

Office of Medicaid BOARD OF HEARINGS

Appellant Name and Address:



Appeal Decision:	Denied	Appeal Number:	2505648
Decision Date:	06/03/2025	Hearing Date:	05/14/2025
Hearing Officer:	Susan Burgess-Cox		

Appearance for Appellant:



Appearance for Commonwealth Care Alliance
(CCA):

Cassandra Horne & Jeremiah Mancuso



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
Board of Hearings
100 Hancock Street, Quincy, Massachusetts 02171*

APPEAL DECISION

Appeal Decision:	Approved in part; Denied in part	Issue:	ICO: Prior Authorization
Decision Date:	06/03/2025	Hearing Date:	05/14/2025
CCA's Rep.:	Cassandra Horne; Jeremiah Mancuso, RN	Appellant's Rep.:	██████
Hearing Location:	All Parties Appeared by Telephone	Aid Pending:	No

Authority

This hearing was conducted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 118E, Chapter 30A, and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

Jurisdiction

Through a notice dated March 26, 2025, Commonwealth Care Alliance, (CCA), a MassHealth-contracted Integrated Care Organization (ICO), notified the appellant that they denied her Level 1 Appeal regarding a modification made to the request for laundry services by approving only one bag as the service for two bags was not medically necessary. (Exhibit 1). The appellant filed this external appeal in a timely manner on April 8, 2025. (130 CMR 610.018; Exhibit 2). A decision of an ICO to “deny or provide limited authorization of a requested service, including the type or level of service, determinations based on the type or level of service, requirements for medical necessity, appropriateness, setting, or effectiveness of a covered benefit” is valid grounds for appeal. (130 CMR 610.032(B)).

Action Taken by the Integrated Care Organization

The MassHealth-contracted Integrated Care Organization (ICO), Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA), modified the appellant's prior authorization request for local laundry services by authorizing only one bag per week rather than the two listed in the prior authorization request. (130 CMR 450.204).

Issue

Whether CCA was correct in modifying the appellant's prior authorization request for two laundry bags per week.

Summary of Evidence

All parties to the hearing appeared by telephone. Documents from CCA are incorporated into the hearing record as Exhibit 4.

The appellant is enrolled in an Integrated Care Organization (ICO), Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA), and has been enrolled since January 1, 2024. The appellant is authorized one unit of laundry per week and receives one bag per week for laundry services through South Coast Laundry Inc. (Exhibit 4, p. 1). On February 2, 2025, the appellant requested two bags per week for laundry services. The appellant had an assessment of her care needs and it was determined that she did not have a medical necessity that qualified her for consideration of receiving more than one bag per week. (Exhibit 4, p. 1). CCA modified this request, approving the appellant for one bag per week. (Exhibit 4, p. 1).

The appellant filed a Level I appeal on February 25, 2025. (Exhibit 1). CCA performed a second review and upheld the initial decision on March 26, 2025. (Exhibit 1, p. 1). CCA noted in their denial rationale that the appellant is diagnosed with bipolar 1 disorder, depression, mild anxiety disorder, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, essential hypertension, and other chronic pain. (Exhibit 1, p. 2). These conditions do not justify approval of a second laundry bag because they do not qualify as a medical necessity for such conditions. Medical necessity for a second bag could possibly be found with conditions such as bladder or bowel incontinence. (Exhibit 1, p. 1). On April 8, 2025, the appellant filed a Level 2 appeal with the MassHealth Board of Hearings. (Exhibit 1, p. 1; Exhibit 2).

The CCA representative testified that the appellant made the Level I appeal requesting more than one laundry bag on the grounds that she had a large family, and one bag was not enough. (Exhibit 4, p. 1). In the appellant's Level 2 appeal request, the appellant stated that her injured hands and wrists prevent her from carrying heavy bags. (Exhibit 4). The appellant also stated that the bags are not large enough for her to effectively do all of her laundry, thus requiring the use of two bags. (Exhibit 4).

The CCA representative testified that there are specific guidelines they must follow when considering whether to grant a second bag for laundry services. Medical conditions that would warrant the approval of a second bag include bladder or bowel incontinence or hyperhidrosis. (Exhibit 4, p. 1). The CCA representative noted that the appellant was eligible and received

other homemaking services as well as one bag for laundry services.

The appellant testified that the injuries sustained in her hands and wrists made it unduly burdensome to do laundry on her own and the amount of laundry necessary for herself takes up more than one bag. The CCA representative responded that the laundry bag authorized by CCA can hold up to twenty pounds of clothing or the like. The appellant also stated that the inability to do all of her laundry for the week in one bag, causes her to have to buy new clothes. The appellant did not give a specific reason as to why the bag was not large enough to hold all her clothes. The appellant confirmed that she does not have a medical condition that would necessitate her to change her clothes more often, such as bladder or bowel incontinence.

The CCA representative noted that the agency is aware of the appellant's hand and wrist injuries and neither condition justifies approval of a second bag. The CCA representative noted that the agency would need to see clinical documentation indicating that the appellant has a medical condition that requires her to change her clothes or sheets more often. The appellant did not present such documentation to the agency on or before the hearing date. The CCA representative also noted the appellant's argument that the laundry bag is not large enough, without specific reasoning, does not warrant approval of a second bag.

