

BULLETIN

To: Private Review Agents

Re: Review of Application for Private Review Agent Certification

Date: April 8, 1999

Bulletin: Life and Health 99-7

Effective January 1, 1999, regulation of private review agents was transferred from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to the Insurance Administration.

Sixty days before the expiration of your certification to act as a private review agent, a copy of the application will be mailed to you, accompanied by copies of Title 15, Subtitles 10A-10B of the Insurance Article and applicable regulations.

Applicants for renewal must respond to each question on the application provided by the Administration. Failure to respond to each question will delay the processing of your application. No other application may be substituted for the application provided by the Administration.

It is imperative that you read the law ***before*** completing the application. The utilization review plan must conform to the newly enacted requirements. To date, applications for renewal have been submitted by private review agents whose certification expired in January, February and March. Many of the applications have been deficient because questions on the application form have been left blank or answered incorrectly. Moreover, the utilization review plan does not reflect the newly enacted requirements.

Any private review agent to whom the internal grievance process has been delegated by a carrier must file an internal grievance procedure that satisfies the provisions of Title 10A of the Insurance Article and COMAR 31.10.18. In the instance where the carrier is also the private review agent, the "delegation" of the internal grievance process may be to the carrier acting in its capacity as the private review agent. (I NEED SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO EXPLAIN THAT)

Personnel of the Administration with medical/legal experience and training will review the application and utilization review plan that must be submitted with the application. The review will determine compliance of the utilization review plan with the requirements. Certification will not be granted to any private review agent who fails to submit information necessary to determine compliance with the requirements.

The law prohibits any person from conducting utilization review without certification.

If you have any questions about this bulletin, please contact the Maryland Insurance Administration at (410) 468-2259.

Donna B. Imhoff, Associate Commissioner