

PARTNERSHIP HEALTHPLAN OF CALIFORNIA

POLICY/ PROCEDURE

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300			Lead Department: Provider Relations	
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy	
Original Date: 07/27/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025		
Applies to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medi-Cal	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees		
Reviewing Entities:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IQI	<input type="checkbox"/> P & T	<input type="checkbox"/> QUAC	
	<input type="checkbox"/> OPERATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE	<input type="checkbox"/> COMPLIANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> DEPARTMENT
Approving Entities:	<input type="checkbox"/> BOARD		<input type="checkbox"/> COMPLIANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> FINANCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input type="checkbox"/> COO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CREDENTIALING	<input type="checkbox"/> DEPT. DIRECTOR/OFFICER
Approval Signature: Marshall Kubota, MD			Approval Date: 01/08/2025	

I. RELATED POLICIES:

- A. MP CR 17 Standards for Contracted Primary Care Physicians
- B. MP CR 4B Identification of HIV/AIDS Specialists
- C. MP CR 13 Credentialing of Pain Management Specialists
- D. MP CR 13A Credentialing of Hospice and Palliative Care Medicine Specialists
- E. MP CR 13B Buprenorphine Prescriber Credentialing
- F. MP CR 13C Credentialing of Osteopathic Manipulation Therapy (OMT) Specialists
- G. MP CR 16 Lactation Consultant Credentialing Policy
- H. MP CR 19 Skilled Nursing Facility (SNFist) Provider Credentialing Policy

II. IMPACTED DEPTS:

- A. Health Services
- B. Grievance and Appeals

III. DEFINITIONS:

N/A

IV. ATTACHMENTS:

- A. [Credentialing Verification sources used by Partnership HealthPlan for Individual Practitioners](#)
- B. [Notice to Practitioners of Credentialing Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- C. [Practitioner Types and Credentialing/Re-Credentialing Criteria Summary](#)

V. PURPOSE:

- A. The purpose of the practitioner credentials review is to ensure that participating practitioners possess the experience, license, certification, privileges, professional liability coverage, education, and other qualifications necessary to provide a level of care consistent with professionally recognized standards; and in accordance with Partnership HealthPlan of California policy, and applicable credentialing and certification requirements of the State of California, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
- B. To describe the credentialing and re-credentialing requirements for the following types of practitioners contracted with Partnership HealthPlan of California. (Partnership)
 - 1. Doctor of Medicine (M.D.)
 - 2. Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.)
 - 3. Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (D.P.M.)
 - 4. Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine (D.C)

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025
Applies to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medi-Cal	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees

5. Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.)
6. Doctor of Optometry (OD)
7. Licensed Acupuncturist (L.Ac. – non-physician)

VI. POLICY / PROCEDURE:

All practitioners or groups of practitioners that have an independent relationship with Partnership will be credentialed before they provide care to members. Thereafter, Partnership re-credentials its practitioners every thirty-six (36) months. The 36-month re-credentialing cycle begins on the date of the previous credentialing decision. The 36-month review cycle is counted to the month, not the day.

If Partnership cannot re-credential a practitioner within the 36-month time frame because the practitioner is on active military assignment, medical leave or sabbatical, the organization documents this and re-credentials the practitioner within 60 calendar days of the practitioner's return to practice.

If a practitioner terminates with the Plan for administrative reasons, and not quality reasons, Partnership may reinstate the practitioner within thirty (30) calendar days without performing initial credentialing. Partnership performs initial credentialing if reinstatement is more than 30 calendar days after termination.

A. Verification Sources

Partnership uses the sources listed on Attachment A "Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan of California for Individual Practitioners" to primary source and verify practitioner's credentials.

