Appendix F: Participant Rights

Appendix F-1: Opportunity to Request a Fair Hearing

The State provides an opportunity to request a Fair Hearing under 42 CFR Part 431, Subpart E to individuals: (a) who are not given the choice of home and community-based services as an alternative to the institutional care specified in Item 1-F of the request; (b) are denied the service(s) of their choice or the provider(s) of their choice; or, (c) whose services are denied, suspended, reduced or terminated. The State provides notice of action as required in 42 CFR §431.210.

Procedures for Offering Opportunity to Request a Fair Hearing. Describe how the individual (or his/her legal representative) is informed of the opportunity to request a fair hearing under 42 CFR Part 431, Subpart E. Specify the notice (s) that are used to offer individuals the opportunity to request a Fair Hearing. State laws, regulations, policies and notices referenced in the description are available to CMS upon request through the operating or Medicaid agency.

FEE FOR SERVICE:
Members are given an oral explanation of the appeals (State Fair Hearing) process during the application process by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) income maintenance staff. The Department also gives members an oral explanation at the time of any contemplated adverse benefit determination. Depending on the adverse benefit determination, this could be provided by the income maintenance worker, case manager, integrated health care coordinator, community-based case manager, and/or medical provider performing the level of care determination. The member is also given written notice of the following at the time of application; and at the time of any department adverse benefit determination. An adverse benefit determination affects a claim for assistance in which applicants are not provided the choice of home and community based services as an alternative to institutional care and members are denied services or providers of their choice, or whose services are denied, suspended, reduced or terminated.

An adverse benefit determination notice of determination that results in members' right to appeal includes the following elements: the right to request a hearing, the procedure for requesting a hearing, the right to be represented by others at the hearing, unless otherwise specified by the statute or federal regulation, provisions for payment of legal fees by DHS; and how to obtain assistance, including the right to continue services while an appeal is pending.

The choice of HCBS vs. institutional services is discussed with the member at the time of the completion of the application by DHS income maintenance staff; and again at the time of the service plan development by the case manager, integrated health care coordinator, or community-based case manager.

All DHS application forms, notices, pamphlets and brochures contain information on the appeals process and the opportunity to request an appeal. This information is available at all of the local offices and on the DHS website. The process for filing an appeal can be found on all Notices of Decision (NOD). Procedures regarding the appeal hearing can be found on the Notice of Hearing. As stated in Iowa Administrative Code, any person or group of persons may file an appeal with DHS concerning any decision made. The member is encouraged, but not required, to make a written appeal on a standard Appeal and Request a Hearing form. Appeals may also be filed via the DHS website. If the member is unwilling to complete the form, the member would need to request the appeal in writing.

All notices are kept at all local DHS Offices or the case manager, integrated health care coordinator, or community-based case manager's file. The member is given their appeal rights in writing, which explains their right to continue with their current services while the appeal is under consideration. Copies of all notices for a change in service are maintained in the service file. IME reviews this information during case reviews.

MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS:
When an HCBS member is assigned to a specific MCO, the assigned MCO community based case manager explains the member's appeal rights through the Fair Hearing process during the initial intake process.

In accordance with 42 CFR 438, an adverse benefit determination means any of the following:
(1) The denial or limited authorization of a requested service, including determinations based on the type or level of service, requirements for medical necessity, appropriateness, setting, or effectiveness of a covered benefit.
(2) The reduction, suspension, or termination of a previously authorized service.
(3) The denial, in whole or in part, of payment for a service. (4) The failure to provide services in a timely manner, as defined by the State.
(5) The failure of an MCO, PIHP, or PAHP to act within the timeframes provided in §438.408(b)(1) and (2) regarding the

standard resolution of grievances and appeals.
(6) For a resident of a rural area with only one MCO, the denial of an enrollee's request to exercise his or her right, under §438.52(b)(2)(ii), to obtain services outside the network.
(7) The denial of an enrollee's request to dispute a financial liability, including cost sharing, copayments, premiums, deductibles, coinsurance, and other enrollee financial liabilities.

In accordance with 42 CFR 438, an appeal means a review by an MCO of an adverse benefit determination that it has issued.

MCOs give their members written notice of all adverse benefit determinations, not only service authorization adverse benefit determinations, in accordance with state and federal rules, regulations and policies, including but not limited to 42 CFR 438. MCO enrollment materials must contain all information for appeals rights as delineated in 42 CFR 438.10, including: (A) the right to file an appeal; (B) requirements and timeframes for filing an appeal; (C) the availability of assistance in the filing process; (D) the right to request a State Fair Hearing after the MCO has made a determination of a member's internal MCO appeal which is adverse to the member. The fact that, if requested by the member, benefits that the MCO seeks to reduce or terminate will continue if the member files an appeal or requests a State fair hearing within the specified timeframe and that the member may be required to pay the cost of such services furnished while the appeal or state fair hearing is pending if the final decision is adverse to the member.

