

New Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Supports Coordination Organizations (SCOs) Qualification Process

ODP Announcement 20-111

AUDIENCE:

All Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) AAW SCOs

PURPOSE:

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires a statewide process to ensure SCOs are qualified to render services to waiver-funded individuals. ODP is replacing the previous AAW SCO requalification process with the ODP AAW SCO Qualification Process described below. This communication outlines the steps the SCO must follow to meet these requirements.

DISCUSSION:

REQUALIFICATION

New SCO Requalification

Following the SCO's initial qualification date, all SCOs classified as **New** are to be requalified by the end of the following fiscal year. This will be detailed on the AAW SCO Qualification form (note: this form is under development and will be distributed at a later time). For example, if a **New** SCO's first **Qualification Begin Date** is 01/20/2017, the SCO must be requalified by 06/30/2018, which is the end of the following fiscal year. A **New** SCO's status is updated from **New** to **Existing** after the SCO is requalified.

Existing SCO Requalification Cycle

Previously, AAW SCOs were requalified during annual monitoring and the Quality Assessment and Improvement (QA&I) process. All activities associated to the AAW SCO requalification process will now occur during the ODP AAW SCO Qualification Process.

Once an SCO is classified as **Existing**, the SCO is to be requalified on a three-year cycle based upon the last digit of the SCO’s MPI number (see chart below*).

Cycle 2		Last digit of MPI	Cycle 3		Last digit of MPI
Year 1	FY 20-21	0-2	Year 1	FY 23-24	0-2
Year 2	FY 21-22	3-5	Year 2	FY 24-25	3-5
Year 3	FY 22-23	6-9	Year 3	FY 25-26	6-9

*Note: the timelines for Cycle 2 of SCO Requalification will be slightly different from the timelines for Cycle 2 of QA&I due to when the requalification process is starting and the corresponding Fiscal Year.

For example: An existing SCO with an MPI number of 223456782, must be requalified by the end of that fiscal year, 06/30/2021.

By 5/1, sixty days prior to the SCO’s qualification 6/30 end date, the Qualification Status will change to **Expiring**. If the SCO is not requalified by the end of the fiscal year (6/30), the Qualification Status will change to **Expired**.

The service qualification statuses are as follows:

- Qualified:** The SCO meets ODP's qualification requirements

- Expiring:** The status changes from **Qualified** to **Expiring** on 05/01, if the SCO has not been requalified
- Expired:** The status changes from **Expiring** to **Expired** on 07/01, if the SCO has not been requalified
- Not Requalified:** The status changes from **Qualified** or **Expiring** to **Not Requalified**, if the SCO no longer meets ODP's qualification requirements by 6/30
- Not Qualified:** The status changes from **Not Requalified** to **Not Qualified** on 07/01 or ODP can change the status to **Not Qualified** at any time, if the SCO's qualification is being terminated

SCOs must submit the AAW SCO Qualification form and the SCO Qualification Documentation Record (note: this form is under development and will be distributed at a later time) with all required supporting documentation by March 31st of the year that their requalification is due. Failure to meet this deadline will affect ODP's ability to designate the SCO as "qualified" by the "Due Date" of April 30. The updated ODP SCO Qualification Documentation Record contains all instructions and qualification requirements.

Upon receipt of an SCO's qualification documentation, ODP will review all materials and determine if qualification standards are met. If the SCO fails to include all the required qualification documentation in their submission, ODP will notify the SCO by email of the missing elements within 10 business days of receipt. If the SCO has met all required qualification standards as evident by the documentation submitted, ODP will consider the SCO as **Qualified**. ODP will sign the ODP AAW SCO Qualification form and email the completed form to the SCO within 30 days of the SCO's submission.

SCOs who are not considered to be **Qualified** by April 30 will be automatically designated as **Expiring** on May 1. Service segments for the next fiscal year will not be authorized in HCSIS, and the SCO may be required to participate in transitional planning for their waiver individuals. If the SCO has not been requalified by June 30, the SCO's **Expiring** status will change to **Expired** on July 1st and the SCO will no longer be qualified to provide services or be paid for services provided on July 1 and after.

During an SCO’s requalification year, from February 1 through June 30, ODP will change the service specialty status from **Qualified** or **Expiring** to **Not Requalified** if the SCO no longer meets ODP’s qualification requirements or is no longer interested in maintaining a qualification status.

REQUALIFICATION NONCOMPLIANCE PROCESS AND TIMELINES

The chart on the following two pages summarizes the requalification process and timelines.

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
FEBRUARY 1 to MARCH 31	This date range is the timeframe SCOs must submit their SCO AAW Qualification form, SCO Qualification Documentation Record and supporting documentation to ODP.
APRIL 1	ODP will send warning e-mails to SCOs who have not submitted their required documentation.
APRIL 30, **DUE DATE**	SCOs who have not submitted their documentation by April 30 will be considered out of compliance with ODP waiver and regulation requirements.
MAY 1	<p>ODP will identify SCOs not requalified by this date. If the SCO has not been Qualified or Not Requalified by April 30, then on May 1, the qualification status for the SCO will change to Expiring.</p> <p>ODP can still consider an SCO as Qualified until the end of the fiscal year (June 30th), if the SCO submits their qualification documentation.</p>
MAY 1 to MAY 15	<p>ODP will send a “failure to comply” notification to SCOs who have been determined to be out of compliance. The notification will inform SCOs to begin transition planning activities for an alternate SCO in order to meet the assessed needs of the individual.</p> <p>SCOs who have not submitted their qualification materials by April 30 must begin transition planning activities with waiver individuals, and families they are currently serving.</p> <p>The intent of the transition planning activities is for Supports Coordinators (SCs) to offer individuals and families a choice about an alternate willing and qualified SCO.</p>

