

Guidance for Modifications to Nursing Facility Bed Increase Requests During the COVID-19 Pandemic

On March 6, 2020, Governor Tom Wolf issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency (Emergency Proclamation) to enable agencies to respond promptly to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency. With the Governor's authorization as conferred in the Emergency Proclamation, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services is suspending regulations at 55 Pa. Code §§ 1187.172-1187.174, and 1187.176, relating to Participation Review of Bed Requests, in order to approve temporary bed increases in response to an increased need for nursing facility beds during the COVID-19 pandemic. This suspension, and bed increases approved under its procedures will expire 60 days after the Emergency Proclamation is lifted.

Effective June 3, 2020, nursing facility providers that are enrolled in the Medical Assistance program and wish to apply for temporary bed increases may do so by e-mailing the following information to OLTL at RA-PartReview@pa.gov:

- Name and address of the legal entity
- Contact name, e-mail address and telephone number for the legal entity
- Current number of licensed beds
- Number of temporary beds requested for approval
- Location of the requested temporary beds (including address, floor, and wing or unit)
- Floor plan illustrating the location of the temporary and existing beds
- Purpose of the requested temporary beds (COVID care, ventilator care, non-COVID hospital relief, etc.)
- Special qualifications of the facility to provide the care proposed
- Documentation supporting the need for the beds (e.g., letters of support, bed use data in the primary service area)
- Attestation of ability to staff and operate the beds requested, or assistance that would be needed to staff and operate the beds requested

OLTL will evaluate requests based primarily on guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health regarding the anticipated need for increased nursing facility capacity or specialty care in specific regions. Temporary bed increases approved for participation in Medicaid must also be licensed and certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Approvals and denials of temporary bed increase requests will be issued via e-mail. Temporary increase approvals will be issued for six-month periods, with the potential for six-month extensions upon request by the facility and approval by OLTL.



Nursing facilities wishing to request permanent bed increases may do so through the established Participation Review Process.

Questions may be directed to Matthew J. Jones, Director, OLTL Fee-For-Service Operations, at matjones@pa.gov.