MCOs must provide members any reasonable assistance in completing forms and taking other procedural steps. This includes, but is not limited to providing interpreter services, and toll-free numbers that have adequate TTY/TTD and interpreter capability. Upon determination of the appeal, the MCO must ensure there is no delay in notification or mailing to the member and member representative the appeal decision. The MCO's appeal decision notice must describe the adverse benefit determinations taken, the reasons for the adverse benefit determination, the member's right to request a State fair hearing, process for filing a fair hearing and other information set forth in 42 CFR 438.408(e).

MCOs must maintain an expedited appeals process when the standard time for appeal could seriously jeopardize the member's life, physical or mental health or ability to attain, maintain or regain maximum function. The MCO must also provide general and targeted education to members and providers regarding expedited appeals including when an expedited appeal is appropriate and procedures for providing written certification thereof.

The MCO's appeal process must conform to the following requirements:
– Allow members, or providers acting on the member's behalf, sixty (60) calendar days from the date of adverse benefit determination notice within which to file an appeal.
– In accordance with 42 CFR 438.402, ensure that oral requests seeking to appeal an adverse benefit determination are treated as appeals. However, an oral request for an appeal must be followed by a written request, unless the member or the provider requests an expedited resolution.
– The MCO must dispose of expedited appeals within 72 hours after the Contractor receives notice of the appeal, unless this timeframe is extended pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408 (c).
– In accordance with 42 CFR 438.410, if the MCO denies the request for an expedited resolution of a member's appeal, the MCO must transfer the appeal to the standard thirty (30) calendar day timeframe and give the member written notice of the denial within two (2) calendar days of the expedited appeal request. The MCO must also make a reasonable attempt to give the member prompt oral notice.
– The MCO must acknowledge receipt of each standard appeal within three (3) business days.
– The MCO must make a decision on standard, non-expedited, appeals within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the appeal. This timeframe may be extended up to fourteen (14) calendar days, pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408. If the timeframe is extended, for any extension not requested by the member, the MCO must give the member written notice of the reason for the delay.
– In accordance with 42 CFR 438.408, written notice of appeal disposition must be provided with citation of the Iowa Code and/or Iowa Administrative Code sections supporting the adverse benefit determination in non-authorization and care review letters that advise members of the right to appeal. For notice of an expedited resolution, the Contractor must also make reasonable efforts to provide oral notice. The written notice of the resolution must include the results of the resolution and the date it was completed. For appeals not resolved wholly in favor of the member, the written notice must include the right to request a State fair hearing, including the procedures to do so and the right to request to receive benefits while the hearing is pending, including instructions on how to make the request. The MCO shall direct the member to the Agency Appeal and Request for Hearing form as an option for submitting a request for an appeal. This shall also include notice that the member may be held liable for the cost of those benefits if the hearing upholds the Contractor's adverse benefit determination.

Members enrolled in an MCO must exhaust the entity's internal grievance processes before pursuing a State Fair Hearing. This requirement is outlined in the concurrent §1915(b) waiver, Part IV, Section E.

Appendix F: Participant-Rights

Appendix F-2: Additional Dispute Resolution Process

a. **Availability of Additional Dispute Resolution Process.** Indicate whether the State operates another dispute resolution process that offers participants the opportunity to appeal decisions that adversely affect their services while preserving their right to a Fair Hearing. *Select one:*

- ○ **No. This Appendix does not apply**
- ◉ **Yes. The State operates an additional dispute resolution process**

b. **Description of Additional Dispute Resolution Process.** Describe the additional dispute resolution process, including: (a) the State agency that operates the process; (b) the nature of the process (i.e., procedures and timeframes), including the types of disputes addressed through the process; and, (c) how the right to a Medicaid Fair Hearing is preserved when a participant elects to make use of the process: State laws, regulations, and policies referenced in the description are available to CMS upon request through the operating or Medicaid agency.

Each MCO operates its own internal grievance and dispute resolution processes. In accordance to 42 CFR 438.408 (f), a managed care enrollee may request a State Fair Hearing only after receiving notice that the MCO is upholding the adverse benefit determination.

