

## CHAPTER 7700

### MNSURE/MINNESOTA HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE

#### ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION

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#### 7700.0010 APPLICABILITY AND PURPOSE.

Subpart 1. **Applicability.** Parts 7700.0010 to 7700.0090 apply to an eligible entity that is an applicant to be certified to deliver consumer assistance services through MNsure.

Subp. 2. **Purpose.** Parts 7700.0010 to 7700.0090 establish the policies and procedures for certification as a consumer assistance partner through MNsure.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

#### 7700.0020 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** As used in this chapter, the terms defined in this part have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Affordable Care Act.** "Affordable Care Act" means the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, Public Law 111-148, as further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act.

Subp. 3. **Applicable staff.** "Applicable staff" means any person who has access authorized under this chapter to data stored in the MNsure Web tool.

Subp. 4. **Board.** "Board" means the Board of MNsure specified in Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.04.

Subp. 5. **Certified application counselor.** "Certified application counselor, " described in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 155.225, means any entity certified by MNsure to provide consumer assistance services without any compensation from MNsure.

Subp. 6. **Conflict of interest.** "Conflict of interest" means any business, private, or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective execution of an entity's or individual's official or professional responsibilities to the extent necessary to carry out the functions of MNsure.

Subp. 7. **Consumer assistance partner.** "Consumer assistance partner " means entities certified by MNsure to serve as a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor.

Subp. 8. **Cost-sharing reduction.** "Cost-sharing reduction" means reductions in cost sharing for an eligible individual enrolled in a silver level plan through MNsure or for an individual who is an American Indian or Alaska Native enrolled in a QHP through MNsure.

Subp. 9. **Enrollment.** "Enrollment" means enrolling individuals in a QHP or public health care program through MNsure, including properly utilizing the appropriate system tools, resources, and data to perform this function.

Subp. 10. **Individual tax credit.** "Individual tax credit" means premium tax credits specified in section 36B of the Internal Revenue Code, as added by section 1401 of the

Affordable Care Act, which are provided on an advance basis to an eligible individual enrolled in a QHP through MNsure according to sections 1402 and 1412 of the Affordable Care Act.

Subp. 11. **In-person assister.** "In-person assister" means any entity certified by MNsure to provide services consistent with the applicable requirements of Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 155.205, (c), (d), and (e), and is distinct from a navigator.

Subp. 12. **Insurance producer.** "Insurance producer" has the meaning defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 60K.31.

Subp. 13. **MNsure.** "MNsure" means the "Minnesota Insurance Marketplace" under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 62V, created as a state health benefit exchange as described in section 1311 of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148, and further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act.

Subp. 14. **Navigator.** "Navigator" means any entity certified by MNsure to serve as a navigator and has the meaning described in section 1311(i) of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), Public Law 111-148, and further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act. For calendar year 2014, the navigator program shall be covered by Minnesota Statutes, section 256.962.

Subp. 15. **Qualified health plan or QHP.** "Qualified health plan" or "QHP" means a health plan that meets the definition in section 1301(a) of the Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148, and has been certified by the board according to Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.05, subdivision 5, to be offered through MNsure.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

#### **7700.0030 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; CERTIFIED CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PARTNERS.**

##### **Subpart 1. Federal prohibitions.**

A. Consumer assistance partners must not be health insurance issuers, subsidiaries of a health insurance issuer, stop loss insurance issuers, subsidiaries of a stop loss insurance issuer, or professional associations that include members of or lobby on behalf of the insurance industry according to federal requirements in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210 (d).

B. Consumer assistance partners must not have a conflict of interest while serving as a consumer assistance partner.

(1) Consumer assistance partners must not receive any compensation directly or indirectly from any health insurance issuer in connection with the enrollment of any individuals or employees in a qualified health plan or a nonqualified health plan as specified in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210 (d)(4).

(2) Consumer assistance partners must follow the requirements pursuant to Minnesota's Level One Establishment Notice of Grant Award, Special Terms and Conditions, Attachment B, #19: "In order to provide services that meet the requirements of Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, sections 155.205 (d)-(e), and 155.405, individuals performing in-person assistance functions must operate in a fair and impartial manner and must meet and adhere to appropriate conflict of interest standards which include, but are not limited to the following: Do not receive any direct or indirect compensation from an issuer in connection with enrolling consumers in health plans; and are not subsidiaries of an issuer or associations that include members of, or lobby on behalf of, the insurance industry."

##### **Subp. 2. Qualifications.**

A. Consumer assistance partners must demonstrate the ability to carry out those responsibilities as defined by the board.

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B. Consumer assistance partners must:

(1) demonstrate proven connections to the communities MNsure will serve, or demonstrate the ability to form relationships with consumers, including uninsured and underinsured consumers;

(2) successfully complete MNsure's certification training program; and

(3) comply with any privacy and security standards applicable to MNsure.

