

An **internal appeal** asks us to look again at a decision we made. Someone at Vermont Medicaid who handles appeals will look at your case.

If you lose the internal appeal, you can ask for a Fair Hearing. In a Fair Hearing the Human Services Board will hear your case. **BUT** you must finish your internal appeal **first**. This is called exhaustion. What if we miss the deadline to decide your internal appeal? Then you don't have to keep waiting. You can go ahead and ask for a Fair Hearing.

Do you need help with your internal appeal? We can help you with:

- Filling out papers
- Helping you take part in the appeal
- Getting an interpreter
- Answering questions
- Helping you understand what is happening

You can also get free help from Vermont Legal Aid. Call their Office of Health Care Advocate at **1-800-917-7787**. **OR** go to their website at <https://vtlawhelp.org/> on the internet. Fill out the form.

After you ask for an internal appeal

1. We will start **getting proof** needed to decide the appeal.
2. **Send us papers** that can help prove your case. This can be:
 - Medical records or other papers
 - What your doctor says about why you need the service
 - Your doctor can do this in writing **OR** talk at the appeal meeting
3. We will set a **day and time** for the appeal meeting. Ask us to change it if the time and date will not work for you.
 - You have the right to take part in the appeal meeting.
 - You can speak for yourself. **OR** you can bring a lawyer, friend or someone else.

Appeal meeting

We will tell you about the meeting ahead of time. You can take part in the meeting in person, by phone or in writing. You can have someone speak for you. They can do this in person, by phone or in writing.

You can give proof and tell us what you think or know.

The person leading the meeting is the reviewer. The reviewer will be someone new to your case. It will **not** be someone who made the decision you are appealing. Is the appeal about what is medically needed? Then the reviewer must know about treating medical problem. The reviewer will look at all proof, records and what you tell them. They will look at the information used to make the decision you appealed. They will also look at any **new** information that was **not** used to make the decision.

How long does an appeal take?

Your appeal will be **decided within 30 days** of the date we get it.

What if we can't have the appeal meeting before the 30 days is up? We can decide the appeal without meeting with you.

Can an appeal take longer than 30 days? Yes. We can take 14 more days if it will help you or you ask us.

After the appeal meeting

We will send you a letter telling you what we decided about your appeal

We must tell you how we decided your appeal. You can see the papers, rules and proof we used. You can see how we decided if what you asked for was medically necessary.

Don't agree with the internal appeal decision? Or did you only win part of the appeal? You can ask for a Fair Hearing

You have **120 days** to ask for a Fair Hearing. The 120 days start with the date on the letter telling you the internal appeal decision. There are 4 ways to ask for a Fair Hearing:

1. **Call** our Customer Support Center at **1-800-250-8427**. **OR** call the Human Services Board at **802-828-2536**. **OR**

2. **Email** AHS.COHSBContact@vermont.gov **OR**
3. **Send a letter** to:
Human Services Board
14-16 Baldwin Street, 2nd floor
Montpelier, VT 05633-4301
OR
4. Do it **in person**.

Important! Did you get an expedited internal appeal?

Then you can ask for a **fast Fair Hearing IF:**

- You lost the appeal or lost part of the appeal **OR**
- Your expedited appeal was not decided before the deadline

What if I have questions or need help?

Call Vermont Health Connect Customer Support at **1-800-250-8427**. We are open Monday to Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM.