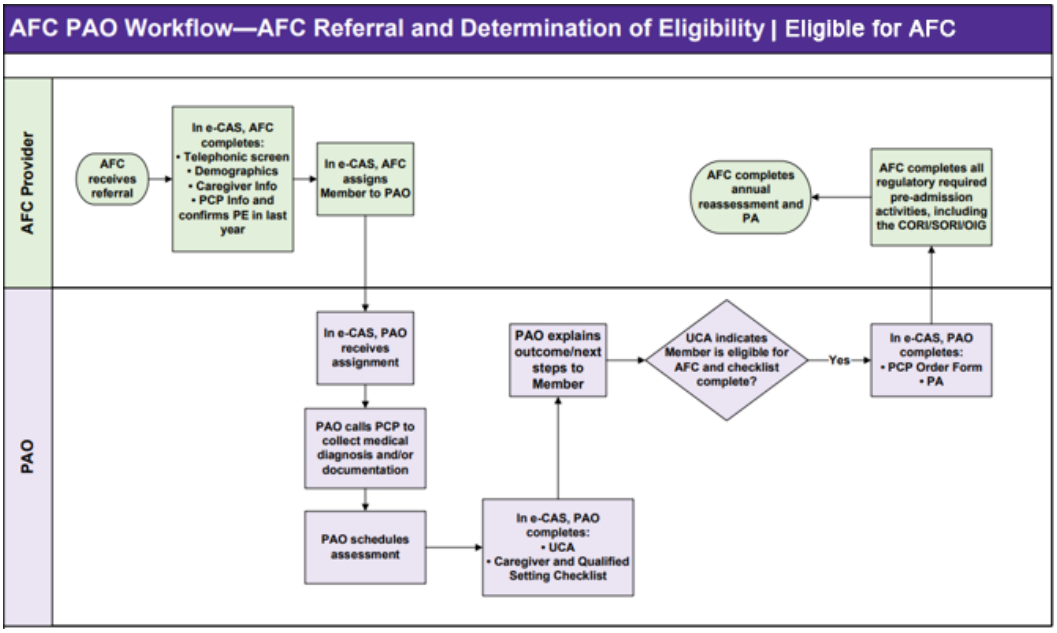
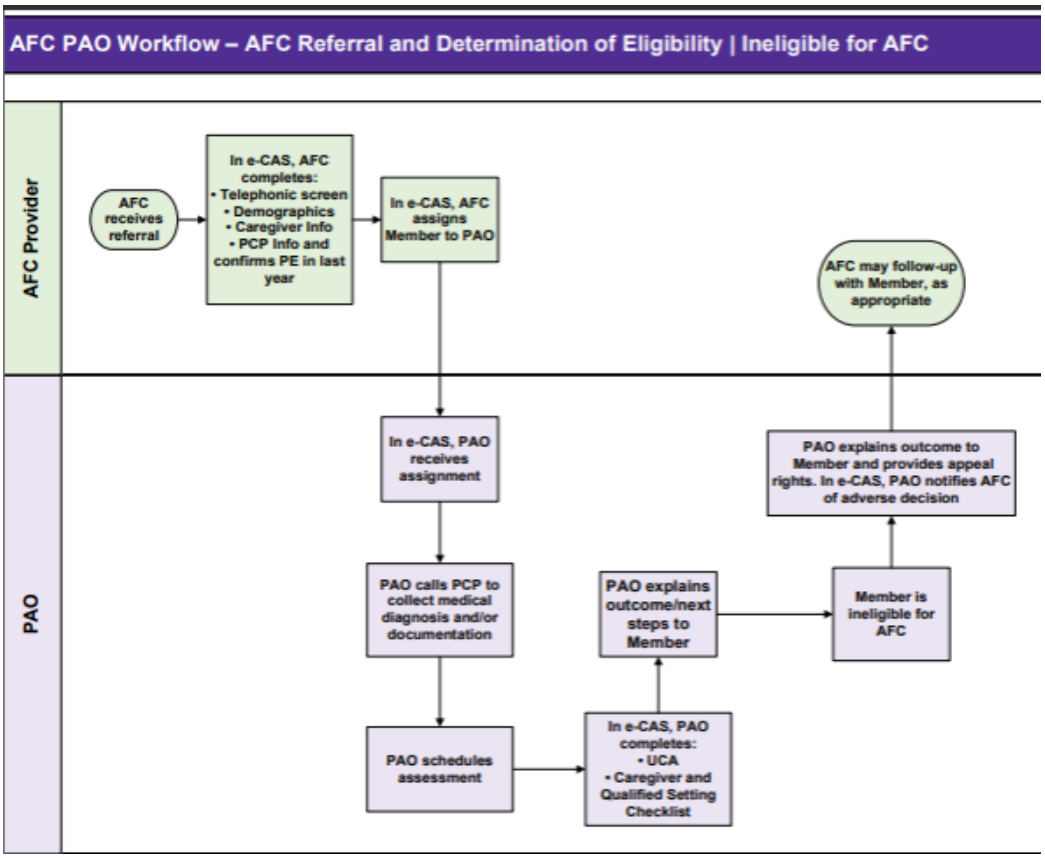
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
www.mass.gov/orgs/masshealth

