

NUMBER

#25-21-06

DATE

July 21, 2025

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and
Staff

Financial Assistance Supervisors
and Workers

Tribal Chairpersons and Tribal
Health Directors

Navigators, Certified
Application Counselors and
Brokers

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please implement changes
effective June 15, 2025

EXPIRATION DATE

July 21, 2027

DHS Announces Expedited Criteria for Disability Determinations by the State Medical Review Team and an Expedited Referrals Unit

TOPIC

State Medical Review Team (SMRT) expedited criteria for disability determination referrals and new SMRT expedited unit.

PURPOSE

This bulletin announces state law changes in SMRT expedited referral criteria and the formation of an expedited unit.

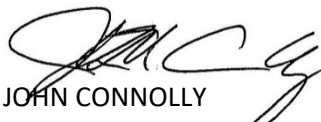
CONTACT

Counties and tribal agencies can submit questions relating to SMRT Policy to SMRT.

State Medical Review Team
PO Box 64248
540 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55164-0248

SMRT Hotline: 651-431-2493 or 800-235-7396
SMRT Fax: 651-431-7457

SIGNED



JOHN CONNOLLY

Deputy Commissioner

Department of Human Services

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

The State Medical Review Team (SMRT) makes disability determinations for people not certified disabled by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to establish a disability basis for Medical Assistance (MA) eligibility. SMRT completes disability determinations according to disability criteria defined by the SSA and completes level of care determinations for children requesting MA under the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) Option. County and tribal eligibility workers submit referrals to SMRT on behalf of the person requesting a disability determination.

Once the referral is received, SMRT sends consent and other forms to the applicant or enrollee and, if applicable, their authorized representative. The forms are necessary for SMRT to request medical evidence from the person's medical providers and determine whether they meet disability criteria.

The 2025 Minnesota Legislature passed a law that establishes an expedited disability determination process for SMRT referrals for certain applicants.

The law also establishes a SMRT expedited unit and requires SMRT to implement electronic signature and document transmission services to support timely processing of expedited cases.

These changes are effective June 15, 2025.

II. Changes in SMRT Expedited Referral Criteria

Effective June 15, 2025, the criteria to request an expedited SMRT referral includes MA applicants or enrollees without an SSA or SMRT disability certification in the following high-risk categories:

- Individuals in a facility who cannot be discharged without home and community-based services or long-term care supports in place;
- Individuals experiencing life-threatening medical conditions requiring urgent access to treatment or prescription medication;
- Individuals diagnosed with a condition listed on the Social Security Administration's Compassionate Allowance List; and
- Children under the age of two who have screened positive for a rare disease recognized by national medical registries or evidence-based standards.

The new state law also permits hospitals to request expedited disability determination referrals through SMRT for these high-risk categories. It also requires hospitals to assist the patient in completing the MA application prior to submitting the referral and providing the medical evidence needed to determine disability status.

III. SMRT Expedited Unit

A SMRT expedited unit will be established to coordinate and process expedited referral requests and communicate with county and tribal agencies and hospitals. The unit will ensure timely electronic transmission of required documentation. DHS is creating a way to obtain the applicant's signature electronically on the SMRT Authorization to Release Protected Health Information form (DHS-6124).

IV. Action Required

County and tribal eligibility workers and social services staff must follow the policy changes outlined in this bulletin when requesting an expedited referral.

Eligibility workers must continue to indicate the reason for an expedited referral request in the Integrated Service Delivery System (ISDS) when submitting SMRT referrals. DHS will notify workers of system updates to ISDS and ONESource procedures once they are available.

Lead agencies must continue to complete MnCHOICES Assessments within 15 business days for expedited SMRT waiver service reviews per current policy.

County and tribal financial assistance supervisors must designate financial assistance staff who will be the contact for the SMRT expedited unit to coordinate expedited requests. These designated staff will collaborate with SMRT, attend meetings to review the new process flow and provide input on the process. These designated staff will play a key role in the timely and accurate submission of SMRT referrals using established policies and procedures.

V. Legal Authority

Laws of Minnesota 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 9, Article 3, Section 1

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling 651-297-3862 or toll free at 800-657-3672 or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.