



Division of Elementary and Secondary Education & Arkansas Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services Joint Guidance on School-based Personal Care Prior Authorizations

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services (DAABHS) requires a Personal Care Prior Authorization (PA) and independent assessment using the Arkansas Independent Assessment (ARIA) conducted by DHS contractor, OPTUM, prior to claiming Medicaid reimbursement for school-based personal care services.

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), in collaboration with DAABHS, developed this guidance regarding the school-based personal care prior authorization process for public school students. The purpose of this guidance is to ensure students receive necessary services and to ensure LEAs receive reimbursement for all eligible services.

Below is the process for which school-based personal care prior authorizations must follow to be eligible for reimbursement through the DHS Division of Medicaid Services (DMS).

- 1. The LEA must complete and upload a DMS-618 Service Plan to the [eQHealth Solutions online portal](#). Service plans may be submitted anytime during the school year.**
 1. School personnel may contact the respective DESE MITS Advisor for assistance with completing the DMS-618 Service Plan and submission process.
 2. Use the [Step-by-Step User Guide for Requesting a PA](#) via the eQHealth Solutions Online Portal. For an overview of the eQHealth Solutions online portal, visit [eQHealth Solutions under 21 Personal Care Training Presentation](#).
- 2. Optum Assessment Notification** – Once the DMS-618 Service Plan has been successfully uploaded into the eQHealth portal, Optum, the independent assessor, is notified of the school-based personal care request for PA, Optum will open a 30-day period to schedule the student's assessment. During the 30-day assessment period, Optum will make 3 attempts to contact the guardian.
 1. School personnel are encouraged to notify the guardian about the required Optum assessment to ensure the assessment takes place within the 30-day period. The guardian or the school representative may schedule the assessment by contacting Optum within the 30-day assessment period. **Optum's call center number is 1-844-809-9538.**
 2. The guardian may request the assessment take place at school. However, the guardian must either be physically present or present by phone/teleconference during the time of the assessment.
 3. If a guardian fails to schedule an appointment within the 30-day Optum assessment period, the school must resubmit the DMS-618 Service Plan to eQHealth to prompt a new 30-day assessment period. The school may submit the same DMS-618 previously submitted. There is no need to complete a new DMS-618 form.
 4. The eQHealth portal will be updated to reflect the assessment progress, completion and approval.

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