B. Initial Credentialing Criteria

1. All practitioners are required to submit the following documentation:
 - a. A completed signed credentialing application.
 - b. A current signed release form and attestation confirming the correctness and completeness of the application, to include:
 - 1) Ability to perform the essential functions of the position,
 - 2) Lack of present illegal drug use,
 - 3) History of loss of license and felony convictions, and
 - 4) History of loss or limitation of privileges or disciplinary actions.
 - c. A current copy of:
 - 1) State medical license(s),
 - 2) DEA certificate (if applicable),
 - 3) Face Sheet of Professional Liability Certification (Certificate of Insurance),
 - 4) Board Certification (if applicable), and
 - 5) Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) Certificate (if applicable).
 - d. A current Curriculum Vitae (CV) that details the practitioner's work history.
2. All questions on the attestation must be answered. All adverse answers must be explained in writing by the applicant.
1. Documentation and information required may not be more than 180 days old at the time of Credentials Committee review. . (Effective 7/1/2025, documentation and information may not be more the 120 days old.)
- 2.
3. Documents submitted by practitioners will be verified to ensure the following requirements are met prior to presentation to the Credentials Committee.
 - a. Possession of a current, valid, unencumbered, unrestricted, and non-probationary license in the states where he or she provides services to Partnership members at the time of the credentialing decision.
 - 1) Exception to this requirement may be made for those applicants whose licensure action was related to substance abuse and who have demonstrated a minimum of six months of successful participation in a treatment or monitoring program; should this exception be entertained, the HealthPlan may request specific documentation from the applicant's

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025
Applies to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medi-Cal	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees

treating physician or program as deemed appropriate and to the extent permitted by law.

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018	Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025	
Applies to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medi-Cal <input type="checkbox"/> Employees	

- 2) Under existing federal law, licensed health professionals employed by a tribal health program are required to be exempt, if licensed in any state, from the licensing requirements of the state in which the tribal health program performs specified services. The tribal health professional's license must be in good standing as stated above.
- 3) Practitioners that don't meet criteria of an unencumbered, unrestricted, and non-probationary license will be presented to the Credentials Committee for consideration. Based on the review of the issues presented, the Credentials Committee will make recommendations to deny credentialing or approve credentialing.
- 4) The Plan will routinely ask practitioners to send a letter to the Credentials Committee to give their narrative and explanation of the action against them and the activities the practitioner has taken as a result of restrictions placed on their medical license. Approval of credentialing would be based on specific requirements that could include but not limited to; required proctoring of practitioner, additional continued medical education (CME) units within a specified time frame, monitoring of practitioner's restrictions by the health plan credentials staff and findings brought back to committee on a monthly or quarterly basis, and/or limiting the type of services provided by the practitioner to Partnership members. This would apply to any practitioner with sanctions or limitations on their medical license from the license governing Board.
- 5) The following criteria will be used by the Credentials Committee to evaluate the practitioner.
 - a) Assessment of risk of substandard care that might be provided to Plan members.
 - b) The completeness and forthrightness of the practitioner's narrative and explanation of the probation, restriction or other encumbrance of their medical license.
- b. Freedom of any sanctions or limitations on clinical license. Verification of the most recent five-year period available through applicable state licensing boards as listed on Attachment A, "Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan for Individual Practitioners." A query of the following sites will be conducted to confirm the practitioner is free of sanctions:
 - 1) DHCS: Medi-Cal Suspended and Ineligible Provider List;
 - 2) System for Aware Management (SAM) Exclusions from US Government Programs;
 - 3) CMS: Exclusions from Medicare and Medicaid;
 - 4) Office of Inspector General (OIG): Exclusions from Federally Funded Programs;
 - 5) National Practitioner Database.

Any practitioner found on any sanction reports, including but not limited to the above resources, cannot participate in the State Medi-Cal Program and/or the Plan's Managed Medi-Cal Program.
- c. Possession of a valid National Provider Identifier (NPI).
- d. Professional liability coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000 per incident and \$3,000,000 in aggregate for all practitioners.
- e. Confirmation of the past five years of malpractice settlements from the malpractice carrier or queries of the National Practitioner Databank. The five-year period may include residency or fellowship.
- f. Possession of a valid and current, unrestricted federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Certificate for practitioners who are qualified to write prescriptions. Must be valid, current, and without limitations in each state where the practitioner provides care to members.
 - 1) Ordering, Referring, and Prescribing (ORP): Practitioners who are employed by a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), a Rural Health Center (RHC), or an Indian Healthcare

