



Department of Medicaid

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TO: Public Children Services Agencies and Title IV-E Agencies

FROM: Dawn Puster, Deputy Director, OhioRISE, Ohio Dept of Medicaid

DATE: October 20, 2023

SUBJECT: Update on Ohio Medicaid PRTF Referral and Authorization Process

Background

Ohio's child-serving agencies have worked closely with the OhioRISE plan, Aetna Better Health of Ohio, Inc. (Aetna), to bring a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) service to extend Ohio's continuum of care for children/youth with the most intensive behavioral health needs. This short-term, intensive, physician-directed, hospital level of care in a residential setting is defined in Chapter [5122-41](#) of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC); and Medicaid reimbursement for the service is described in (OAC) rule [5160-59-03.6](#).

Currently, children/youth only access the PRTF intensity of treatment outside of Ohio. As Ohio prepares to bring this service in state, changes are being made to the process through which authorization for the PRTF service is completed. Beginning November 1, 2023, Medicaid coverage of PRTF treatment requires the OhioRISE care coordinator to submit a PRTF Request Form to Aetna for both in-state and out-of- state PRTF services.

New Process for Requesting Prior Authorization for PRTF Treatment

PRTF is a Medicaid service. Children/youth who demonstrate need for the PRTF service have severe behavioral health needs, which warrant OhioRISE enrollment. Therefore, PRTF is a treatment service covered under the OhioRISE program benefit package. When medically necessary, Medicaid payment through the OhioRISE plan covers the entirety of the PRTF service (treatment services and room and board).

For Medicaid to cover medically necessary PRTF services for a child/youth through OhioRISE, the child/youth must be enrolled in OhioRISE. Connection to OhioRISE enrollment is through an Ohio Children's Initiative Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment. PRTF is one of the most restrictive levels of care and therefore this treatment intervention should be carefully considered with the involvement of the child/youth's Child and Family Team (CFT), which includes the custodial entity. When a child/youth is in custody, the biological family is not required to participate in the CFT if it is not in the child/youth's best interest.

As of November 1, 2023, for Aetna to cover PRTF Treatment, the OhioRISE care coordinator (CC) at the OhioRISE care management entity (CME) or Aetna will complete the PRTF Request Form in Aetna's PRTF Request Portal (portal) upon recommendation of the CFT. For reference, the information collected in the portal is located in Appendix B in the [OhioRISE PRTF Program Manual](#). If Aetna determines that PRTF treatment is medically necessary for a child/youth, Aetna will refer the child/youth to a PRTF provider.

A PRTF Request Form is not required for children/youth who are already receiving treatment in PRTF facilities out of state or for whom Aetna has already approved an authorization for PRTF treatment. The existing PRTF authorization will remain in effect for these children/youth.

Title IV-E Agencies will work with the CC to provide information that is needed to supplement the PRTF Request Form for the PRTF request and referral. If primary care coordination is not provided by the CME or Aetna, all PRTF Request Forms will be submitted by an Aetna CC, but the child/youth will maintain the chosen lead care coordination entity. Once all information for the PRTF request is submitted in the portal:

- Aetna will review and decide whether PRTF treatment is medically necessary for the child/youth within three business days.
- Aetna will send a determination notice to the custodial entity. If Aetna denies, reduces, terminates, or suspends PRTF services, this constitutes an adverse benefit determination, and can be appealed in accordance with rule [5160-26-08.4](#) of the Administrative Code.
- If the PRTF request is approved, Aetna will contact facilities both in-state and out-of-state to secure a facility for the child/youth.
- Once a PRTF facility has been identified for the child/youth, the CC will notify the CFT, to include the custodial entity.
- If a youth is approved for PRTF services, but a PRTF provider is not immediately identified, the CC, and Aetna will provide support to the Child and Family Team to determine next steps and a stabilization plan will be put in place to help maintain the youth until an appropriate PRTF is identified.

If a child/youth not yet enrolled in OhioRISE is identified as potentially in need of PRTF treatment, the Title IV-E Agency should reach out immediately to a CME, Aetna or the child/youth's Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) to obtain a CANS assessment and OhioRISE enrollment determination. Contact information for each CME can be found here: [CME Contact Information](#). CMEs, Aetna, and MCOs can provide connection to a CANS assessment, work with the child/youth and the Title IV-E Agency to identify next steps, and request an expedited PRTF review, if needed, while working to simultaneously enroll the child/youth in OhioRISE. Care coordinators working in CMEs and at Aetna can help navigate and communicate urgent situations with Aetna's prior authorization review team.

Upon admission, and throughout the course of treatment in the PRTF, the CFT (which includes the custodial entity) will remain engaged and work with the CC and PRTF to plan for the child/youth's transition from the PRTF, which should occur no later than six months after admission.

Please direct any questions on this matter to OhioRISE Policy at OhioRISEPolicy@medicaid.ohio.gov.