

Oklahoma Health Care Authority

The Oklahoma Health Authority (OHCA) values your feedback and input. It is very important that you provide your comments regarding the proposed rule change by the comment due date. Comments can be submitted on the OHCA's [Proposed Changes Blog](#).

OHCA COMMENT DUE DATE: March 3, 2022

The proposed policy changes are currently in effect as Emergency Rules and must be promulgated as Permanent Rules. The proposed policy was presented at the July 6, 2021 Tribal Consultation. Additionally, this proposal was presented to the Medical Advisory Committee on September 9, 2021 and the OHCA Board of Directors on November 17, 2021. Furthermore, this proposal will be presented at a Public Hearing scheduled for March 8, 2022. Finally, the proposed changes are scheduled to be presented as permanent rules to the OHCA Board of Directors on March 16, 2022.

Reference: APA WF 21-19

SUMMARY:

Appeals to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) - The proposed revisions will comply with Senate Bill 207 by updating policies regarding appeals to the Agency's CEO.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority Act, Section 5007 (C)(2) of Title 63 of Oklahoma Statutes; Section 5052(C) of Title 63 of Oklahoma Statutes; The Oklahoma Health Care Authority Board; Senate Bill 207

RULE IMPACT STATEMENT:

STATE OF OKLAHOMA OKLAHOMA HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

SUBJECT: Rule Impact Statement
APA WF # 21-19

A. Brief description of the purpose of the rule:

The proposed rule changes will comply with Senate Bill 207 by revising policies regarding appeals to the Agency's chief executive officer (CEO) pursuant to 63 O.S. Section 5052(C). The changes will note that the CEO may only designate an administrative law judge (ALJ) at another state agency, that is established in the State Medicaid Plan, and approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to hear and decide a CEO appeal. Further revisions will clarify that in-person hearing requests will need to be submitted on the updated LD-4 form.

- B. A description of the classes of persons who most likely will be affected by the proposed rule, including classes that will bear the cost of the proposed rule, and any information on cost impacts received by the agency from any private or public entities:

SoonerCare members and providers will be affected by the proposed rule. This rule should not place any cost burden on private or public entities. No information on any cost impacts were received from any entity.

- C. A description of the classes of persons who will benefit from the proposed rule:

SoonerCare members and providers will benefit from the proposed rule changes that allow the chief executive officer to designate an administrative law judge to review appeals. These changes will help to streamline the process for appealing to the CEO and could potentially cut down on time burdens.

Additionally, SoonerCare members will benefit from the language that makes telephonic hearings the preferred type of hearing. This will help to alleviate any burdens that may have been caused by having to appear in-person.

- D. A description of the probable economic impact of the proposed rule upon the affected classes of persons or political subdivisions, including a listing of all fee changes and, whenever possible, a separate justification for each fee change:

There is no probable economic impact and there are no fee changes associated with the rule change for the above classes of persons or any political subdivision.

- E. The probable costs and benefits to the agency and to any other agency of the implementation and enforcement of the proposed rule, the source of revenue to be used for implementation and enforcement of the proposed rule, and any anticipated effect on state revenues, including a projected net loss or gain in such revenues if it can be projected by the agency:

The proposed rule changes are budget neutral.

- F. A determination of whether implementation of the proposed rule will have an economic impact on any political subdivisions or require their cooperation in implementing or enforcing the rule:

The proposed rule changes will not have an economic impact on any political subdivision or require their cooperation in implementing or enforcing the rule changes.

- G. A determination of whether implementation of the proposed rule will have an adverse effect on small business as provided by the Oklahoma Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Act:

The Agency does not anticipate that the proposed rule changes will have an adverse effect on small businesses.

- H. An explanation of the measures the agency has taken to minimize compliance costs and a determination of whether there are less costly or non-regulatory methods or less intrusive methods for achieving the purpose of the proposed rule:

The Agency has taken measures to determine that there are no other legal methods to achieve the purpose of the proposed rule. Measures included a formal public comment period and tribal consultation.

- I. A determination of the effect of the proposed rule on the public health, safety and environment and, if the proposed rule is designed to reduce significant risks to the public health, safety and environment, an explanation of the nature of the risk and to what extent the proposed rule will reduce the risk:

The proposed rule changes are not anticipated to have an effect on and are not designed to reduce any significant risks to the public health, safety, and environment.