Subp. 3. **Eligible entities.** Consumer assistance partners eligible for certification by MNsure are any of the following entities able to demonstrate to the board that the entity has existing relationships, or could readily establish relationships with consumers in Minnesota, including uninsured, underinsured, and vulnerable populations, likely to be eligible to enroll through MNsure: 501(c)(3) community-based organizations, for-profit businesses, government agencies, and any other entity recognized by the Office of the Secretary of State including, but not limited to:

A. community and consumer-focused nonprofit groups;

B. trade, industry, and professional associations;

C. farming organizations;

D. religious organizations;

E. chambers of commerce;

F. insurance producers, subject to subpart 1;

G. tribal organizations; and

H. state or local human services agencies.

MNsure will consider coalitions or collaboratives of entities meeting the requirements of subpart 3.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0040 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PARTNERS;  
CONSUMER ASSISTANCE SERVICES.**

Subpart 1. **Duties and responsibilities.** As required in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210 (e), consumer assistance partners, at a minimum, must perform the following activities:

A. maintain expertise in eligibility, enrollment, and program specifications and conduct public education activities;

B. provide information and services in a fair, accurate, and impartial manner, and this information must acknowledge other health programs;

C. facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans offered in MNsure;

D. provide referrals to any applicable office of health insurance consumer assistance or health insurance ombudsman established under section 2793 of the Public Health Service Act, or any other appropriate state agency or agencies for any enrollee with a grievance, complaint, or question regarding an enrollee's health plan, coverage, or a determination under such plan or coverage;

E. provide information in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to the needs of the population being served by MNsure including individuals with limited English proficiency; and ensure accessibility and usability of tools and functions for individuals with disabilities according to the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and

F. comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 1557 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other applicable federal law and regulation.

Subp. 2. **Consumer assistance services.** Consumer assistance partners and insurance producers certified by MNsure shall guide consumers through the application and enrollment process and facilitate access to the range of health coverage options available through MNsure by providing the following services, including but not limited to:

A. informing consumers of health insurance options and the value of coverage, in addition to reviewing insurance options available through MNsure;

B. informing individuals of application processes, required documentation, mandated requirements, and any exemption criteria;

C. providing information and referrals to small employers on enrollment in the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) and any tax provisions, including credits and penalties, potentially affecting small employers;

D. gauging eligibility through MNsure and providing referrals to appropriate support services or programs for further assistance, such as free health clinics;

E. providing nonmedical referrals, to the extent possible, according to MNsure referral guidance;

F. explaining program eligibility rules and providing application assistance for Medicaid/CHIP, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions;

G. assisting with the entry of information into enrollment tools and resources, including final submission of information;

H. advising American Indians and Alaskan Natives on benefits specified by the Affordable Care Act, such as cost-sharing reductions, income exclusions, special open enrollment periods, and exemption from minimum health care coverage mandate;

I. addressing questions regarding the submission of eligibility and enrollment verification documentation;

J. facilitating referrals to insurance producers for individuals and families enrolling in qualified health plans through MNsure and requesting plan enrollment assistance beyond the scope of consumer assistance partners;

K. facilitating referrals to community organizations, counties, or other appropriate nonprofit or public entities when individuals and families require technical expertise and assistance beyond the scope of the consumer assistance partner or insurance producer;

L. explaining, discussing, and interpreting coverage and policies with consumers to facilitate plan selection; and

M. assisting with plan comparison based upon individual priorities, including but not limited to metal tier levels, quality ranges, providers including, but not limited to, specialty care, pharmaceutical, dental and eye care, and total cost estimation including utilization and health status.

Regardless of services listed in this subpart, no consumer assistance partner may provide a service that requires licensure under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 60K, unless the consumer assistance partner has the appropriate licensure under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 60K.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

#### **7700.0050 CERTIFICATION TRAINING.**

Subpart 1. **Consumer assistance partners.** MNsure shall develop a certification training program, administer Web-based training, and administer assessment of proficiency for navigators, in-person assisters, and certified application counselors. Training shall be made available to eligible entities by MNsure. MNsure may enter into agreements with third-party entities to deliver the MNsure certification training program curriculum. MNsure may audit any third-party entity program at any time and may terminate the training agreement at MNsure's discretion. Documentation of certification training completion shall be maintained by MNsure. To receive and maintain MNsure certification, all applicable staff

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of an entity serving as a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor must complete the following required training modules with a minimum passing score, determined by MNsure, on all assigned training coursework. Modules include, but are not limited to, those specified in items A to E.

A. MNsure Web tool that includes training on the use of the public Web site, online enrollment tools, and navigation of the navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor landing page.

B. Affordable Care Act 101 that includes training on basic information on available public health care programs, referrals to other consumer assistance partners and insurance producers certified by MNsure, underserved and vulnerable populations, privacy and security as specified in part 7700.0080, and conflict of interest as specified in part 7700.0070.

C. Public health care programs, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, and means of appeal and dispute resolution.

D. Qualified health plan includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, the range of qualified health plan options offered through MNsure, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution.

E. Overview of Minnesota licensure requirements to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** MNsure shall establish minimum certification training standards for insurance producers certified to serve by MNsure. Training and assessment of proficiency for insurance producers shall be administered by MNsure. MNsure may enter into agreements with third-party entities to deliver the MNsure certification training program curriculum. MNsure may audit any third-party entity program at any time and may terminate the training agreement at MNsure's discretion. Training shall be made available to eligible insurance producers by MNsure. To receive and maintain MNsure certification, all applicable staff of an entity serving as a certified insurance producer must complete the required training modules in items A to E with a minimum passing score, determined by the board, on all assigned training coursework. Modules include, but are not limited to:

A. MNsure Web tool that includes training on the use of the public Web site, online enrollment tools, and navigation of the insurance producer landing page;

B. Affordable Care Act 101 that includes training on basic information on available public health care programs, referrals to consumer assistance partners serving MNsure, underserved and vulnerable populations, privacy and security as specified in part 7700.0080, and conflict of interest as specified in part 7700.0070;

