

From: Sharon Hoffbeck

To: RPEA Members

Date: February 4, 2018

Subject: AlaskaCare retiree health plan appeal process has been changed

Dear RPEA Members,

Effective January 1, 2018, the AlaskaCare retiree health plan appeal process has been changed.

This change reinserts a formal level of appeal between the second level (third party administrator or independent review organization) and the Office of Administrative Hearings. The new third appeal level will be to the Division of Retirement and Benefits (DRB). Prior to 2014, the appeal process included a Level III appeal to DRB. In 2014 the Division chose to remove themselves against strong opposition from RPEA. The past four years have proven that to have been a mistake, which they are now correcting.

A retiree filing a Level III appeal to DRB will be provided 60 calendar days from the date of the Level II decision to file the appeal, and DRB will issue a written response within 60 days of receipt.

Those who filed an appeal prior to 1/1/18 will continue under the 2013 appeal process.

RPEA is in the process of updating our Appeal Instructions document and will post it to the RPEA website as soon as possible. The 2018 Amendment also has expanded coverage of medical treatment of gender dysphoria. Although the plan continues to exclude gender reassignment surgery to change sex characteristics, the plan has removed coverage exclusions for medically necessary psychological counseling and hormone therapy. The Department of Administration explains that this amended level of coverage will align the AlaskaCare retiree plan more closely with coverage offered by other large scale government health care plans such as Medicare and the military's TRICARE plans.

Below are links to the 2018 Amendment, as well as information about the new appeal process for dental and medical appeals. The Long Term Care appeal process remains the same.

2018 Amendment

<http://doa.alaska.gov/drb/pdf/ghlb/retiree/retireePlanAmendment01012018.pdf>

Dental Plan Appeal

<http://doa.alaska.gov/drb/pdf/forms/ben074b.pdf>

Health Plan Appeal

<http://doa.alaska.gov/drb/pdf/forms/ben074a.pdf>

Anyone who would like to comment on the 2018 Amendment can direct email to DOA Commissioner Leslie Ridle at leslie.ridle@alaska.gov.

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President

Retired Public Employees of Alaska

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