

**NEW YORK STATE  
MEDICAID PROGRAM**

**PERSONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
SERVICE MANUAL**

**POLICY GUIDELINES**

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## Section I - Requirements for Participation in Medicaid

The following guidelines contain Medicaid policies and information to assist Personal Emergency Response Services (PERS) providers in billing the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) for PERS services provided to qualified Medicaid clients.

### Record Keeping Requirements

The provider must maintain a data record for each client based on information supplied by the local social services district. This client data information will be forwarded to the provider on the day PERS is authorized. The data record must contain the following information:

- The client's name, telephone number and address, including an apartment number and floor, where applicable;
- Personal medical history, including age, sex, medical condition, primary diagnosis, and other relevant medical history;
- The name, telephone number, and address of each person whom the PERS recipient has designated as the emergency responders;
- The name, telephone number and address of the person whom the PERS client has designated as his/her representative, if different from the emergency responder;
- The name, telephone number and address of the police department, fire department, ambulance service, hospital, or other entity that the PERS client has designated as an emergency response organization;
- The client's written authorization for the emergency response organization and emergency responder to enter his/her home and provide emergency treatment and transportation; and
- The name, telephone number, and address of the client's physician and preferred hospital.

Client records must be updated every six months or whenever the district notifies the provider that changes must be made. Examples of information in the file which may be changed are the emergency responders or the client's medical condition.

### Monitoring Records

In addition to the data record, the PERS provider will also maintain records of all monitoring activities, all the signals sent by clients and his/her responses to these

signals. The provider must also maintain a record of all clients whom the monitoring agency test monitors each month.

**Installation and Equipment Removal Records**

Providers are also required to keep a record of the dates of installation and removal of PERS equipment, a record of instructions given to the PERS client regarding the use of the equipment and a record of all maintenance, repairs or replacements of the PERS equipment.

## Section II – Personal Emergency Response Services

### Contracting for PERS Providers

PERS are provided through contracts negotiated between local department of social service and the PERS provider. When the local department of social services selects a provider(s), a contract which defines the responsibilities of each party must be negotiated. A model contract has been developed by the Department for this purpose. This contract will require, among other things that the PERS provider maintain appropriate insurance coverage to protect the social services district from liability claims resulting from personal injuries to clients or persons who install, maintain or remove PERS equipment. Any local variations to the model contract must be included in the model contract. For example, local variations may include language that supports the methods selected by the district for monitoring the provider's provision of PERS equipment and services. Both the contract and rates, including any local variations, must be approved by the State Department of Health (DOH) before PERS are implemented.

### General Requirement for the Provision of Care

The process and procedures for the authorization of personal emergency response services are completed in accordance with and in coordination with the authorization procedures for home care services. Authorization for PERS services are based on a physician's order and a comprehensive assessment which must include an evaluation of the client's physical disability status, the degree that they would be at risk of an emergency due to medical or functional impairments or disability and the degree of their social isolation.

### Prior Authorization for Personal Emergency Response Services

Prior Authorization from the local department of social services is required for the provision of PERS. The authorization must be received by the provider of service prior to the initiation of service delivery. The local department of social services will enter the authorization into the prior approval system and will notify the provider. A PERS Authorization may not exceed six months.

### Initiation by the Local Department of Social Services of the Provision of PERS

Once it has been determined that a client may be eligible for PERS, and the comprehensive assessment and authorization are completed, the local department of social services have the primary responsibility to ensure that PERS services are provided and authorized.

The local department of social services must telephone the provider on the day of PERS authorization and inform the provider of the name, address and telephone number of the client. The local department of social services must also inform the provider that the provider must telephone the client or the client's representative that same day to arrange a mutually convenient time for the provider to install the PERS equipment into the client's telephone line, and that the provider must install the equipment within seven business days after the day the provider receives the written authorization from the local department of social services and that, if the provider cannot install the equipment within this seven day period, the provider must immediately notify the local department of social services. Also on the day the local department of social services authorizes PERS, the department must forward to the provider a copy of the authorization, along with the information contained in the client's data record. If the client's physical circumstances, medical condition or mental status changes during the authorization period, the local department of social services will be responsible for notifying the provider of these changes in writing so that the provider may update the client's data record.

## Responsibility of Personal Emergency Response Providers

The PERS provider has the responsibility to furnish, install, maintain, test and service the PERS equipment as required. Within this context it is expected that the local department of social services and the PERS provider will work closely together to coordinate service delivery to ensure that the client's health and safety needs are always met and that the client will have immediate access to medical help in an emergency.

### Installation of PERS Equipment

The installation process begins when the local department of social services telephones the provider informing him/her of the client's name, address and telephone number. The provider contacts the client or his/her representative on that same day and arranges a convenient time for the PERS equipment installation into the client's telephone line. The client must have and maintain a private line telephone service in order for the PERS equipment to properly function. The provider must properly install the equipment within seven business days from the day it receives the local department of social services written authorization. If the provider is unable to install the equipment within the seven-day time frame, the local department of social services must be notified immediately. Installation of PERS equipment is completed upon performance of the following tasks by the provider.

- The provider has notified the local department of social services on the day the provider installed the recipient's PERS equipment that the equipment has been properly installed;
- The provider has instructed the client in the use of the PERS equipment and has provided the client with simple, written instructions that describe these procedures.

The name and telephone number of the provider should appear on this instruction packet;

- The provider has informed the client that if the PERS equipment malfunctions, he/she should immediately notify the provider or the local department of social services;
- The provider has informed and encouraged the client to call the monitoring agency to test the equipment or with questions regarding the use of the equipment whenever they arise;

Within seven business days following the installation of PERS equipment, the provider must send the local department of social services, by mail or facsimile machine, a written confirmation that the equipment has been installed and that the client has been instructed in the use of the equipment. This confirmation must be signed by a representative of the provider and by the client or his/her representative. The client or the local department of social services may request, at any time, that the provider furnish, in the client's home, follow-up instructions on the use of PERS equipment.

