



## **Back-Up Staffing Guidelines**

The back-up staffing plan is designed to assure the health and safety of members receiving Innovations services. Failure to provide back-up staffing is a Level I Incident and must be reported to the MCO. Partners has chosen Alpha MCS as the reporting method to be used by providers. If you do not have an Alpha log-in, contact the Partners IT Help Desk at 704-842-6431 to be given access.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) communicated via Joint Communication Bulletin 256 (#J256) on July 3, 2017 that “It is the expectation that if a provider agency or Employer of Record (EOR) staff member is unable to provide back-up staff, the provider or EOR is required to report this lack of staffing to the LME-MCO.” This is a requirement and back-up staffing reports should be submitted bi-weekly.

In relation to back-up staffing, there are two types of service interruptions: Failure to Provide Back-Up Staffing and Service Breaks.

### **When to Submit a Failure to Provide Back-Up Staffing Report**

- 1) Regularly scheduled staff is unable to provide service(s) AND a back-up staff is not available.
- 2) Regularly scheduled staff is unable to provide service(s) and back-up staff is available BUT is declined by the member/legally responsible person.

The purpose of the back-up staffing report is to document the reason that BACK-UP STAFF was not provided, NOT why the primary staff was unable to provide the service. The Back-Up Staffing report is NOT used to report service breaks.

### **Service Breaks**

Per Clinical Coverage Policy 8P <https://files.nc.gov/ncdma/documents/files/8-P.pdf> , and also communicated via Joint Communication Bulletin #J266 on September 21, 2017, service breaks do not require Back-Up Staffing reporting to the MCO. Service breaks are defined as holidays, vacations, weather conditions, illnesses, and scheduling conflicts. Services breaks should be documented in the member’s record.

## Service Breaks v/s Failure to Provide Back Up Staffing

Service Breaks are member driven in that the service was not provided due to the member canceling the service.

Failure to provide Back Up Staffing is provider driven in that the service is not provided because the provider is unable to provide staffing.

The following table contains scenarios regarding when to complete a Failure to Provide Back-Up Staffing Report versus document a service break in the member's record. The scenarios are based on information provided by DMA in response to questions they have received from providers regarding completion and submission of *Failure to Provide Back-Up Staffing Incident Reports*.

Scenario	Type of Incident	Provider Action Step	Submit via ALPHA PORTAL BUS MODULE
Member had doctor's appointment and services were not provided	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member went on vacation and did not receive services	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Regularly scheduled staff out due to illness. Back-up staff was offered but member/family did not want another staff person <b>or</b> back-up staff was unavailable	Failure to Provide Back-Up	Complete Failure to Provide Back-up Staffing Incident Report	Yes
Regularly scheduled staff quit. Back-up staff was offered but member/family did not want another staff person <b>or</b> back-up staff was unavailable	Failure to Provide Back-up	Complete Failure to Provide Back-up Staffing Incident Report	Yes
member/family not utilizing all authorized service units available	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member/family did not notify the supervisor that regularly scheduled staff did not show up for work until several days after the fact	Failure to Provide Back-up	Complete Failure to Provide Back- up Staffing Incident Report	Yes
New regularly scheduled staff in the process of being hired. Back-up staff offered during interim but declined <b>or</b> back-up staff was unavailable	Failure to Provide Back-up	Complete Failure to Provide Back- up Staffing Incident Report	Yes
Member did not have services over a holiday per member/family request	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member/Parent/Guardian requested no staff to come to give consumer a break	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member/Family requested no services due to inclement weather	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No

Member is sick and unable to participate in services	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member is in the hospital	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Member/Family had a scheduling conflict and requested cancellation of services	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Provider is closed for a holiday	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No
Provider is closed or closes early due to inclement weather	Service Break	Document the service break in the member record	No

Submitting the Failure to Provide Back-Up Staffing Report is a requirement by DHSR. Information from the reports submitted by providers is used in a quarterly report required to be submitted to the Division by the MCOs. Partners also does quarterly reporting to our Human Rights Committee and a monthly snapshot of details to our Quality of Care Committee.

### **COVID FLEXIBILITES – FAILURE TO PROVIDE BACK-UP STAFFING**

Effective July 1, 2022, Partners is requiring providers to submit the failure to provide backup staffing reports at least bi-weekly. The COVID flexibilities allowed by Partners will end on June 30, 2022.

### **ENTERING THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE BACK-UP STAFFING REPORTS IN THE ALPHA PORTAL**

Instructions for using the Back-up Staffing Module may be found upon logging into the Alpha portal and locating “Alpha University” in the menu, <http://www.alphacm.net/mcsuniversity/> . You will look for the Quality Management section and click on Backup Staffing V2 to bring up the instruction document. You may save but should also print to have when you enter the reports until you are familiar with the process.

Below are some highlights of the instructions:

To begin, go back to the menu in Alpha, click on Quality Management → Backup Staffing → Create

When you create, Alpha will assign a unique BUS ID#. Fields with “asterisks” are required fields.

A report must be submitted for each date of incident, as the form does not allow for multiple dates.

To enter the consumer information, click on the “search” button, type in the last and first name and click “search” again and it should bring up the consumer. If it brings up more than one consumer with that name, look at the DOB and SSN before selecting.

Complete the provider details and contact information.

You will either check the box stating that Back-up Staffing was not available, or that back-up staffing was offered but declined. When either box is checked it will open additional fields, specific to the reason chosen, to be completed.

Service Details-begin typing the service code such as T2013TF or H2015 as this will cause the predictive text to pop up and you can click on it to populate the field.

Indicate the time of service and the hours without staff.

Choose the reason the BACK-UP staff was unavailable (not the primary staff) in the drop down. If “Other” is chosen as the reason, there must be an explanation of what “other” means in the field to the right of the reason field.

Do not submit a report for a date of incident prior to the actual date of incident.

At the bottom of the report, you have the option of clicking on the “Save” button then returning to the form to complete. When you are ready to complete and submit the report to the MCO, click on the “Submit” box on the left of the form, then click on the “Save” button on the right of the form to send the report to the MCO.

If you have questions, please contact:

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