C. public health care programs, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution;

D. qualified health plans includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, the range of qualified health plan options offered in MNsure, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution; and

E. defined contributions includes training on federal requirements and MNsure online enrollment tools for small employers to provide a defined contribution towards a qualified health plan for their employees.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0060 CERTIFICATION.**

Subpart 1. **Consumer assistance partners.** Before providing any services, a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor must be certified by MNSure by meeting the criteria in items A to F:

A. enter into a formal agreement with MNSure by responding to MNSure's solicitation for navigators, in-person assisters, or certified application counselors;

B. select, manage, and monitor individuals performing consumer assistance services and direct them to meet MNSure certification training standards by ensuring that all applicable staff participate in required MNSure sponsored training under part 7700.0050;

C. comply with MNSure conflict of interest standards as specified in part 7700.0070;

D. comply with MNSure privacy and security standards as specified in part 7700.0080;

E. comply with MNSure account creation process; and

F. comply with recertification requirements to be determined by MNSure.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** Before providing any services through MNSure, an insurance producer must be certified by MNSure by meeting the criteria in items A to G:

A. maintain active status as an insurance producer under part 7700.0020, subpart 12;

B. inform MNSure of the intent to be certified by MNSure;

C. ensure that all insurance producer and applicable staff and subcontractors participate in required MNSure certification training specified in part 7700.0050;

D. disclose to MNSure which health carrier's qualified health plans offered through MNSure the insurance producer is authorized to sell;

E. comply with MNSure privacy and security standards specified in part 7700.0080;

F. comply with the MNSure account creation process; and

G. comply with recertification requirements to be determined by MNSure.

Subp. 3. **Noncompliance.** At MNSure's discretion, certification may be withdrawn from a navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor or individual for noncompliance with the certification requirements in subpart 1. At MNSure's discretion, certification may be withdrawn from an insurance producer entity or individual for noncompliance with the certification requirements in subpart 2.

Subp. 4. **Monitored performance.** At MNSure's discretion, a consumer assistance partner and MNSure certified insurance producer's performance may be monitored during the certification period. MNSure may require an underperforming entity to develop and implement a time-limited performance improvement plan. If performance is not to MNSure's satisfaction, certification to provide services through MNSure may be withdrawn.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0070 CONFLICT OF INTEREST.**

Subpart 1. **Framework; consumer assistance partners.** MNSure shall provide consumers with impartial, high-quality, community-based education and information, and in-person application and enrollment assistance through consumer assistance partners. In order to ensure the delivery of high quality services, to minimize or eliminate the existence of conflicts of interest and ensure integrity, MNSure will:

A. screen for potential conflicts of interest during the consumer assistance partner selection process and throughout the term of engagement with these entities;

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B. require initial and ongoing training that includes instruction on providing impartial education and in-person assistance with consumer selection of a qualified health plan;

C. require the consumer assistance partner to disclose all affiliations that may present a direct, indirect, or perceived conflict of interest which includes submission of a written attestation that the consumer assistance partner is not a health insurance issuer or issuer of stop loss insurance, a subsidiary of a health insurance issuer or issuer of stop loss insurance, or an association that includes members of, or lobbies on behalf of, the insurance industry;

D. monitor the consumer assistance partner's performance and practice through reporting;

E. monitor the consumer assistance partner through feedback tools on the MNsure Web site and through qualitative and quantitative evaluation tools;

F. actively solicit customer satisfaction feedback on experience with MNsure; and

G. as circumstances command, where a conflict of interest arises, require mitigation, revocation of certification, or termination of partnership with a consumer assistance partner.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** All current conflict of interest requirements in Minnesota Rules and Minnesota Statutes shall apply to insurance producers.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0080 PRIVACY AND SECURITY.**

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 155.260, MNsure shall require a navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer to annually attest that its data security and privacy practices are compliant with the applicable federal and state laws and supportive of MNsure data security and privacy practices. Any navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer must have specific authorization from MNsure prior to accessing data through MNsure according to Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.06, subdivision 8. The authorization must be immediately and permanently revoked under Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.06, subdivision 8, for any willful violation of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13. MNsure has the right to inspect, assess, and audit a navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer's data security and privacy practices. Inadequate data security and privacy practices may result in termination of certification at the discretion of MNsure.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0090 COMPENSATION.**

Subpart 1. **Consumer assistance partners compensation.** Consumer assistance partner compensation may include, but is not limited to, per enrollment payments, grants, and pay-for-performance payments. The type of compensation is dependent on the specific role of the consumer assistance partner. The amount or rate of compensation is dependent on the specific role of the consumer assistance partner. The rate of per enrollment payments shall be set by the board on an annual basis. The initial payment rate and any subsequent changes to the payment rate must be published in the State Register. The payment rate is effective upon publication and applicable for all work completed on or after the payment rate effective date.

A. Payment per enrollment.

(1) Consumer assistance partners may receive payment for each successful enrollment through MNsure. The rate of payment shall be set by MNsure. The initial payment rate and any subsequent changes to the payment rate shall be published in the

State Register. The payment rate is effective upon publication and applicable for all work completed on or after the payment rate effective date. Payments shall be paid based on the availability of funding.

(2) Payments shall be made directly to the entity.

B. Grants.

(1) MNSure may award grants through a competitive process. The competitive process shall be based on solicitation, and at MNSure's discretion, grants shall be established based on the criteria outlined in the solicitation.

(2) Disbursements of grant funding shall be paid per contract agreed to between the entity and MNSure.