The appellant stated that she no longer wanted to participate in the hearing and ended the telephone call.

Findings of Fact

Based on a preponderance of the evidence, I find the following:

1. The appellant is enrolled in an Integrated Care Organization (ICO), Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA).
2. The appellant requested two bags of laundry each week.
3. CCA modified this request and approved one bag of laundry each week.
4. CCA determined that the appellant did not demonstrate that a second laundry bag was medically necessary.
5. The appellant has hand and wrist injuries.
6. The appellant is not incontinent.
7. The appellant does not have any condition that would make a second laundry bag

medically necessary.

Analysis and Conclusions of Law

In order to be eligible to enroll in an integrated care organization (ICO), a MassHealth member must meet all of the following criteria, and may not be enrolled or concurrently participate in any of the programs or plans listed in 130 CMR 508.007(F):

- (a) be 21 through 64 years of age at the time of enrollment;
- (b) be eligible for MassHealth Standard as defined in 130 CMR 450.105(A): MassHealth Standard or MassHealth CommonHealth as defined in 130 CMR 450.105(E): MassHealth CommonHealth;
- (c) be enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B, be eligible for Medicare Part D, and have no other health insurance that meets the basic-benefit level as defined in 130 CMR 501.001: Definition of Terms; and
- (d) live in a designated service area of an ICO. (130 CMR 508.007(A)(1)).

The appellant meets the requirements to enroll in an ICO. (130 CMR 508.007).

When a member is enrolled in an ICO in accordance with the requirements under 130 CMR 508.007(A), the ICO will authorize, arrange, integrate, and coordinate the provision of all covered services for the member. (130 CMR 508.007(C)). Upon enrollment, the ICO is required to provide evidence of its coverage, the range of available covered services, what to do for emergency conditions and urgent care needs, and how to obtain access to specialty, behavioral health, and long-term services and supports. (130 CMR 506.007(C)).

CCA is responsible for providing enrolled members with the full continuum of Medicare- and MassHealth covered services. (130 CMR 450.105). As an ICO, CCA can provide more to members than MassHealth allows but not less.

MassHealth pays only for medically necessary services to eligible MassHealth members and may require that medical necessity be established through the prior authorization process. (130 CMR 420.410(A)(1)).

A service is "medically necessary" if:

- (1) it is reasonably calculated to prevent, diagnose, prevent the worsening of, alleviate, correct, or cure conditions in the member that endanger life, cause suffering or pain, cause physical deformity or malfunction, threaten to cause or to aggravate a handicap, or result in illness or infirmity; and
- (2) there is no other medical service or site of service, comparable in effect, available, and suitable for the member requesting the service, that is more

conservative or less costly to MassHealth. (130 CMR 450.204(A)).

Under CCA's Medical Necessity Guideline for Laundry Services Delivery, a member must have functional impairment(s) that prevent the individual from doing laundry. Laundry services may not be provided to the benefit of other household members. In order to be eligible for laundry services, documentation should support that laundry service is required for successful community living, to ensure the health and welfare of the Member, and that the Guidelines for limitations and exclusions have been met. A CCA Clinical Assessment (MDS) or GSSC/LTSC Assessment completed no more than 6 months before the date of the Prior Authorization request; an in-person assessment may be required." (Exhibit 1, p. 2).

Limitations and exceptions of CCA's Medical Necessity Guideline for Laundry Services include:

- (1) Laundry services are only provided to meet the needs of the member. Laundry for other household members cannot be included in bags.
- (2) Laundry is authorized at one unit per week. One unit of Laundry equals one bag; and each bag of laundry equals 20 pounds or less. Two extra units/bags will be provided for each 52-week period to capture any additional laundry in the form of bedding or unanticipated soiled clothing. Requests for more than the above will require justification.

Here, the appellant did not meet the medical-necessity requirements to receive a second laundry bag. While the appellant noted that her wrist and hand injuries prevent her from performing the task, this justification did not directly relate to the need to have more than one bag of laundry each week. The appellant did not provide evidence of incontinence or another condition that would require her to change clothes more often or have more laundry than the average person.

The appellant testified that the single laundry bag was not large enough to hold all her laundry for the week, limiting her available clothing for the week. The appellant reportedly buys new clothes to account for the lack of clothes due to the single laundry bag's small size. The appellant did not state a specific reason explaining why the bag was not large enough to fit her clothes for the week. The CCA representative testified that the bag holds up to twenty pounds of material and the size is the standard for CCA's laundry services. The size of the bag alone without additional justification does not warrant the approval of a second laundry bag according to CCA guidelines.

The appellant failed to demonstrate that the second laundry bag was medically necessary. The decision made by CCA authorizing coverage for one laundry bag each week is correct.

This appeal is denied.

Order for MassHealth Integrated Care Organization

None.

Notification of Your Right to Appeal to Court

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to appeal to Court in accordance with Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws. To appeal, you must file a complaint with the Superior Court for the county where you reside, or Suffolk County Superior Court, within 30 days of your receipt of this decision.

Susan Burgess-Cox
Hearing Officer
Board of Hearings

MassHealth Representative: Commonwealth Care Alliance SCO, Attn: Nayelis Guerrero, 30 Winter Street, Boston, MA 02108