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
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Original Date: 08/08/2018	Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025	
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- Clinic, must enroll as a Medi-Cal billing provider, rendering provider, or as an ORP only provider.
- 2) Practitioners who want to be recognized as a Buprenorphine Prescriber must hold a valid DEA certificate with the approval to dispense and treat with buprenorphine and sign the Addendum to the Credentialing Application for Buprenorphine Prescriber and Treatment Specialty. Refer to Policy MP CR 13B “Buprenorphine Prescriber Credentialing.”
 - 3) Partnership may credential a practitioner whose DEA certificate is pending, or has limitations, if they submit a Partnership DEA Waiver attesting to the fact that they have an alternative plan in place to have their prescriptive privileges covered by a colleague with appropriate certification and privileges until the practitioner has a valid DEA certificate.
 - g. Completion of medical school and residency program requirements.
 - 1) The highest level of education and training will be verified.
 - a) If practitioner is Board Certified, primary source verification of residency program is not required. If practitioner is not Board Certified Partnership will verify residency. Verification of Fellowship does not meet the intent of this requirement. Practitioner fellowship program or completion of fellowship is not communicated to members in the directory, newsletter or by Member Services staff.
 - b) If the practitioner did not complete a residency, then medical school will be verified.
 - h. Current privileges at an Accredited or Medicare verified hospital, primary admitting facility without restrictions.
 - 1) Practitioners that do not have hospital privileges must have an agreement with a physician or group. The practitioner must furnish Partnership with written verification of this agreement.
 - i. Documentation of the most recent five years of continuous work history.
 - 1) A gap in work history greater than 6 months requires a verbal clarification by the practitioner.
 - 2) A gap in work history greater than 12 months requires a written clarification by the practitioner.
 - j. Current Board Certification for practitioners who state they are Board Certified is verified using the applicable licensing board on Attachment A, “Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan of California for Individual Practitioners.”
 - k. Current Medi-Cal status as verified through a query of the Partnership Provider Master File (PMF) database and/or the California Health and Human Services (CHHS) Open Data Portal. PMF is updated monthly through data received from the Department of Health Services and the Open Data Portal is updated by CHSS monthly
 - l. Current California Children Services (CCS) paneled provider status as verified by the CCS source identified on Attachment A, “Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan for Individual Practitioners.” CCS “paneled” is not a requirement for credentialing but the verification of each practitioner is required to identify and report providers in accordance with APL 18-011.
 - m. Freedom of any Medicare/Medi-Cal sanctions as verified by those sources identified on Attachment A, “Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan for Individual Practitioners.”
 4. Practitioners who wish to be credentialed in any of the following specialty areas must meet additional criteria set forth in each specialty policy as listed below:
 - a. Primary Care: MP CR 17 Standards for Contracted Primary Care Providers
 - b. HIV/AIDS: MP CR 4B Identification of HIV/AIDS Specialists
 - c. Pain Management: MP CR 13 Credentialing of Pain Management Specialists
 - d. Hospice and Palliative Care: MP CR 13A Credentialing of Hospice and Palliative Care Medicine Specialists.

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
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e. Buprenorphine Treatment: MP CR 13B Buprenorphine Prescriber Credentialing

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025
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- f. Osteopathic Manipulation Treatment: MP CR13C Credentialing of Osteopathic Manipulation Specialist
- g. Lactation Consultant: MP CR 16 Lactation Consultant Credentialing Policy
- h. Skilled Nursing Facility Provider: MP CR 19 Skilled Nursing Facility Provider (SNFist) Credentialing Policy
5. Primary Care Physicians and OB/GYN Specialist Physicians must receive a passing score on an office site audit prior to having credentials presented to the Credentialing Committee.
6. Practitioners are notified in writing when given a credentialing application that they have a right to be informed of the status of their application upon request, a right to review any portion of their personal credentials file related to information submitted in support of their credentialing application, a right to be notified of discrepancy between information provided on the credentialing application and the primary source verification, and they have the right to correct any identified erroneous information, provided the information is not peer review protected. (Attachment B, "Notice to Practitioners of Credentialing Rights/Responsibilities.
7. Locum Tenens that provide service for less than 90 calendar days of a rolling 12 months do not need to be credentialed. If they are providing service for a site longer than 90 calendar days out of a rolling 12 months they will need to be credentialed by Partnership. Partnership HealthPlan does not enter into independent relationships with Locum Tenens, refer members to Locum Tenens, or list Locum Tenens in the Provider Directory.