C. Pay-for-performance payments. At the discretion of MNSure, pay-for-performance payments shall be established to address specific performance measures including, but not limited to, targeted geographic areas, specific population barriers, disparities, or distinctive outreach activities.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** Compensation for insurance producers is subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.05, subdivision 3.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 62V.05; L 2013 c 9 s 14*

**History:** *37 SR 1579*

**7700.0100 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OF MNSURE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS.**

Subpart 1. **Applicability.** Parts 7700.0100 to 7700.0105 govern the administration of MNSure eligibility appeals. Parts 7700.0100 to 7700.0105 must be read in conjunction with the federal Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148; Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 155; and Minnesota Statutes, chapter 62V; and sections 256.045 and 256.0451.

Subp. 2. **Applicability to medical assistance and MinnesotaCare.** Although MNSure offers a unique single marketplace for consumers to compare several health insurance coverage options, including coverage under medical assistance and MinnesotaCare, appeals rights and processes for medical assistance and MinnesotaCare are found in applicable federal or state statute or rule, including, but not limited to, parts 9505.0130, 9505.5105, 9505.0545, and 9506.0070, and Minnesota Statutes, sections 256.045, 256.0451, and 256L.10. Nothing in these rules should be construed to supersede, abridge, or in any way limit the appeal rights of appellants contesting issues covered or not covered under these rules that are available under applicable federal or state statute or rule, including, but not limited to, parts 9505.0130, 9505.5105, 9505.0545, and 9506.0070, and Minnesota Statutes, sections 256.045, 256.0451, and 256L.10. However, nothing in these rules prevent any MNSure consumer from filing appeals through MNSure.

Subp. 3. **Regulatory investigations.** Nothing in these rules limits or supersedes the ability of the commissioners of commerce and health to conduct investigations or facilitate appeals as authorized by laws administered by the Departments of Commerce and Health.

**Statutory Authority:** *L 2013 c 9 s 14; 62V.08*

**History:** *38 SR 397*

**7700.0101 DEFINITIONS.**

Subpart 1. **Scope.** As used in parts 7700.0100 to 7700.0105, the terms defined in this part have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Agency.** "Agency" means the entity that made the eligibility determination being contested. Agency includes MNSure and, where applicable, any entity involved under a contract, subcontract, grant, or subgrant with MNSure that provides or operates programs or services for which appeals are available. Agency does not include the Minnesota Department of Commerce or the Minnesota Department of Health.



Subp. 3. **Appeal.** "Appeal" means a challenge to or dispute of an initial determination or redetermination made by MNsure enumerated under part 7700.0105, subpart 1, item A.

Subp. 4. **Appeal record.** "Appeal record" means all relevant records pertaining to the contested issues, including eligibility records filed in the proceeding, the appeal decision, all papers and requests filed in the proceeding, and if a hearing is held, the recording of the hearing testimony or an official report containing the substance of what happened at the hearing and any exhibits introduced at the hearing.

Subp. 5. **Appeals examiner.** "Appeals examiner" means a person appointed to conduct hearings under this part by the MNsure board and includes human services judges of the Department of Human Services and administrative law judges of the Office of Administrative Hearings, when acting under a delegation of authority from the MNsure board.

Subp. 6. **Appellant.** "Appellant" means the applicant or enrollee, the employer, or small business employer or employee submitting an appeal. Appellant includes the appellant's attorney or representative. An appellant who is not a business owner may file and appeal on his or her own behalf or on behalf of the appellant's household.

Subp. 7. **Business day.** "Business day" means any day other than a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 645.44.

Subp. 8. **Business hours.** "Business hours" means the hours between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Central Standard Time, on business days.

Subp. 9. **Chief appeals examiner.** "Chief appeals examiner" means the chief human services judge of the Department of Human Services and the chief administrative law judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings, when acting under a delegation of authority from the MNsure board.

Subp. 10. **De novo review.** "De novo review" means a review of an appeal without deference to prior decisions in the case and can include making new findings of fact based on the appeal record.

Subp. 11. **Eligibility.** "Eligibility" means meeting the stipulated requirements for participation in a program or access to a service or product.

Subp. 12. **MNsure board or board.** "MNsure board" or "board" means the entity established in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 62V, as a board under Minnesota Statutes, section 15.012, and should be understood to include any individual or entity to whom the board has delegated a specific power or authority either directly or through an interagency agreement when that individual or entity is exercising the delegation.

Subp. 13. **Party or parties.** "Party" or "parties" means the appellants and agencies that are involved in an appeal and who have the legal right to make claims and defenses, offer proof, and examine and cross-examine witnesses during the appeal.

Subp. 14. **Person.** "Person" means a natural person.

Subp. 15. **Preponderance of the evidence.** "Preponderance of the evidence" means, in light of the record as a whole, the evidence leads the appeals examiner to believe that the finding of fact is more likely to be true than not true.

Subp. 16. **Representative.** "Representative" means a person who is empowered by the party to support, speak for, or act on behalf of the party. Representative includes legal counsel, relative, friend, or other spokesperson or authorized representative under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.227.

Subp. 17. **Vacate.** "Vacate" means to set aside a previous action.