- J. A determination of any detrimental effect on the public health, safety and environment if the proposed rule is not implemented:

The Agency does not anticipate any detrimental effect in the absence of the implementation of the rule changes on public health, safety, and environment, however, the agency would be out of compliance with state statutes.

- K. The date the rule impact statement was prepared and if modified, the date modified:

Prepared: July 27, 2021
Modified: August 12, 2021

TITLE 317. OKLAHOMA HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

CHAPTER 2. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND PROCESS

SUBCHAPTER ONE. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

317:2-1-2. Appeals

(a) Request for appeals.

(1) For the purpose of calculating the timeframe for requesting an administrative appeal of an agency action, the date on the written notice shall not be included. The last day of the timeframe shall be included, unless it is a legal holiday as defined by Title 25 of the Oklahoma Statutes (O.S.) Section (§) 82.1, or any other day the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) is closed or closes early, in which case, the timeframe runs until the close of the next full business day.

(2) An appeals request that an aggrieved member or provider sends via mail is deemed filed on the date that the agency receives it.

(b) Member process overview.

(1) The appeals process allows a member to appeal a decision relating to program benefits. Examples are decisions involving medical services, prior authorizations for medical services, or discrimination complaints.

(2) In order to initiate an appeal, the member must file a LD-1 (Member Complaint/Grievance Form) within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the OHCA sends written notice of its action, in accordance with Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC) 317:2-1-2(a), above, or, in matters in which a formal notice is not sent by the agency, within thirty (30) days of the date on which the member knew or should have known the facts or circumstances serving as the basis for appeal.

(3) If the LD-1 form is not received timely, the OHCA administrative law judge (ALJ) will cause to be issued a letter stating the appeal will not be heard. In the case of tax warrant intercept appeals, if the LD-1 form is not received by OHCA within the timeframe pursuant to 68 O.S. § 205.2, OHCA similarly will cause to be issued a letter stating the appeal will not be heard because it is untimely.

(4) If the LD-1 form is not completely filled out or if necessary documentation is not included, then the appeal will not be heard.

(5) OHCA will advise members that if assistance is needed in reading or completing the grievance form, arrangements will be made to provide such assistance.

(6) Upon receipt of the member's appeal, a fair hearing before the OHCA ALJ will be scheduled. The member will be notified in writing of the date and time of the hearing. The member, and/or his/her designated authorized representative, must appear at the hearing, either in person or telephonically. Requests for a ~~telephone~~ in-person hearing must be received in writing on OHCA's Form LD-4 (Request for Telephonic~~In-Person~~ Hearing) ~~form~~ no later than ten (10) calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing date. ~~Telephonic hearing requests will only be granted by the OHCA's chief executive officer (CEO) or his/her designee, at his/her sole discretion, for good cause shown, including, for example, the member's physical condition, travel distances, or other limitations that either preclude an in-person appearance or would impose a substantial hardship on the member.~~

(7) The hearing shall be conducted according to OAC 317:2-1-5. The OHCA ALJ's decision may in certain instances be appealed to the CEO of the OHCA, or his or her designated independent ALJ, which is a record review at which the parties do not appear (OAC 317:2-1-13).

(8) Member appeals are ordinarily decided within ninety (90) days from the date on which the member's timely request for a fair hearing is received, unless:

(A) The appellant was granted an expedited appeal pursuant to OAC 317:2-1-2.5;

(B) The OHCA cannot reach a decision because the appellant requests a delay or fails to take a required action, as reflected in the record;

(C) There is an administrative or other emergency beyond OHCA's control, as reflected in the record; or

(D) The appellant filed a request for an appeal of a denied step therapy exception request, pursuant to OAC 317:2-1-18.

(9) Tax warrant intercept appeals will be heard directly by the OHCA ALJ. A decision is normally rendered by the OHCA ALJ within twenty (20) days of the hearing ~~before the ALJ~~.

(c) Provider process overview.

(1) The proceedings as described in this subsection contain the hearing process for those appeals filed by providers. These appeals encompass all subject matter cases contained in OAC 317:2-1-2(d)(2).

(2) All provider appeals are initially heard by the OHCA ALJ under OAC 317:2-1-2(d)(2).

(A) In order to initiate an appeal, a provider must file the appropriate LD form within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the OHCA sends written notice of its action, in accordance with OAC 317:2-1-2(a), above. LD-2 forms should be used for Program Integrity audit appeals; LD-3 forms are to be used for all other provider appeals.