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
<p>MAY15 to JUNE 30</p>	<p>SCOs that are out of compliance with SCO qualification requirements may still qualify during this timeframe; however, there is no guarantee the existing SCO will continue service delivery to the individual because he or she may select a new willing and qualified SCO to render services.</p> <p>If, during planning activities, the waiver individual chooses to begin service with an alternate willing and qualified SCO prior to July 1, the current SCO will be end-dated accordingly in the ISPs in HCSIS. When an individual chooses to transition to another SCO, the current SCO must participate in transitioning activities as per Chapter 6100.302.</p>
<p>JUNE 30 Expiration Date</p>	<p>SCOs who are not Qualified by June 30, will be considered out of compliance regarding ODP requalification standards.</p>
<p>JULY 1</p>	<p>Effective July 1, the following actions will occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODP will confirm which SCOs are in Expired status • ODP will review all SCOs in Expired status to determine steps to resolve any outstanding issues. <p>Service authorizations will not be carried forward to the new fiscal year in ISPs. Both the SCOs service offerings in HCSIS and PROMISE™ enrollment(s) will be end dated June 30 by ODP. When this action occurs, the SCO will no longer be able to receive payment for services rendered to individuals enrolled in the AAW</p>

SCO Action – Facilitating Transition Planning

ODP will inform the SCO when the SCO has not submitted their qualification documentation by the due date of April 30.

Once notification has been received by the SCO the following actions should be performed:

- The current SC should inform the individual and family that the SCO was not qualified by the due date and is at risk of not being able to render services as of July 1
- Generate a list of available qualified SCOs who are willing and able to render the same service. The current SC can do this by presenting the AAW Supports and Services Directory

- The current SC should schedule an ISP team meeting with the individual and family to review the list of SCOs that are qualified, willing, and able to provide the service necessary to support the individual's assessed needs and outcomes. This activity should be documented in a service note in HCSIS
- The individual shall exercise choice in the selection of a qualified SCO
- If the individual chooses a new SCO, the current SC should inform the individual that he/she will be sending a referral to the selected SCO. The current SC is responsible for making prompt referrals to the SCO selected by the individual. The current SC documents this activity in the service notes in HCSIS
- If during the transition planning an alternate SCO is not identified, the current SCO should contact ODP for assistance

SCO APPEALS

When an SCO's qualification status changes to **Expired**, therefore unable to receive waiver payments for services rendered, the SCO has appeal rights under 55 Pa. Code Chapter 41 (Medical Assistance Provider Appeal Procedures). For SCOs that are **Expired** effective July 1, ODP will notify the SCO describing ODP's attempts to bring the SCO into compliance and instructions on how a SCO may file an appeal. The SCO will be copied on this letter.

Any SCO with intent to voluntarily discontinue PROMISE™ enrollment to render AAW services with ODP must notify the AAW Enrollment Lead at RA-PWBASPROVENROLL@pa.gov.

ORGANIZED HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

SCOs that serve as Organized Health Care Delivery Systems (OHCDs) ensure that all qualification standards are met prior to the provision of any service. During requalification, SCOs serving as OHCDs will include vendor qualification information for all vendor services rendered or paid on their submitted SCO Qualification Documentation Record.

REVALIDATION

SCOs are required to revalidate service locations within 5 years of the initial date of enrollment and ongoing. Revalidation involves the submission of a new enrollment application through the On-line Provider Enrollment Application System. For the application to be approved, SCOs will need to attach an approved ODP SCO Qualification form that demonstrates qualification included in the revalidation enrollment application. For more information about the revalidation process, please review the Office of Medical Assistance Programs [Bulletin Number 99-16-10 \(Revalidation of Medical Assistance \(MA\) Providers\)](#).

SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION

SCOs who serve individuals in the AAW should submit supporting documentation to ODP's BSASP.

Please note: SCOS who also service individuals in the ID/A waivers (Consolidated, Person/Family Directed Support, or Community Living waivers) will also need to adhere to the ID/A SCO qualifications process as outlined by the Bureau of Community Supports (BCS).

TRAINING

This session is targeted to ODP SCOs associated with the AAW to review the new SCO Requalification process which ODP's BSASP is starting in February 2021. The session will focus on the steps and requirements of the SCO requalification process which all AAW SCOs will have to participate in at least once every three years.

AAW SCO Requalification Process

Thursday, Jan 7, 2021

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

[Registration Link](#)

SCO CONTACT INFORMATION

ODP is requesting that all SCOs identify a primary and secondary contact person(s). The identified contact person(s) is the individual(s) who the entity has assigned to receive specific information related to the AAW qualification process including any unique electronic links, access to AAW qualification process specific information, ongoing direction and communication from ODP regarding the AAW qualification process, etc.

All SCOs must complete and submit their information using the link below by close of business on January 15, 2021.

<https://aawproviderscoqualscontacts.questionpro.com>

RESOURCES

55 Pa. Code Chapter 6100 Enrollment

INQUIRIES

For inquiries regarding this communication, contact the AAW Enrollment mailbox at: RA-PWBASPROVENROLL@pa.gov.