## Responding to Emergency Signals

A provider's responsibility is to ensure that the monitoring agency performs the correct protocols when responding to an emergency signal. When the monitoring agency receives a signal from the client's equipment, staff from the monitoring agency will retrieve the client's data record and complete the following tasks:

- If the client's equipment has voice-to-voice capability, the monitoring agency staff will immediately establish client contact and determine whether an emergency exists and the type of assistance needed.
- If the client with voice-to-voice equipment is able to respond, monitoring agency staff will ask the client if assistance is needed and provide an appropriate response to the situation (such as contacting the designated emergency responder(s), or emergency response organization).
- If the monitoring agency staff is unable to establish contact with a client whose equipment has voice-to-voice capability, or if the client's equipment lacks voice-to-voice capability, monitoring agency staff will attempt to reach one of the emergency responders.
- Once an emergency responder is contacted, that emergency responder determines what further action to take to provide the client with assistance, including summoning an emergency response organization.

- If monitoring agency staff is unable to reach one of the emergency responders, the monitoring agency staff must notify the emergency response organization, (e.g. police, fire or ambulance).
- Monitoring agency staff will maintain contact with the client, the emergency responder or the emergency response organization, and will monitor the provision of this emergency service to verify that services have been provided and the emergency has been resolved.

The provider must telephone the local department of social services on the first business day after an emergency occurs and inform the local department of social services of the nature of the emergency and how it was resolved. The provider must also send the local department of social services a written report within seven working days after the emergency.

It is the provider's responsibility to assure that the monitoring agency's equipment has appropriate back-up power supply, separate telephone services, and back-up information retrieval system, so that the monitoring agency will be able to respond to signals for help from a client's PERS equipment during power failures, mechanical malfunctions, or other technical emergencies.

### **Removal of the Client's PERS Equipment**

The provider must not remove PERS equipment unless the local department of social services has notified the provider in writing that the equipment must be removed. The following procedures must be followed by the provider when removing equipment from a client's home:

- On the day the district telephones the provider and notifies it that PERS equipment must be removed, the provider must telephone the client or the client's representative to arrange a mutually convenient time for the removal of the equipment.
- The provider must remove PERS equipment within seven business days after the day the provider receives the local department of social services written notification that the equipment must be removed.
- On the day the equipment is removed, the provider must notify the local department of social services by telephone of the removal of the equipment.
- Within seven business days after the day the local department of social services notified the provider that the equipment is to be removed, the provider must forward to the district a written confirmation that the equipment has been removed. The confirmation must be signed by a representative of the provider and by the PERS client.



## Section III - Basis of Payment for Services Provided

Payment is only available for PERS services authorized by the local department of social services and provided in accordance with the authorization and the provider's contractual agreement with the local department of social services. Reimbursement for PERS will consist of two rates, which have been negotiated between the PERS provider and the local department of social services. The installation rate must include the costs for renting or leasing of PERS equipment, the installation, maintenance, and the removal of this equipment from the client's home. The second rate will be for the monthly service charge for monitoring agency services.

All payments for PERS services will end on the day the district sends the provider a written notification to discontinue service and remove the PERS equipment from the client's home.

## Section IV - Definitions

For the purpose of the Medicaid program and as used in this manual, the following standards and definitions apply.

### Emergency Responder

An emergency responder is a PERS client's neighbor, family member or any other person who, at the client's request, has agreed to respond to a signal for help when notified by a monitoring agency. To ensure adequate coverage of an emergency signal, the client must list with the local department of social services the name, address and telephone number of one person who has agreed to serve as an emergency responder.

### Emergency Response Organization

An emergency response organization is a police or fire department, an ambulance service, a hospital or other entity that the client has designated to respond to signals for help when notified by the monitoring agency or emergency responder.

### Personal Emergency Response Services

A Personal Emergency Response Services (PERS) is the provision and maintenance of electronic communication equipment in the home of a client. This equipment, when activated or if a timer mechanism has not been reset, signals a monitoring agency. PERS also includes the continuous monitoring of such signals by a trained operator and, in case of receipt of such signals, the immediate notification of the emergency response organizations, or persons, as the client has previously specified.

### PERS Provider

A PERS provider is a certified home health agency, a long term home health care program, an area agency on aging, a police department, a fire department, an ambulance service, a hospital, or any other entity that is capable of providing PERS either directly or through subcontracts. A PERS provider may also be a monitoring agency.

### Product Enhancements

Many PERS manufacturers have developed different **product enhancements**, the following are key features shared by all PERS:

- **An emergency response activator** is a small, electronic device that the PERS client presses or otherwise activates to send a signal for help to the monitoring agency. The activator can be hand held, worn as a neck pendant or as a wristband.

- **An emergency response communicator** is an electronic unit connected to the client's telephone line. The communicator can accept the signal from the activator and also has a button to generate a signal. The communicator then sends this signal over telephone lines to the monitoring agency.
- **Manufacturer-based monitoring agencies** have trained staff on duty on a 24-hour, seven day per week basis at the national or regional monitoring agency offices.
- **The monitoring agency** is an agency that is capable of receiving signals for help from a client's PERS equipment 24 hours a day, seven days per week; determining whether an emergency exists; and notifying an emergency response organization or an emergency responder that the PERS client needs emergency help.
- **Provider-based monitoring agencies** are usually located in hospitals and have staff who are trained to respond to the emergency signal by referencing pertinent client information, and/or calling the client or responder to determine if an emergency exists and summoning assistance.