(B) Except for OHCA Program Integrity audit appeals, if the appropriate LD form is not received timely, the OHCA ALJ will cause a letter to be issued stating that the appeal will not be heard.

(C) A decision ordinarily will be issued by the OHCA ALJ within forty-five (45) days of the close of all evidence in the appeal.

(D) Unless otherwise limited by OAC 317:2-1-7 or 317:2-1-13, the OHCA ALJ's decision is appealable to OHCA's CEO, or his or her designated independent ALJ.

(d) **OHCA ALJ jurisdiction.** The OHCA ALJ has jurisdiction of the following matters:

(1) **Member appeals.**

(A) Discrimination complaints regarding the SoonerCare program;

(B) Appeals which relate to the scope of services, covered services, complaints regarding service or care, enrollment, disenrollment, and reenrollment in the SoonerCare Program;

(C) Fee-for-service appeals regarding the furnishing of services, including prior authorizations;

(D) Appeals which relate to the tax warrant intercept system through the OHCA. Tax warrant intercept appeals will be heard directly by the OHCA ALJ. A decision will be rendered by the OHCA ALJ within twenty (20) days of the hearing;

(E) Proposed administrative sanction appeals pursuant to OAC 317:35-13-7. Proposed administrative sanction appeals will be heard directly by the OHCA ALJ. A decision by the OHCA ALJ will ordinarily be rendered within twenty (20) days of the hearing ~~before the ALJ~~. This is the final and only appeals process for proposed administrative sanctions;

(F) Appeals which relate to eligibility determinations made by OHCA;

(G) Appeals of insureds participating in Insure Oklahoma which are authorized by OAC 317:45-9-8; and

(H) Appeals which relate to a requested step therapy protocol exception as provided by 63 O.S. § 7310.

(2) **Provider appeals.**

(A) Whether Pre-admission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) was completed as required by law;

(B) Denial of request to disenroll member from provider's SoonerCare Choice panel;

(C) Appeals by long-term care facilities for administrative penalty determinations as a result of findings made under OAC 317:30-5-131.2(b)(5)(B) and (d)(8);

(D) Appeals of Professional Service Contract awards and other matters related to the Central Purchasing Act pursuant to Title 74 O.S. § 85.1 et seq.;

(E) Drug rebate appeals;

(F) Provider appeals of OHCA Program Integrity audit findings pursuant to OAC 317:2-1-7. This is the final and only appeals process for appeals of OHCA Program Integrity audit findings;

(G) Oklahoma Electronic Health Records Incentive program appeals related only to incentive payments, incentive payment amounts, provider eligibility determinations, and demonstration of adopting, implementing, upgrading, and meaningful use eligibility for incentives;

(H) Supplemental Hospital Offset Payment Program (SHOPP) annual assessment, supplemental payment, fees or penalties as specifically provided in OAC 317:2-1-15; and

(I) Appeals from any adjustment made to a long-term care facility's cost report pursuant to OAC 317:30-5-132, including any appeal following a request for reconsideration made pursuant to OAC 317:30-5-132.1.

317:2-1-13. Appeal to the chief executive officer

(a) The Oklahoma Health Care Authority offers approximately forty (40) different types of administrative appeals. Some of the appeals are appealable to the chief executive officer (CEO) and some are not. The following appeals are subject to further review upon timely submission of a request for CEO appeal and may be heard/reviewed by the CEO, or his or her designated independent administrative law judge (ALJ), following the decision of ~~an administrative law judge~~ the OHCA ALJ:

(1) Appeals under Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC) 317:2-1-2(d)(1)(A) to (d)(1)(H), with the exception of subsection (d)(1)(E); and

(2) Appeals under OAC 317:2-1-2(d)(2)(A) to (d)(2)(I), with the exceptions of subsections (d)(2)(D),(E),(F),(G), and (I).

(b) Appeals to the CEO must be filed with the OHCA within thirty (30) days of the date of the Order, or decision by OHCA.

(c) No new evidence may be presented to the CEO.

(d) Appeals to the CEO under (a) of this Section may be filed by the provider, member, or agency. The CEO will ordinarily render decisions within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the appeal.

(e) The CEO may only designate an independent ALJ at another state agency, as established in the Oklahoma State Medicaid Plan and approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, to review a CEO appeal.