The policies and procedures regarding the MCO grievance and appeals system are outlined in the concurrent §1915 (b) waiver, Part IV, Section E. MCO members can appeal any adverse benefit determination within 60 calendar days. An adverse benefit determination is defined as the: (i) denial or limited authorization of a requested service, including the type or level of service, requirements for medical necessity, appropriateness, setting, or effectiveness of a covered benefit; (ii) reduction, suspension or termination of a previously authorized service; (iii) denial, in whole or in part, of payment for a service; (iv) failure to provide services in a timely manner; (v) failure of the MCO to act within the required timeframes; or (vi) the denial of an enrollee's request to dispute a financial liability, including cost sharing, copayments, premiums, deductibles, coinsurance, and other enrollee financial liabilities. MCOs must ensure that oral requests seeking to appeal an adverse benefit determination are treated as appeals. However, an oral request for an appeal must be followed by a written request, unless the member or the provider requests an expedited resolution. MCOs must make a decision on standard, non-expedited, appeals within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the appeal. This timeframe may be extended up to fourteen (14) calendar days, pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 438.408. Expedited appeals must be disposed within seventy-two (72) hours unless the timeframe is extended pursuant to 42 CFR § 438.408 and 410. MCO members can also file grievances with their MCO; grievances are any written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about any matter other than an adverse benefit determination." MCO members have the right to request a State Fair Hearing if dissatisfied with the outcome of the MCO appeals process. MCOs notify members of this right through enrollment materials and notices of adverse benefit determination, including information that the MCO grievance and appeals process is not a substitute for a Fair Hearing. MCOs must acknowledge receipt of a grievance within three (3) business days and must make a decision on grievances and provide written notice of the disposition of grievance within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the grievance or as expeditiously as the member's health condition requires. This timeframe may be extended up to fourteen (14) calendar days, pursuant to 42 C.F.R. § 438.408.

Appendix F: Participant-Rights

Appendix F-3: State Grievance/Complaint System

a. **Operation of Grievance/Complaint System.** *Select one:*

- ○ **No. This Appendix does not apply**
- ◉ **Yes. The State operates a grievance/complaint system that affords participants the opportunity to register grievances or complaints concerning the provision of services under this waiver**

b. **Operational Responsibility.** Specify the State agency that is responsible for the operation of the grievance/complaint system:

FEE FOR SERVICE:
IME is responsible for operation of the complaint and grievance reporting process for all fee-for-service members. In addition, the Department maintains an HCBS Quality Assurance and Technical Assistance Unit contract that is responsible for the handling of fee-for-service member complaints and grievances in regards to provision of services under this waiver.

MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATION:

IME Member Services MCO Member and MCO Liaison: Designated IME Member Services staff serves as a liaison for any MCO grievance/complaint that is reported to IME Policy staff by an MCO member or his/her advocate. IME Policy sends the pertinent details of the grievance/complaint to the MCO liaison. The IME MCO liaison communicates and coordinates with the MCO and member to grievance/complaint to resolution; and, the resolution is communicated to the IME Policy staff who received the original grievance/complaint. This process serves to support those MCO members who may be confused about the MCO grievance/complaint process to follow or members who have not been able to resolve their grievance/complaint with their MCOs.

Grievances/complaints follow the parameters and timelines in accordance with 42 CFR 438.408 and 438.410.

A grievance/complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction about any matter other than an adverse benefit determination. Grievances may include, but are not limited to, the quality of care or services provided, and aspects of interpersonal relationships such as rudeness of a provider or employee, or failure to respect the enrollee's rights regardless of whether remedial action is requested. Grievance includes an enrollee's right to dispute an extension of time proposed by the MCO to make an authorization decision.

MCO Grievance/Complaint System:
The MCO must provide information about its grievance/complaint system to all providers and subcontractors at the time they enter into a contract. Further, the MCO is responsible for maintenance of grievance records in accordance with 42 CFR 438.416.

The MCO must provide information about its grievance/complaint system to all members and provide reasonable assistance in completing forms and taking procedural steps. This responsibility also includes; but is not limited to, auxiliary aids and services upon request (e.g. interpreter services and toll–free numbers that have TTY/TTD and interpreter capability).

The MCO member handbook must include information, consistent with 42 CFR
38.10.
The MCO must insure that individuals who make decisions on grievances have not been involved in any previous level of review or decision-making and is not a subordinate of such individual.

MCO Grievance/Complaint Process:
A member may submit an oral or written grievance at any time to the MCO. With written consent of the member, a provider or an authorized representative may file a grievance on behalf of a member. There is not a timeline for submission.

The MCO must acknowledge receipt of the grievance.

The MCO must process the grievance resolution within 30 days of the date that the grievance is received and issue a written notification to the member in accordance with 42 CFR 438.408.

The resolution may be extended by fourteen (14) days upon member request. If the member does not request an extension, the MCO must make reasonable efforts to give the member prompt oral notice of the delay; and within two (2) calendar days provide the member with a written notice of the basis for the decision to extend the timeframe. If the member does not agree with the extension, he/she may file an additional grievance to the extension.

c. **Description of System.** Describe the grievance/complaint system, including: (a) the types of grievances/complaints that participants may register; (b) the process and timelines for addressing grievances/complaints; and, (c) the mechanisms that are used to resolve grievances/complaints. State laws, regulations, and policies referenced in the description are available to CMS upon request through the Medicaid agency or the operating agency (if applicable).

