



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
*Office of the Attorney General*

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: BRIAN MCCORMICK**  
Regulatory and Manual Section Manager  
Department of Medical Assistance Services

**FROM: ELIZABETH A. MCDONALD**  
Assistant Attorney General

**DATE: August 15, 2013**

**SUBJECT: Emergency Regulations Regarding Mental Health Support Services (12 VAC 30-50-226 & 30-60-143)**

I have reviewed these emergency regulations that would strengthen the eligibility criteria for Mental Health Support Services (MHSS), to ensure that only individuals who clinically qualify for the services receive the services. Based on that review, it is this Office's view that the Director of the Department of Medical Assistance Services ("DMAS"), acting on behalf of the Board of Medical Assistance Services pursuant to Virginia Code § 32.1-324, has the authority to promulgate these regulations, subject to compliance with the provisions of Article 2 of the Administrative Process Act ("APA") and has not exceeded that authority.

The authority for this emergency action is found in Virginia Code § 2.2-4011, which provides that an "emergency situation" is a "situation in which Virginia statutory law, the Virginia appropriations act, or federal law requires that a regulation shall be effective in 280 days or less from its enactment..." The amendments to the regulations will enable the Director, in lieu of the Board of Medical Assistance Services, to comply with Items 307 LL and 307 RR(f) of the 2012 *Acts of the Assembly*.

Accordingly, with the prior approval of the Governor, these regulations will qualify for the “emergency” exemption from Article 2 requirements. Please be advised, however, that under Virginia Code §2.2-4011(A), the Department must state in writing the nature of and necessity for such emergency actions, and this appears to have been accomplished in the “Agency Background Document.” In addition, the regulations shall be effective for no more than 12 months. As the Department intends to continue regulating the subject matter governed by this emergency regulation beyond 12 months, it will be necessary to replace these emergency regulations with regulations duly promulgated under Article 2 of the APA. A Notice of Intended Regulatory Action relating to the proposed replacement regulations must be filed with the Register within 60 days of the effective date of the emergency regulations. The proposed regulations must be filed with the Register within 180 days after the effective date of the emergency regulations.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 786-7363.

cc: Kim F. Piner  
Senior Assistant Attorney General