

Attention MassHealth Recipients



Have you had trouble getting prescriptions filled at the pharmacy?

This may be because the prescription requires *prior authorization*

What is *prior authorization*?

Prior authorization is an application your doctor submits to MassHealth to explain why a drug is medically necessary for you.

Which drugs require *prior authorization*?

Brand-name drugs that have a generic version usually require *prior authorization*. Drugs in certain categories need *prior authorization*, such as some antidepressants, anti-seizure drugs and asthma medications. Detailed information about which drugs require *prior authorization* can be found at http://www.state.ma.us/dma/providers/pharmacy/pharm_IDX.htm.

What if a pharmacist refuses to fill my prescription because I need *prior authorization*?

- If it is an emergency, the pharmacist should provide you with a 72-hour supply of the drug.
- Contact your doctor and ask him or her to submit a *prior authorization* request right away. MassHealth should respond to your doctor's request within 24 hours.

Can I appeal MassHealth's denial of *prior authorization* of a drug?

Yes. You should get a notice if MassHealth denies your doctor's request for *prior authorization*. You can appeal **up to 30 days** from the date the denial was mailed, by completing the form on the notice. You will receive advance notice of the date, time and place of the hearing on your appeal. You can have someone represent you at the hearing. **IMPORTANT:** If MassHealth tells your doctor that *prior authorization* is denied and you do **not** receive a notice, you can appeal by sending a request to the DMA Board of Hearings, Two Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116 (Fax: 617-210-5820).

Will MassHealth pay for the drug while I wait for my appeal hearing?

Yes, if MassHealth is already covering the drug and you appeal **within 10 days** of the date the denial was mailed. If this is a new drug or you miss the 10-day deadline, you may want to ask your doctor for samples while you wait for the appeal hearing.

This flyer was prepared by Health Law Advocates www.hla-inc.org. If you need legal assistance with a MassHealth denial of prior authorization for a prescription drug, please call us at 617-338-5241.