C. Re-Credentialing Requirements

1. All practitioners are required to submit the following documentation:
 - a. A completed signed Credentialing Application;
 - b. A current signed release form and attestation confirming the correctness and completeness of the application, to include:
 - 1) Ability to perform the essential functions of the position,
 - 2) Lack of present illegal drug use,
 - 3) History of loss of license and felony convictions, and
 - 4) History of loss or limitation of privileges or disciplinary actions.
 - c. A current copy of:
 - 1) State medical license(s),
 - 2) DEA certificate (if applicable),
 - 3) Face Sheet of Professional Liability Policy or Certification, and
 - 4) Board Certification (if applicable)
2. Practitioners will receive the Partnership Notification of Credentialing Rights and Responsibilities with their Credentialing Application. (Attachment B, "Notice to Practitioners of Credentialing Rights/Responsibilities.")
3. Documentation and information required may not be more than 180 days old at the time of Credentials Committee review. (Effective 7/1/2025, documentation and information may not be more the 120 days old.)
4. Documentation will be verified in the same manner, using the same sources listed in Attachment A, "Credentialing Verification Sources used by Partnership HealthPlan for Individual Practitioners," as the initial credentialing process to ensure the practitioner has remained current and in good standing.
5. Primary Care Physicians must pass an office site audit every three years as a part of the re-credentialing process.
6. Performance monitoring reports related to the practitioner and shall be part of the re-credentialing process for all practitioners.
 - a. Practitioner-specific performance monitoring reports including quality of care issues confirmed by the peer review process will be pulled from the Partnership Quality department.

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025
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- b. Practitioner-specific member grievance monitoring reports will be pulled from the Partnership Grievance and Appeals department.
- c. The Partnership physician reviewer is responsible for reviewing all practitioners who meet thresholds and may refer a specific practitioner's history of complaints to the Credentials Committee for review, depending on the number and severity of complaints. Thresholds for evaluation:
 - 1) Any potential quality issue (PQI) finding with a severity ranking of P3 in the past two years.

Policy/Procedure Number: MP CR 300		Lead Department: Provider Relations
Policy/Procedure Title: Physician Credentialing and Re-credentialing Requirements		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Policy
Original Date: 08/08/2018		Next Review Date: 01/14/2026 Last Review Date: 01/08/2025
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- 2) A pattern of two (2) or more of any combination of confirmed PQIs ranked at least P1 and confirmed member grievances with a severity ranking of 3 in the past two years.
- 3) A pattern of three (3) or more of any combination of grievances or PQI cases that are unfounded (grievance severity ranking of 1 or 2) or PQI category P0 in the past two years.

VII. REFERENCES:

- A. 2025 NCQA, CR 1, Element A, Factors 1, 2, 3, & 8
- B. 2025 NCQA, CR 1, Element B, Factors 1, 2, & 3
- C. 2025 NCQA, CR 3, Element A, Factors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6
- D. 2025 NCQA, CR 3, Element B, Factors 1 & 2
- E. 2025 NCQA, CR 3, Element C, Factors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6
- F. 2025 NCQA, CR 4, Element A
- G. 2025 NCQA CR1 Element A Factor 12
- H. DHCS APL 16-012
- I. DHCS APL 14-004
- J. DHCS APL 18-011

VIII. DISTRIBUTION:

- A. Partnership Provider Manual

IX. POSITION RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURE: Credentialing Supervisor

VII. REVISION DATES:

8/8/2018, 07/10/2019, 08/14/2019, 11/13/2019, 04/08/2020, 11/11/2020, 10/09/24; 01/08/25

PREVIOUSLY APPLIED TO:

Archived Policies:

- A. MP CR 4 Initial Credentialing Requirements
- B. MP CR 7 Re-credentialing Requirements
- C. MP CR 401 Credentials Document Collection, Review and Verification