

Rule No. 560-X-64-.15 Grievances and Fair Hearings of Integrated Care Networks – NEW RULE

(1) An integrated care network (ICN) with a grievance concerning the Medicaid Agency as addressed in Section 22-6-225(c) of the Alabama Code, shall abide by the following procedures.

(2) For the purposes of this rule, an “ICN grievance” means any dispute or claim of an ICN against the Medicaid Agency for which an opportunity for hearing is provided by law or specific contractual provision, excepting disputes or claims for which the State of Alabama, the Medicaid Agency, or their officials, employees, or agents are immune under the constitutions or laws of the State of Alabama and/or the United States.

(3) An ICN shall request a fair hearing with the Medicaid Agency to review an ICN grievance. The request for fair hearing must be in writing and must be filed with the Medicaid Agency within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the occurrence upon which the ICN grievance is based. Provided, however, this deadline shall not apply to any occurrence discovered upon receipt of an audit, reconciliation or report that provides notice to the ICN of an occurrence that was not previously discoverable in the exercise of reasonable care. In such case the deadline for requesting a fair hearing shall be sixty (60) calendar days from the ICN’s receipt of such audit, reconciliation, or report. An ICN’s request for a fair hearing with the Medicaid Agency relating to the imposition of a sanction must be in writing and must be filed with the Medicaid Agency within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the sanction notice. The written request shall include a statement of the factual and/or legal basis for the ICN’s dispute or claim and a statement of the relief or action sought. The Medicaid Agency will not accept requests for fair hearings that are outside the filing deadline. The ICN may submit the written request for fair hearing to the Medicaid Agency by mail, hand-delivery, facsimile or electronic mail, and the request must be received by the Medicaid Agency on or before the filing deadline.

(4) Upon filing a written request for a fair hearing, the ICN may also request an informal conference with the Medicaid Agency to seek a resolution of the ICN grievance.

(5) If the ICN grievance is not resolved through informal conference with the Medicaid Agency, the ICN grievance shall be reviewed in a fair hearing before an impartial hearing officer in accordance with the requirements for contested case proceedings under the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, Section 41-22-1 *et seq.* of the Alabama Code. The hearing authority for all fair hearings of ICN grievances shall be the Commissioner of the Medicaid Agency, who shall appoint one or more hearing officers to conduct fair hearings and submit findings and recommendations to the Commissioner for final decision on each ICN grievance. The hearing officer shall not have been involved in any way with the ICN grievance in question.

(6) A fair hearing shall be impartially conducted and held at the Medicaid Agency’s central office in Montgomery. Written notice of the date, time, place and nature of the fair hearing shall be sent by certified mail to the ICN’s address of record and may also be communicated by email or facsimile transmission by the Director, Hearings of the Medicaid Agency, or the designated hearing officer, at least ten (10) calendar days before the hearing is to be held. The notice shall comply with the requirements of Section 41-22-12(b) of the Alabama Code.

(7) The ICN may be represented at the fair hearing by legal counsel at its own expense. The ICN may call witnesses and may examine witnesses called by other parties.

(8) The Medicaid Agency shall be responsible for payment of the hearing officer(s) fees and expenses and any court reporter's fees and expenses related to the fair hearing.

(9) All fair hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sections 41-22-12 through 41-22-19 of the Alabama Code, unless otherwise noted in this rule. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing, the findings and recommendations of the hearing officer shall be submitted to the Commissioner of the Medicaid Agency, who shall make a final decision within thirty (30) calendar days of the recommendation. The Medicaid Agency shall promptly send a copy of the final decision to the ICN's address of record by certified mail.

(10) The ICN may seek judicial review of the final decision of the Medicaid Agency in accordance with the provisions of Sections 41-22-20 and 41-22-21 of the Alabama Code.

(11) This rule shall not be applicable to any grievance or appeal of a provider or Medicaid Beneficiary filed pursuant to the provisions of Section 22-6-225(b) of the Alabama Code or rules promulgated by the Medicaid Agency pursuant thereto providing for grievances and appeals of providers and Medicaid Beneficiaries.

(12) Nothing in this rule is intended to create or establish new causes of action in any court. Nothing in this rule shall be construed as a waiver of any sovereign, qualified, or any other type of immunity.

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Statutory Authority: Code of Alabama, 1975 Section 22-6-150 *et seq.* and 41-22-12 through 41-22-19.

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