
Hospice Providers – Waiver Requests: PT, OT, SLP, & Dietary Counseling in Non-urbanized Areas

What is a Hospice waiver request?

In accordance with the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) State Operations Manual (SOM), [Appendix M](#), at [42 \(CFR\) 418.74](#), a hospice agency may request an exemption from the requirement to have physical therapist (PT), occupational therapist (OT), speech-language pathology (SLP), and dietary counseling services available on a 24-hour basis.

How do I request a waiver?

In accordance with the [42 \(CFR\) 418.74](#), [Appendix M](#), a hospice must submit a written request for a waiver. All required materials necessary for requesting a waiver may be found below.

What is included in the waiver request packet?

The waiver request packet includes what must be submitted and reviewed by the Bureau of Facility Standards (items #1 and #2) and resource information (item #3) as follows:

1. Documentation to support the hospice is located in a non-urbanized area as determined by the Bureau of the Census.
2. Evidence that the hospice has made a good faith effort to make available PT, OT, SLP, and dietary counseling services on a 24-hour basis and/or to hire a dietary counselor to furnish services directly. This evidence must include the following:
 - Copies of advertisements in local newspapers that demonstrate recruitment efforts.
 - Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, and dietary counselor job descriptions.
 - Evidence that salary and benefits are competitive for the area.
 - Evidence of any other recruiting activities (for example, recruiting efforts at health fairs and contact discussions with physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, and dietary counseling service providers in the area).
3. CMS State Operations Manual (SOM), [Appendix M](#)

How do I complete the waiver request?

Return all necessary materials (items #1 and #2 above) to the Bureau of Facility Standards. Please ensure that all information is included and that all hand-printed reports are clearly printed and easily readable.

Where do I send my completed waiver request materials?

The waiver request materials can be submitted by mail and/or hand delivered. ***PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.***

✚ If you are mailing the waiver request packet, mail to:

Department of Health and Welfare
Bureau of Facility Standards
P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, ID 83720-0009

✚ If you are hand delivering the waiver request packet, deliver to:

Department of Health and Welfare
Bureau of Facility Standards
3232 Elder Street
Boise ID 83705

What happens after I submit my waiver request materials?

Bureau of Facility Standards staff will review the submitted materials. If the request is incomplete, or if there are questions, Bureau staff will contact the provider. Once all the necessary materials have been received, we will forward the information to the CMS Region X office for final review and decision-making. CMS will notify you of the results. Any waiver request is deemed to be granted unless it is denied within 60 days after it is received by CMS.

How long will the waiver request process take?

The length of the waiver request process varies depending on multiple factors such as whether or not the request is complete, whether or not additional information needs to be submitted, current work load and availability of resources necessary to complete the request review, etc. Therefore, it is not possible for the Bureau of Facility Standards to establish specific timeframes.

How long will my waiver be in effect?

Once approved by CMS, an initial waiver will remain effective for 1 year from the date of the request. If a hospice wishes to receive a 1-year extension, it must submit a request to CMS before the expiration of the waiver period and certify that conditions under which it originally requested the waiver have not changed since the initial waiver was granted. To do so, please complete and submit updated waiver request information as specified in the [“What is included in the waiver request packet”](#) section above.

Additional information

For additional information, please contact the Bureau of Facility Standards at (208) 334-6626 or email questions to fsb@dhw.idaho.gov.