

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Substance Addiction Services
250 Washington St
Boston, MA 02108

A New Day for OTPs

Important Updates from the Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS)

Dear Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) Provider,

The BSAS memo distributed on April 4, 2024, "[Waiver from Certain Regulatory Requirements and Guidance – 42 CFR Part 8 and 105 CMR 164.000](#)" outlines the BSAS OTP regulatory alignment and identifies specific regulatory waivers. It also provides the Department's expectation regarding the implementation of the changes per the Final Rule that became effective **April 2, 2024, with full compliance expected on October 2, 2024**. BSAS is grateful to the OTPs for their dedication and daily efforts to provide this life-saving treatment and looks forward to supporting OTPs as you implement these changes.

1.) Promote and support a cultural shift in care and service delivery.

The regulatory changes **focus on:**

- patient-centered care
- shared practitioner-patient decision-making
- practitioners' clinical judgment,
- responsive, flexible OTP services
- evidence-based practice
- non-stigmatizing language

2.) Promote MOUD as a treatment for a chronic medical condition.

The regulatory changes **support:**

- Increasing access
- Allowing for more flexible treatment experiences
- Increasing retention in care
- Expanding the reach of the OTP, through mobile units, medication units in other services, primary care integrations, infectious disease treatments, and other behavioral health services

To ensure OTPs are prepared to implement the Federal Regulatory changes by October, BSAS has summarized the key changes relevant to programs in Massachusetts and has prepared additional resources, such as a letter to patients, links to national webinars, and dates for local training opportunities.

Key Highlights of New OTP Regulations and BSAS Guidance

The Department expects that OTPs review the [Final Rule](#) and the [BSAS regulatory waivers and expectations](#). All policies, including take-home and telehealth, must be updated to reflect the new rule and BSAS' Waiver from Certain Regulatory Requirements and Guidance. To support OTPs during this transition, opportunities for training, dialogue, and responsive technical assistance are available.

Want to learn more?

1. **New Federal Regulations in Opioid Treatment Programs, What does this mean for Massachusetts?** Two opportunities are available to join the Massachusetts' OTP Training and Technical Assistance Center as they present the Department's expectations regarding the implementation of the changes per the Final Rule that became effective April 2, 2024, with full compliance expected on October 2, 2024. There will be opportunities for participant engagement, including Q&A and facilitated discussion. Please complete the registration link for the date you can attend and let the TTA center know what you are hoping to learn.
 1. *Wednesday, June 12, 2024 - 3:30 pm EST* | Register [here](#)
 2. *Thursday, June 27, 2024 - 3:30 pm EST* | Register [here](#)
2. **Letter to Patients**

Increased awareness of the new regulations and their intended positive impact on the OTP patient experience may encourage new and returning patients to initiate treatment at OTPs. A letter (translated into multiple languages) addressed to current and future OTP patients explains the key changes in a digestible and easily accessible format. All OTPs are expected to share the letter with patients by posting it in common areas and handing out individual copies. BSAS is prepared to send the letter to referral sources such as emergency departments and harm reduction organizations. Additionally, BSAS encourages programs to send the letter to community referral sources and partners. Translated versions of this letter will be available.
3. Connect with the OTP Training and Technical Assistance Center at otptta-ma@jsi.com

Resources

1. **42 CFR Part 8 Final Rule Table of Changes** | Available [here](#)

The table summarizes key changes to 42 CFR Part 8
2. **42 CFR Part 8 Final Rule - Frequently Asked Questions** | Available [here](#)