**Statutory Authority:** *L 2013 c 9 s 14; 62V.08*

**History:** *38 SR 397*

**7700.0105 MNSURE ELIGIBILITY APPEALS.**

**Subpart 1. Eligibility.**

A. MNSure appeals are available for the following actions:

(1) initial determinations and redeterminations made by MNSure of individual eligibility to purchase a qualified health plan through MNSure, made in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, sections 155.305, (a) and (b); 155.330; and 155.335;

(2) initial determinations and redeterminations made by MNSure of eligibility for and level of advance payment of premium tax credit, and eligibility for and level of cost sharing reductions, made in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, sections 155.305 (f) to (g); 155.330; and 155.335;

(3) initial determinations and redeterminations made by MNSure of employer eligibility to purchase coverage for qualified employees through the Small Business Health Options Program under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.710 (a);

(4) initial determinations and redeterminations made by MNSure of employee eligibility to purchase coverage through the Small Business Health Options Program under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.710 (e);

(5) initial determinations and redeterminations made by MNSure of individual eligibility for an exemption from the individual responsibility requirement made in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.605;

(6) a failure by MNSure to provide timely notice of an eligibility determination in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, sections 155.310 (g); 155.330 (e)(1)(ii); 155.335 (h)(ii); 155.610 (i); and 155.715 (e) and (f);

(7) in response to a notice from MNSure under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.310 (h), a determination by MNSure that an employer does not provide minimum essential coverage through an employer-sponsored plan or that the employer does provide coverage but is not affordable coverage with respect to an employee; and

(8) in response to a denial of a request to vacate a dismissal made according to this chapter and in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.530 (d)(2).

B. If an individual has been denied eligibility for medical assistance under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.302 (b), an appeal of a determination of eligibility for advanced payments of the premium tax credit or cost-sharing reduction must also be treated as an appeal of medical assistance determination of eligibility.

**Subp. 2. Filing an appeal.**

A. To initiate an appeal, an appellant must file the appeal with MNSure as follows:

- (1) by mail;
- (2) by telephone;
- (3) by Internet; and
- (4) in person.

B. MNSure must provide the necessary contact information for each method of filing an appeal with each eligibility determination and also through the MNSure Web site.

C. The agency must assist any potential appellant in filing an appeal when assistance is requested.

D. An appeal must be received by MNSure within 90 days from the date of the notice of eligibility determination. There is a rebuttable presumption that the date of the notice of eligibility determination is five business days later than the date printed on the notice. The person may rebut this presumption by presenting evidence or testimony that they received the notice five business days after the date printed on the notice. An appeal received more than 90 days after the date of the eligibility notice will be dismissed. If the

deadline for filing an appeal falls on a day that is not a business day, the filing deadline is the next business day.

E. Appeal request forms will be available to persons through the Internet, by in-person request, by mail, and by telephone. The following information is requested, but not required, in an appeal:

- (1) name;
- (2) MNsure username;
- (3) date of birth;
- (4) address, including either an e-mail address, if available, or a mailing or physical address;
- (5) MNsure programs involved in the appeal, for which a list must be provided on the appeal request form;
- (6) reason for the appeal; and
- (7) in appeals of redeterminations of eligibility, whether the appellant intends to continue at the level of eligibility and benefits before the redetermination being appealed until the appeal decision.

F. Appeals shall be accepted regardless of whether the requested information is provided on the form or the information is incomplete. However, failure by an appellant to provide all of the requested information may prevent resolution of the appeal or delivery of effective notice.

G. The date of official receipt of appeals submitted after business hours, whether filed through the Internet or by telephone, is the next business day.

**Subp. 3. Notices and communications.**

A. The parties to an appeal have the right to the following timely notices and communications:

- (1) acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal and a scheduling order, including information regarding the appellant's eligibility pending appeal and an explanation that any advance payments of the premium tax credit paid on behalf of the tax filer pending appeal are subject to reconciliation; and
- (2) the decision and order of the MNsure board.

B. Any notice sent to the appellant must also be sent to the appellant's attorney or representative.

C. An appeals examiner shall not have ex parte contact on substantive issues with the agency, the appellant, or any person involved in an appeal. No agency employee shall review, interfere with, change, or attempt to influence the recommended decision of the appeals examiner in any appeal, except through the procedures allowed herein. The limitations in this subpart do not affect the board's authority to review or make final decisions.

**Subp. 4. Rescheduling.**

A. Requests to reschedule a hearing must be made in person, by telephone, through the Internet, or mailed and postmarked to the appeals examiner at least five days in advance of the regularly scheduled hearing date. The rescheduling request may be made orally or in writing. The requesting party must provide the other party a copy of a written request or must otherwise notify the other party of the request.

B. Any rescheduling of a hearing with less than five days' advance notice will be at the discretion of the appeals examiner and granted only when the rescheduling does not prejudice any party to the rescheduling.

C. Unless a determination is made by the appeals examiner that a request to reschedule a hearing is made for the purpose of delay, a hearing must be rescheduled by

the appeals examiner for good cause as determined by the appeals examiner. Good cause includes the following:

- (1) to accommodate a witness;
- (2) to obtain necessary evidence, preparation, or representation;
- (3) to review, evaluate, and respond to new evidence;
- (4) to permit negotiations of resolution between the parties;
- (5) to permit the agency to reconsider;
- (6) to permit actions not previously taken;
- (7) to accommodate a conflict of previously scheduled appointments;
- (8) to accommodate a physical or mental illness;
- (9) where an interpreter, translator, or other service necessary to accommodate a person with a disability is needed but not available; or
- (10) any other compelling reasons beyond the control of the party that prevents attendance at the originally scheduled time.

D. If requested by the appeals examiner, a written statement confirming the reasons for the rescheduling request must be provided to the appeals examiner by the requesting party.

