

NEW YORK
state department of
HEALTH

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LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM

Transmittal No: 14 OHIP/LCM-1

Date: November 3, 2014

**Division: Eligibility and
Marketplace Integration**

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Assisting Veterans in Applying for Veterans' Benefits

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment I - Sample Referral Letter
Attachment II - List of Veterans' Administration Offices

This letter is to reiterate Medicaid policy regarding the identification of veterans and their dependents for purposes of making a referral to the Veterans' Administration. Veterans and their dependents must be referred to a State or county veterans' office so that their eligibility for veterans' related benefits can be assessed.

New York State Executive Law Section 354-a, requires the Department to obtain veteran status and military experience of individuals applying for assistance and to advise those identified as veterans that the Division of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and local veterans' service agencies can provide assistance and benefits to veterans under State and Federal law. The benefits veterans may be eligible for based upon their military service include pensions, disability compensation, health care, education benefits and vocational rehabilitation and training. Additionally, family members may be entitled to certain benefits based on the veteran's military service.

The requirement to refer veterans and their dependents to a State or county veterans' office was previously stated in 93 ADM-21, "Utilization of Veteran's Benefits as a Resource." A recent audit conducted by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) in 2013 found that not all districts are consistent in referring veterans to apply for benefits provided by the VA.

According to the audit, in 89 percent of the cases reviewed from six local districts, there was no documentation that the veteran was referred to a State Division of Veterans' Affairs or local veterans' service agency. Thus, local districts were out of compliance with Medicaid policy to refer veterans to apply for veterans' benefits.

A. Identifying Veterans

Local district staff should use the following means to identify veterans.

1. Self-Attestation on the Medicaid Application

When an applicant attests to being a veteran on the Access NY application (DOH-4220), a referral for veterans' benefits should be made.

2. Cognos Reports - PARIS Match

Another resource available to the local district to identify veterans are Cognos Reports. As a result of the quarterly PARIS (Federal Public Assistance Reporting Information System) match, identified Medicaid recipients are updated on WMS to indicate veteran status. This information is made available to districts through the following reports which should be reviewed quarterly as part of the procedures a district uses to confirm a Veteran's status.

Two pre-defined reports are available in Cognos and include veterans' information. The Cognos reports enable users to extract data and create reports.

The first report is titled 'Veterans Listing with Residential Addresses (LDSS)'. This report contains the following information:

- Case Number
- Case Name
- Address
- Phone
- Case Type
- CIN
- Employment Code
- SSN
- Age
- Veteran Status
- Veteran Name

The second report is titled 'Veterans in Current Cases Detailed List (LDSS)' and contains the following information:

- District
- Unit
- Worker
- Case Number
- Case Type
- CIN
- Name
- Birth Date
- Gender
- Veteran Status

Cognos is accessed via the CentraPort website. The user must have an active HSEN account as well as access to WRTS ALL data via Cognos through the district's WRTS Cognos Security Contact. The following steps must be completed to run the report:

Log onto the CentraPort website;
Click on Applications;
Click on Cognos;
From the OTDA reporting tab, click on the 'Veterans' link; and
Click on the desired report link to generate report.

Any questions regarding Cognos can be answered by email to the following address:

Email Cognos.reporting@dfa.state.ny.us

B. Veterans' Affairs Referral

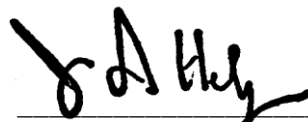
Once an applicant is identified as having served in the Armed Forces, including the National Guard, Coast Guard, Army, Navy, Marine Corp. and Air Force, local district staff are required to mail to the applicant a referral letter with instructions about how to apply for veterans' benefits. The referral letter should include the address and phone number for the nearest Veterans' Administration office. A sample referral letter is included with this LCM. A dated copy of the referral letter must be included in the case record to document the referral.

C. Best Practices

Some best practices used by local districts to ensure veterans and their dependents receive benefits for which they qualify include assisting the applicant in making an appointment with the VA when the individual applies for assistance in person. In such instances, the local district must document this referral in the case record. Additionally, districts who have established linkages with the local veterans' service agency have benefited in meeting the needs of area veterans. Included with this letter is an updated list of county veterans' service agencies.

The Department will conduct case record reviews to monitor local district compliance with identifying and referring veterans, and whether those referrals are documented in the case record. The reviews will be conducted by the Department field staff when they are onsite conducting regular case record reviews.

Any questions should be directed to your local district liaison at (518)474-8887 for Upstate counties, and in NYC, (212) 417-4500.



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