Any fee-for-service waiver participant, participant's relative/guardian, agency staff, concerned citizen or other public agency staff may report a complaint regarding the care, treatment, and services provided to a participant of services. A complaint may be submitted in writing, in person, by e-mail or by telephone. Verbal reports may require submission of a detailed written report. The complaint may be submitted to an HCBS Provider Quality Oversight Specialist, HCBS Program Manager, any IME Unit, or Bureau Chief of Long Term Care. Complaints by phone can be made to a regional HCBS Provider Quality Assurance Oversight Specialist at their local number or by calling the IME. The Bureau of Long Term Care has established a committee to review complaints. The committee will meet biweekly to review current complaints.

Once received, the HCBS Quality Assurance and Technical Assistance Unit shall initiate investigation within one business day of receipt and shall submit a findings report to the Quality Assurance Manager within 15 days of finalizing the investigation. Once approved by the Quality Assurance Manager, the findings report is provided to the complainant and the provider in question. If the complainant is a participant, they are informed by the HCBS Quality Oversight Incident and Complaint Specialist that filing a grievance or making a complaint is not a pre-requisite or substitute for a Fair Hearing.

MCO members must exhaust the entity's internal grievance and appeals processes before pursuing a State Fair Hearing. The policies and procedures regarding the MCO grievance and appeals system are outlined in the concurrent §1915(b) waiver, Part IV, Section E. MCO members can appeal any "action" within 30 days. An "action" is defined as the: (i) denial or limited authorization of a requested service, including the type or level of service; (ii) reduction, suspension or termination of a previously authorized service; (iii) denial, in whole or in part, of payment for a service; (iv) failure to provide services in a timely manner; or (v) failure of the MCO to act within the required timeframes set forth in 42 CFR 438.408(b). In accordance with 42 CFR 438.406, oral requests seeking an appeal are treated by the MCO as an appeal; however, an oral request for an appeal must be followed by a written request, unless the member or the provider requests an expedited resolution.

MCO members have the right to request a State Fair Hearing if dissatisfied with the outcome of the MCO appeals process. MCOs notify members of this right through enrollment materials and notices of action. In accordance with 42 CFR 438.406, the MCO provides the member and their representative opportunity, before and during the appeals process, to examine the member's case file, including medical records and any other documents or records considered during the appeals process. In addition, the member and their representative have the opportunity to present evidence and allegations of fact or law in person as well as in writing. Upon determination of the appeal, the MCO must promptly notify the member and his/her representative of the appeal decision. The MCO's appeal decision notice must describe the actions taken, the reasons for the action, the member's right to request a State Fair Hearing, process for filing a Fair Hearing and other information set forth in 42 CFR 438.408(e).

MCOs must ensure that the individuals rendering decisions on grievance and appeals were not involved in previous levels of review or decision-making and are health care professionals with appropriate clinical expertise in treating the member's condition or disease if the decision will be in regard to any of the following: (i) an appeal of a denial based on lack of medical necessity; (ii) a grievance regarding denial of expedited resolution of an appeal; or (iii) any grievance or appeal involving clinical issues. Appeals must be resolved by the MCO within 45 calendar days of receipt; this timeframe may be extended up to 14 calendar days, pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408(c).

MCOs must resolve appeals on an expedited basis when the standard time for appeal could seriously jeopardize the member's health or ability to maintain or regain maximum function. Such expedited appeals must be resolved within 3 business days after the MCO receives notice of the appeal, unless this timeframe is extended pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408 (c). Standard appeals must be resolved within 45 calendar days; this timeframe may be extended up to 14 calendar days, pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408(c). If the timeframe is extended, for any extension not requested by the member, the Contractor must give the member written notice of the reason for the delay. Within 90 calendar days of the date of notice from the MCO on the appeal decision, the member may request a State Fair Hearing.

MCO members can also file grievances with their MCO; grievances are any written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction about any matter other than an "action," as defined above. Grievances may be filed either orally or in writing; receipt is acknowledged by the MCO within 3 business days and resolved within 30 calendar days or as expeditiously as the member's health condition requires. This timeframe may be extended up to 14 calendar days, pursuant to 42 CFR 438.408(c).

MCOs are required to track all grievances and appeals in their information systems; this includes data on clinical reviews, appeals, grievances and complaints and their outcomes. MCOs are responsible for reporting on grievances

and appeals to DHS. This includes maintenance and reporting to the State the MCO member grievance and appeals logs which includes the current status of all grievances and appeals and processing timelines.