



Pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

OFFICE OF LONG-TERM LIVING BULLETIN

ISSUE DATE
June 19, 2014

EFFECTIVE DATE
June 19, 2014

NUMBER
51-14-07, 55-14-07, 59-14-07

SUBJECT:
Service Coordination After-Hours Coverage

Bonnie L. Rose
Deputy Secretary, Office of Long-Term Living

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to convey to Service Coordination Entities (SCEs) their responsibility to provide 24-hour phone coverage so that Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) program participants can access service coordination services during non-business hours. This bulletin also makes a change to a prior process in place that requires after-hours coverage by SCEs.

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to SCEs enrolled in the Aging, Attendant Care, CommCare, Independence and OBRA waivers and the Act 150 Program.

BACKGROUND:

Critical incidents that occur to program participants may affect their need for the involvement and intervention of Service Coordinators (SCs). These incidents are defined in 55 Pa. Code § 52.3 and include, but are not limited to, abuse, neglect, exploitation and service interruption.

55 Pa. Code § 52.26 (a)(4)(ii) requires that SCs conduct more frequent calls or visits if the Department determines they are necessary to ensure the participant's health and safety. Additionally, § 52.26 (a)(3)(ii) directs SCs to modify the participant's service plan, if necessary, when the participant has a significant medical or social change. Further, in accordance with 55 Pa. Code § 52.14(i), requiring that providers comply with OLTL's approved waivers, both the Aging and Attendant Care waivers contain the requirement that SCEs ensure 24-hour access to Service Coordination personnel (via direct employees or a contract) for response to emergency situations that are related to the Service Coordination service or other waiver services.

For SCEs to adequately provide for the health and welfare of program participants, they must be aware of when these incidents occur in order to provide sufficient and timely contact. They must also be available to assist the participant, if necessary, in implementing the individualized

back-up plan and make any necessary revisions to participant service plans based on changes in medical or social conditions caused by a critical incident. This could entail, among other activities, directing the participant to contact local emergency medical services, initiating a report to protective services, or locating emergency housing.

An SC supervisor may authorize changes to the Individual Service Plan (ISP) when there is an emergency or unplanned event. An emergency or unplanned event is an unexpected/sudden event that results in an immediate need for a change or increase in the existing ISP that is necessary for the health and welfare of the participant. Refer to OLTL's Individual Service Plan Review document, which can be found at:

<http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/publications/bulletinsearch/bulletinsearchresults/index.htm?po=OLTL>.

Previously, there were no parameters in which SCEs were to return after-hours calls. This bulletin specifies the time in which those return calls are to be made. To ensure the health and safety of program participants, to further define the frequency of SC contact with program participants and to ensure that SCs are available to make needed changes to service plans based on critical incidents that occur outside of normal business hours, OLTL is instituting the process outlined below.

PROCESS:

All SCEs are to have a 24-hour system in place that allows participants to access the SCE via telephone during non-business hours in order to report a critical incident.

- SCEs are to return these calls immediately but no more than one (1) hour after receipt of the call.
- The return call is to be made by an SC, SC supervisor or agency executive.
- If a participant's needs are such that no immediate action is required, the SC should document the call and follow up on it the next business day.
- The phone numbers of all service coordination agencies, including their after-hours numbers, will be posted on the OLTL website.

In addition to following this process, to report incidents and to report cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, SCs are to follow OLTL's Critical Incident Management bulletin, which can be found at:

<http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/publications/bulletinsearch/bulletinsearchresults/index.htm?po=OLTL>.

**COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:
PA Dept. of Public Welfare/OLTL**

**Bureau of Policy and Regulatory Management
P.O. Box 8025
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8025
717-783-8412**