to whether or not the exact clinic location exists outside of an urbanized area can be complicated. The Rural Assistance Center (RAC) has a resource that can help. RAC's website contains a "rural locator" where providers and staff can enter a proposed clinic address and search the location per CMS requirements for RHC certification: <http://maps.rupri.org/circ/racrural/amirural.asp>.

To access the features of this valuable resource:

1. Enter the prospective clinic's address, city, state and zip code
2. Click on "Next"
3. Click on "CMS-Rural Health Clinics Program"
4. Click on "Am I Rural"

If the clinic location exists outside of the US Census Bureau defined Urban Area and is considered rural, the following message will appear, "YES - The Rural Health Clinics Program requires that your location be outside an Urbanized Area as defined by the U.S. Census. This location does not reside within an Urbanized Area." For more information, please contact Rich Marquez, RHC Program Coordinator at (303) 577-0373, (800) 851-6782, or [rm@coruralhealth.org](mailto:rm@coruralhealth.org)

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"Enhancing healthcare services in Colorado by providing information, education, linkages, tools & energy toward addressing rural healthcare issues."

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