**Subp. 5. Telephone, videoconference, or in-person hearing.**

A. A hearing may be conducted by telephone, videoconference, or in person. An in-person appeals hearing will only be held at the discretion of the appeals examiner, or if the person asserts that either the person or a witness has a physical or mental disability that would impair the person's ability to fully participate in a hearing held by interactive video technology. To have the hearing conducted by videoconference or in person, a person must make a specific request for that type of hearing.

B. When an in-person hearing is granted, the appeals examiner shall conduct the hearing in the county where the person involved resides, unless an alternate location is mutually agreed upon before the hearing.

C. Where federal law or regulation does not require a telephone, videoconference, or in-person hearing and allows for a review of documentary evidence through a desk review, a telephone, videoconference, or in-person hearing will only be provided when the appeals examiner determines that such a hearing would materially assist in resolving the issues presented by the appeal.

**Subp. 6. Emergency expedited appeals.**

A. An appellant has a right to request an emergency expedited appeal when there is an immediate need for health services because a standard appeal could seriously jeopardize the appellant's life or health or ability to attain, maintain, or regain maximum function. An appellant must specify that an emergency expedited appeal is being requested when submitting the initial appeal.

B. If an emergency develops during a pending appeal such that there has developed an immediate need for health services because a standard appeal could seriously jeopardize the appellant's life or health or ability to attain, maintain, or regain maximum function, an appellant may request an expedited appeal.

C. If a request for an expedited appeal is denied, the appellant will be notified according to the process and time period required under the applicable federal law.

D. If a request for an expedited appeal is accepted, the appeals examiner will issue a decision according to the process and time period required under the applicable federal law.

**Subp. 7. Interpreter and translation services.**

A. Appeals must be accessible to appellants who have limited English proficiency, appellants who require interpreter and translation services, and appellants with disabilities. An appeals examiner has a duty to inquire whether any person involved in the hearing needs the services of an interpreter, translator, or reasonable accommodations to accommodate a disability in order to participate in or to understand the appeal process.

B. Necessary interpreter services, translation services, or reasonable accommodations must be provided at no cost to the person involved in the appeal.

C. If an appellant requests interpreter services, translation services, or reasonable accommodations or it appears to the appeals examiner that necessary interpreter or translation services are needed but not available for the scheduled hearing, the hearing shall be rescheduled to the next available date when the appropriate services can be provided.

**Subp. 8. Access to data.**

A. Subject to the requirements of all applicable state and federal laws regarding privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure of personally identifiable information, the appellants and agencies involved in an appeals hearing must be allowed to access the appeal record upon request at a convenient place and time before and during the appeals hearing. Copies of the appeal record, including an electronic copy of the recorded hearing, must be provided at no cost and, upon request, must be mailed or sent by electronic transmission to the party or the party's representative.

B. An appellant involved in an appeals hearing may enforce the right of access to data and copies of the case file by making a request to the appeals examiner. The appeals examiner shall make an appropriate order enforcing the appellant's right of access, including but not limited to ordering access to files, data, and documents possessed by the agency; continuing or rescheduling an appeal hearing to allow adequate time for access to data; or prohibiting use by the agency of files, data, or documents that have been generated, collected, stored, or disseminated in violation of the requirements of state or federal law, or when the documents have not been provided to the appellant involved in the appeal.

**Subp. 9. Data practices.**

A. Data on individuals, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 13.02, subdivision 5, will be collected about persons and appellants throughout the appeals process. The purpose of this data collection is to conduct an appeal. A party to an appeal is not required to supply data for an appeal. However, deciding which evidence and testimony to submit may have an impact on the outcome of the appeal decision. Certain other government officials may have access to information provided throughout the appeals process if this is allowed by law or pursuant to a valid court order.

B. When an appeal proceeds beyond the MNsure appeals process to judicial review, the appeal record will be public unless the court with jurisdiction over the appeal issues a protective order. When the appeal proceeds outside of the MNsure appeals process to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the record will be classified according to federal law governing the collection of data on individuals.

**Subp. 10. Appeal summary.** The agency must prepare an appeal summary for each appeal hearing. The appeal summary shall be delivered to each party and the MNsure appeals examiner at least three business days before the date of the appeal hearing. The appeals examiner shall confirm that the appeal summary is delivered to the party involved in the appeal as required under this subpart. Each party shall be provided, through the appeal summary or other reasonable methods, appropriate information about the procedures for the appeal hearing and an adequate opportunity to prepare. The contents of the appeal summary must be adequate to inform each party of the evidence on which the agency relies and the legal basis for the agency's action or determination.

**Subp. 11. Representation during appeal.** An appellant may personally appear in any appeal hearing and may be represented by an attorney or representative. A partnership may

be represented by any of its members, an attorney, or other representative. A corporation or association may be represented by an officer, an attorney, or other representative. In a case involving an unrepresented appellant, the appeals examiner shall examine witnesses and receive exhibits for the purpose of identifying and developing in the appeal record relevant facts necessary for making an informed and fair decision. An unrepresented appellant shall be provided an adequate opportunity to respond to testimony or other evidence presented by the agency at the appeal hearing. The appeals examiner shall ensure that an unrepresented appellant has a full and reasonable opportunity at the appeal hearing to establish a record for appeal. An agency may be represented by an employee or an attorney, including an attorney employed by the agency as authorized by law.

