

DATE: 11/7/16 ~~-Revised 12/30/16-~~

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #16-11-05

SUBJECT: Shortened COMPASS Application and Expedited Processing of Medical Assistance Applications for Inmates Being Released From Correctional Facilities

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Inez Titus
Director
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To provide updated policy and procedures for the expedited processing of Medical Assistance (MA) applications for inmates who are being released from State Correctional Institutions (SCIs), Community Corrections Centers (CCCs)/Contract Facilities, and county prisons. **This includes use of the shortened Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services (COMPASS) application for inmates who are being released from SCIs, CCCs/Contract Facilities, and county prisons to a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF).**

BACKGROUND

Many inmates, particularly those with serious mental or physical health conditions, require essential health care upon release from incarceration. In order to improve the continuity of care for this population, the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) have collaborated to create a process to ensure that MA benefits will be in place for inmates on the date of release from incarceration.

DISCUSSION

On November 13, 2016, a shortened health care application will be available on COMPASS website to correctional facilities that are registered Community Partners (CPs) and that have assigned Non-MA Provider numbers (See Attachments). The process begins when an individual's release date from the correctional facility is established. The Correctional Facility Health Care Release Coordinator will ensure completion of the COMPASS application for the individual prior to the scheduled release date. Upon receipt, the County Assistance Office (CAO) will process the application, and if eligible, authorize MA no sooner than 15 days prior to the individual's estimated release date from the correctional facility, using the release date as the MA begin date. This process will require close cooperation and communication between the correctional facility and CAO staff.

PROCEDURES

Implementation of this process requires actions by the correctional facility and CAO staff:

Correctional Facility:

1. Verify the individual's release date.
2. Complete an Employability Assessment Form ([PA 1663](#)) for all disabled individuals. If the PA 1663 indicates the individual is permanently disabled or will be disabled for a period of twelve (12) months or longer, a Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) Referral Form ([PA 731](#)) will be completed and signed by the individual.
3. Complete a Health-Sustaining Medication Assessment Form ([PA 1671](#)) for lawful permanent residents (LPRs) subject to the five-year bar and lawfully present non-pregnant adults age 21 and over who are not disabled but require a health-sustaining medication.
4. Submit an application through COMPASS prior to the individual's release date by clicking on the "MA Inmate Release" button located on the left hand side of the dashboard. The new "MA Inmate Release" landing page will capture the following data necessary to initiate the shortened application process: the correctional facility's Non-MA provider number, the individual's release date, and the individual's release address. This information will carry over onto the application.
 - Submit the application no sooner than fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the individual's release date and no later than five (5) calendar days prior to the individual's release date.
 - The application will be submitted to the CAO in the individual's county of residence. **See note below to determine individual's county of residence.**

NOTE: The individual's release address will be their home address, CCC/contract facility (halfway house) address, or the RTF address that they are being placed in after being released. If the individual is being placed in an RTF upon release from an SCI, the RTF address should be used as the release address. If the individual is being placed in an RTF upon release from a county prison, the individual's home address should be used as the release address.

- If the individual is homeless or does not have an established release address, the CAO address in the county they intend to reside may be used. The individual will be instructed by the correctional facility to report any address change to the CAO.

- Scan or attach a file, or send via fax, all necessary documentation.

NOTE: CPs should not enter the comment “for expedited determination of MA eligibility” when applying through this process. They will continue to enter comments when applying for SCI inmates’ inpatient hospital services.

5. Immediately contact the CAO if any change to the release date is expected or occurs.

CAO

Upon receipt of the new Work Item Type “PRE-RLS MA” in the Workload Dashboard (WLD), the caseworker will:

1. Review the application information, including any accompanying verification. The Signature page of the application will now include a “Release Date” field which will be located between the “Type of Community Based Organization” and “Community Organization Provider Number” fields.

NOTE: Ensure receipt and accurate completion of the [PA 1663](#) and [PA 731](#) if the inmate is permanently disabled.

2. Determine eligibility in the appropriate MA category:
 - If an individual reports a disability, which has been verified by the Social Security Administration (SSA) or the individual is Medical Review Team (MRT) certified, the CAO will determine eligibility for non-Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) MA first.
 - If an individual reports a disability that is not verified by SSA or MRT, but meets criteria for MAGI MA, they should be reviewed for MAGI MA categories. The CAO will then initiate the Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) referral. The individual will continue to be eligible in a MAGI category until either SSA or MRT determines the individual to be disabled.

NOTE: The CAO must request necessary verification to make an eligibility determination for non-MAGI MA and MAGI MA if verification cannot be obtained from electronic data sources.

3. If all required verifications are available when the application is received, and the individual is eligible, authorize ongoing MA in eCIS no sooner than 15 days prior to the individual’s release date from the correctional facility, using the release date as the MA begin date. **For individuals entering an RTF, please refer to OPS 15-12-03 for procedures on processing the application.**

NOTE: If the correctional facility submits the application after the release date, the MA begin date will be the application submission date. If there is a medical need, the CAO can go back using the current retroactive MA rules (no earlier than first day of the third month prior to the application date), but no earlier than the release date.

4. Send notices to the individual and the correctional facility.

NOTE: Applications for this process should not be confused with applications for SCI inmates' inpatient hospital services (see OPS110803). Those applications will continue to be transferred to the Central Unit for processing.

NEXT STEPS

1. Review this Operations Memorandum with appropriate staff.
2. Contact your Area Manager if you have any questions.
3. OPS151204 becomes obsolete with the issuance of this Operations Memorandum.

Attachments:

[SCI Non-MA Provider Numbers](#)

[CCCs and Contract Facilities Non-MA Provider Numbers](#)

[County Prison Non-MA Provider Numbers](#)