Roles Guide: MassHealth Public Assessor Option (PAO) for Adult Foster Care (AFC)





AFC Provider Responsibilities

Before submitting the referral to the PAO for Completion of an Initial Clinical Assessment:

- Obtain demographic information and verify MassHealth eligibility within e-CAS
- Complete the Telephonic Screen assessment in e-CAS
- Verify that PCP is enrolled with MassHealth
- Confirm that the individual has had a PCP visit within the past 12 months [130 CMR 408.431 (B)(2)]
- Obtain caregiver information, including verification that the caregiver is not a spouse or legal guardian [130 CMR 408.434(B)(4)], and contact information for the caregiver

AFC providers should refer to the PAO through e-CAS by marking *Yes* in the PAO Referral field on the Member's demographics page after the steps above are complete. This will notify the PAO that the Member is ready to move forward with the Initial Clinical Assessment.

After PAO Completion of an Initial Clinical Assessment:

The AFC provider will work with the Member and caregiver to resolve any issues that are identified on the Caregiver and Qualified Setting Checklist, if applicable.

Once notified by the PAO, the AFC provider can review the PA and all associated documentation in e-CAS. The AFC provider will then complete the remaining required regulatory pre-admission activities, including the full Caregiver and Qualified Setting assessments.

Other AFC Responsibilities

AFC providers will continue to conduct all annual reassessments and significant change assessments using the Uniform Core Assessment (UCA). AFC providers will also remain responsible for full Caregiver and Qualified Setting assessments.

PAO Responsibilities

Initial Clinical Assessment

MassHealth Members enrolled in MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth who are **seeking AFC services must have their Initial Clinical Assessment and Initial Prior Authorization completed by the PAO**.

Members who are authorized for services through MassHealth's One Care, Senior Care Options (SCO), or Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) plans will be assessed through their plan.

Steps the PAO will take in completing the Initial Clinical Assessment process include:

- The PAO will schedule the Initial Clinical Assessment with the Member. This initial step is dependent upon the PAO receiving a completed Telephonic Screen from the AFC provider and making successful contact with the Member.

- The PAO will contact the Member's PCP to obtain the medical diagnosis and any required supporting documentation, including the Physical Examination (PE). If available, AFC providers may send this to the PAO with the referral which may expedite the assessment process.

- The PAO will complete the Uniform Core Assessment (UCA) as the Initial Clinical Assessment.

- The PAO will complete the Caregiver and Qualified Setting Checklist. If requirements are not met, the PAO will notify the AFC provider. These steps occur during the same visit as completion of the UCA.

- The PAO will explain the assessment outcome and next steps to the Member, including appeal options for Members determined to be ineligible.

- The PAO will complete the PCP Order Form, obtain the PCP's signature, and confirm receipt of all required supporting documentation. This step occurs after the assessment for Members that are clinically eligible for AFC. The PCP Order Form must be obtained to submit the PA.

Prior Authorization (PA)

The PAO will submit the initial PA within e-CAS once all required documents have been received.

The PAO's PA submission in e-CAS will transmit to MMIS. There will be no additional adjudication as the PAO is a state entity.

The PAO will notify the Member's AFC provider when the PA is issued.

Learn More

For more information about the PAO and how it supports AFC, explore the resources available on the MassHealth LTSS PAO website, including an FAQ Guide for Providers: AFC.

Visit: https://masshealthltsspao.com/en/resources