**Subp. 12. Dismissals.**

A. The appeals examiner must dismiss an appeal if the appellant:

- (1) withdraws the appeal orally or in writing;
- (2) fails to appear at a scheduled appeal hearing or prehearing conference and good cause is not shown;
- (3) fails to submit a valid appeal; or
- (4) dies while the appeal is pending.

B. If an appeal is dismissed, the appeals examiner must provide timely notice to the parties, which must include the reason for dismissal, an explanation of the dismissal's effect on the appellant's eligibility, and an explanation of how the appellant may show good cause why the dismissal should be vacated.

C. The appeals examiner must vacate a dismissal if the appellant makes a written request within 30 days of the date of the notice of dismissal showing good cause why the dismissal should be vacated. There is a rebuttable presumption that the date of the notice of dismissal is five business days later than the date printed on the notice. The person may rebut this presumption by presenting evidence or testimony that they received the notice later than five business days after the date printed on the notice. Good cause can be shown when there is:

- (1) a death or serious illness in the person's family;
- (2) a personal injury or physical or mental illness that reasonably prevents an appellant or witness from attending the hearing;
- (3) an emergency, crisis, including a mental health crisis, or unforeseen event that reasonably prevents an appellant or witness from attending the hearing;
- (4) an obligation or responsibility of an appellant or witness which a reasonable person, in the conduct of one's affairs, could reasonably determine takes precedence over attending the hearing;
- (5) lack of or failure to receive timely notice of the hearing in the preferred language of an appellant involved in the hearing;
- (6) excusable neglect, excusable inadvertence, or excusable mistake as determined by the appeals examiner; or
- (7) any other compelling reason beyond the control of the party as determined by the appeals examiner.

**Subp. 13. Prehearing conferences.**

A. The appeals examiner, at the examiner's discretion, prior to an appeal hearing may hold a prehearing conference to further the interests of justice or efficiency. The parties must participate in any prehearing conference held. A party may request a prehearing conference. The prehearing conference may be conducted by telephone, in writing, or in person. The prehearing conference may address the following issues:

- (1) disputes regarding access to files, evidence, subpoenas, or testimony;

- (2) the time required for the hearing or any need for expedited procedures or decision;
- (3) identification or clarification of legal or other issues that may arise at the hearing;
- (4) identification of and possible agreement to factual issues; and
- (5) scheduling and any other matter that will aid in the proper and fair functioning of the hearing.

B. The appeals examiner shall make a record or otherwise contemporaneously summarize the prehearing conference in writing, which shall be sent to:

- (1) the parties; and
- (2) the party's attorney or representative.

**Subp. 14. Disqualification of appeals examiner.**

A. The chief appeals examiner shall remove an appeals examiner from any case where the appeals examiner believes that presiding over the case would create the appearance of unfairness or impropriety. No appeals examiner may hear any case where any of the parties to the appeal are related to the appeals examiner by blood or marriage. An appeals examiner must not hear any case if the appeals examiner has a financial or personal interest in the outcome. An appeals examiner having knowledge of such a relationship or interest must immediately notify the chief appeals examiner and be removed from the case.

B. A party may move for the removal of an appeals examiner by written application of the party together with a statement of the basis for removal. Upon the motion of the party, the chief appeals examiner must decide whether the appeals examiner may hear the particular case.

**Subp. 15. Status of eligibility and benefits pending appeal.**

A. In appeals involving a redetermination of an appellant's eligibility, the appellant shall continue at the level of eligibility and benefits before the redetermination being appealed only if the appellant affirmatively elects to receive them during the appeal.

B. The appeal type, as specified in subpart 1, item A, determines what eligibility and benefits are available to be continued pending appeal. The availability of a continuation of eligibility and benefits is only available for appellants under subpart 1, item A, subitems (1) and (2). If appealing eligibility for advanced payments of premium tax credits and/or cost-sharing reductions, at issue is the amount of the advance payments of premium tax credits and/or cost-sharing reductions; and if appealing the eligibility to purchase a QHP through MNsure, at issue is the eligibility to purchase a QHP through MNsure.

C. Where an appellant continues at the level of eligibility before the redetermination being appealed and the appeal decision upholds the redetermination being appealed, the appellant is subject to reconciliation and repayment of any overpayment.

**Subp. 16. Commencement and conduct of hearing.**

A. The appeals examiner shall begin each hearing by describing the process to be followed in the hearing, including the swearing in of witnesses, how testimony and evidence are presented, the order of examining and cross-examining witnesses, and the opportunity for an opening statement and a closing statement. The appeals examiner shall identify for the parties the issues to be addressed at the hearing and shall explain to the parties the burden of proof that applies to the appellant and the agency. The appeals examiner shall confirm, prior to proceeding with the hearing, that the appeal summary, if prepared, has been properly completed and provided to the parties, and that the parties have been provided documents and an opportunity to review the appeal record, as provided in this part.

B. The appeals examiner shall act in a fair and impartial manner at all times. At the beginning of the appeal hearing, the agency must designate one person as a representative who shall be responsible for presenting the agency's evidence and questioning any witnesses. The appeals examiner shall make sure that both the agency and the appellant are

provided sufficient time to present testimony and evidence, to confront and cross-examine all adverse witnesses, and to make any relevant statement at the hearing. All testimony in the hearing will be taken under oath or affirmation. The appeals examiner shall make reasonable efforts to explain the appeal hearing process to unrepresented appellants and shall ensure that the hearing is conducted fairly and efficiently. Upon the reasonable request of the appellant or the agency or at the discretion of the appeals examiner, the appeals examiner shall direct witnesses to remain outside the hearing room, except during individual testimony, when the appeals examiner determines that such action is appropriate to ensure a fair and impartial hearing. The appeals examiner shall not terminate the hearing before affording the appellant and the agency a complete opportunity to submit all admissible evidence and reasonable opportunity for oral or written statement. In the event that an appeal hearing extends beyond the time allotted, the appeal hearing shall be continued from day to day until completion. Appeal hearings that have been continued shall be timely scheduled to minimize delay in the disposition of the appeal.

