

<b>STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &amp; SOCIAL SERVICES</b>  <b>SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES</b>  <b>POLICY &amp; PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>	<b>SECTION: 10</b> PCA Program	<b>Number:</b> 10-11	<b>Page:</b> 1
	<b>SUBJECT:</b> PCA Service Level Authorization Start Date		
	<b>APPROVED:</b>  Duane G. Mayes, Director		<b>DATE:</b> 6/14/13
	<i>Replaces policy signed 10/29/07</i> <i>Effective June 17, 2013</i>		

**Purpose:**

To establish prior authorization effective dates for personal care assistance (PCA) services consistent with Medicaid regulations.

**Policy**

Under Medicaid regulations at 7 AAC 125.024(d), a recipient's personal care service level authorization or amendment to a personal care service level authorization developed under 7 AAC 125.026 does not take effect until approved by the State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS). Effective immediately, unless an exception exists under 7 AAC 125.150(a) or (b), the start date for the prior authorization, whether it is an initial, a renewal, or an amendment will be **the date of approval** by SDS, unless it will result in a reduction. If a service level authorization is reduced, SDS will continue to authorize services for 10 days from the date of approval (the reduction will go into effect 10 days from the date of the notice of the reduction). This policy applies to all service level authorizations and *Change of Information (COI)* forms received on or after the effective date of this policy. SDS will continue to extend prior authorizations for recipients in the process of renewing their PCA services.

The Division will continue to maintain its system of expedited consideration for assessments and changes of information in accordance with 7 AAC 125.020(d). PCA agencies may submit a *Request for Expedited Consideration* form when the following circumstances are present: an applicant/recipient's discharge from an acute care or nursing facility is imminent or recent, an applicant/recipient is diagnosed with a terminal illness with a life expectancy of 6 months or less, an applicant/recipient's primary caregiver is unable to provide care due to the caregiver's declining health or an emergency, or an applicant/recipient has been referred for expedited consideration by Adult Protective Services or the Office of Children's Services.

**Authority**

7 AAC 125.020(d) Assessment; levels of assistance; AAC 125.024(d) Personal care service level authorization; 7 AAC 125.150(a) and (b) Agency-based personal care program; personal care agencies.

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## Procedures

### A. Initial Application

Prior authorizations for initial PCA service applications are effective the date SDS approves the authorization with the following exceptions:

An agency-based program may provide services without a service level authorization if

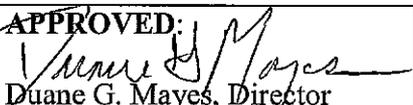
1. the recipient is being or has been discharged from a general acute care hospital or nursing facility;
2. the recipient has a discharge plan or a physician's confirmation of diagnosis and request for personal care services to begin immediately upon discharge;
3. home health services are not available or indicated and has a plan to have an assessment done by SDS no more than three days after discharge;
4. the recipient's primary caregiver is absent due to an emergency and lack of PCA services will result in immediate hospitalization or placement in a nursing facility. The recipient must have an assessment done within three days after the caregiver absence occurs; the three days may be extended if an SDS assessor is not available to conduct the assessment in the three day period.

### B. Renewal Application

Prior authorizations for renewal PCA service applications are effective the date SDS approves the authorization, except that If a plan is reduced, the effective date of the reduction is 10 days from the date of authorization. (Example: Reduction authorized by SDS on July 1<sup>st</sup>; effective date of reduction is July 11<sup>th</sup>).

### C. Expedited Service Level Authorization Request

1. Prior authorizations for expedited PCA service assessments are effective the date SDS approves the authorization, except when a plan is reduced, the effective date of the reduction is 10 days from the authorization date.
2. To request expedited consideration, the provider submits to SDS a *Request for Expedited Consideration* form verifying that one of the following circumstances exist:
  - a. Imminent or recent recipient discharge for an acute care hospital or nursing facility;
  - b. The recipient has received a diagnosis of a terminal illness, and is expected to live no longer than six months;

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- c. The recipient has experienced a significant change in their physical condition that is not reflected in the most recent PCAT, and that will require immediate hospitalization or placement in a nursing facility if PCA services are not provided or increased;
- d. The recipient's primary caregiver is absent due to an emergency or declining health; the primary caregiver is unable to provide care to the recipient, and the recipient will require immediate hospitalization or placement in a nursing facility if PCA services are not provided or increased.

**D. Change of Information/Amendment Request**

1. Prior Authorizations for PCA service COI/Amendment requests are effective the date SDS approves the authorization, except when a plan is reduced, the effective date of the reduction is 10 days from the authorization date.
2. The PCA agency is responsible for notifying SDS of any improvement in the recipient's condition and to request any appropriate reductions in service through a COI/Amendment.