C. The appeal hearing shall be a de novo review and shall address the correctness and legality of the agency's action and shall not be limited simply to a review of the propriety of the agency's action. The appellant may raise and present evidence on all legal claims or defenses arising under state or federal law as a basis for the appeal, excluding any constitutional claims that are beyond the jurisdiction of the appeal hearing. The appeals examiner may take official notice of adjudicative facts.

D. The burden of persuasion is governed by specific state or federal law and regulations that apply to the subject of the hearing. Unless otherwise required by specific state or federal laws that apply to the subject of the appeal, the appellant carries the burden to persuade the appeals examiner that a claim is true and must demonstrate such by a preponderance of the evidence.

E. The appeals examiner shall accept all evidence, except evidence privileged by law, that is commonly accepted by reasonable people in the conduct of their affairs as having probative value on the issues to be addressed at the appeal hearing. The appeals examiner shall ensure for all cases that the appeal record is sufficiently complete to make a fair and accurate decision.

F. The agency must present its evidence prior to or at the appeal hearing. The agency shall not be permitted to submit evidence after the hearing except by agreement at the hearing between the appellant, the agency, and the appeals examiner. If evidence is submitted after the appeal hearing, based on an agreement, the appellant and the agency must be allowed sufficient opportunity to respond to the evidence. When determined necessary by the appeals examiner, the appeal record shall remain open to permit an appellant to submit additional evidence on the issues presented at the appeal hearing.

**Subp. 17. Orders of the MNsure board.**

A. A timely, written decision must be issued in every appeal. Each decision must contain a clear ruling on the issues presented in the appeal hearing and contain a ruling only on questions directly presented by the appeal and the arguments raised in the appeal.

B. A written decision must be issued within 90 days of the date the appeal is received, as administratively feasible, unless a shorter time is required by law.

C. The decision must contain both findings of fact and conclusions of law, clearly separated and identified. The findings of fact must be based on the entire appeal record. Each finding of fact made by the appeals examiner shall be supported by a preponderance of the evidence unless a different standard is required by law. The legal claims or arguments of a participant do not constitute either a finding of fact or a conclusion of law, except to the extent the appeals examiner explicitly adopts an argument as a finding of fact or conclusion of law.

D. The decision shall contain at least the following:

(1) a listing of the date and place of the appeal hearing and the parties and persons appearing at the appeal hearing;



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(2) a clear and precise statement of the issues, including the dispute that is the subject of the appeal and the specific points that must be resolved in order to decide the case;

(3) a listing of each of the materials constituting the appeal record that were placed into evidence at the appeal hearing, and upon which the appeal hearing decision is based;

(4) the findings of fact based upon the entire appeal record. The findings of fact must be adequate to inform the parties and the public of the basis of the decision. If the evidence is in conflict on an issue that must be resolved, the findings of fact must state the reasoning used in resolving the conflict;

(5) conclusions of law that address the legal authority for the appeal hearing and the ruling, and which give appropriate attention to the claims of the parties;

(6) a clear and precise statement of the decision made resolving the dispute that is the subject of the appeal, including the effective date of the decision; and

(7) written notice of any existing right to appeal, including taking an appeal to the United States Department of Health and Human Services and identifying the time frame for an appeal and that the decision is final unless appealed.

E. The appeals examiner shall not independently investigate facts or otherwise rely on information not presented at the appeal hearing. The appeals examiner may not contact other agency personnel, except as provided in subpart 16. The appeals examiner's recommended decision must be based exclusively on the testimony and evidence presented at the appeal hearing, legal arguments presented, and the appeals examiner's research and knowledge of the law.

F. The MNsure board shall review the recommended decision and accept or refuse to accept the decision. The MNsure board may accept the recommended order of an appeals examiner and issue the order to the parties or may refuse to accept the decision. Upon refusal, the MNsure board shall notify the parties of the refusal, state the reasons, and allow each party ten days to submit additional written argument on the matter. After the expiration of the ten-day period, the MNsure board shall issue an order on the matter to the parties. Refusal of the MNsure board to accept a decision must not delay the 90-day time limit to issue a decision.

Subp. 18. **Public access to hearings and decisions.** Appeal decisions must be maintained in a manner so that the public has ready access to previous decisions on particular topics, subject to appropriate procedures for compliance with applicable state and federal laws regarding the privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure, of personally identifiable information. Appeal hearings conducted under this part are not open to the public due to the not public classification of the information provided for inclusion in the appeal record.

Subp. 19. **Administrative review.**

A. Administrative review by the United States Department of Health and Human Services may be available for parties aggrieved by an order of the MNsure board.

B. An appeal under this part must be filed with the United States Department of Health and Human Services and MNsure within 30 days of the date of the appeal decision according to the process required under the applicable federal regulations.

Subp. 20. **Judicial review.** An appellant may seek judicial review to the extent it is available by law.

**Statutory Authority:** *L 2013 c 9 s 14; 62V.08*

**History:** *38 SR 397*