

# Credentialing procedures

---

---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

---

**CREDENTIALING**

[Criteria](#)

[Credentialing, hearing and appeals process](#)

[Expanded review](#)

[Practitioners' rights](#)

### **Fallon Community Health Plan Credentialing/Recredentialing Criteria**

Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP) seeks to contract with high quality physicians and licensed healthcare practitioners who are willing to make a commitment to managed care. The FCHP Credentials Committee credentials M.D.s, D.O.s, D.P.M.s, D.D.S.s, D.M.D.s.(who provide care under the medical benefit), D.C.s, C.N.M.s, as well as N.P.s, P.A.s, PTs, OTs, ODs and licensed mental health professionals such as, but not limited to, DMins, Ed.D.s Ph.D.s, Psy.D.s, Sc.D.s, LICSWs, LCSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, C.A.C.s, and C.A.D.A.C.s.

The following criteria will be applied by the FCHP Credentials Committee:

1. The practitioner must hold a current, valid and unrestricted license to practice in the state in which they intend to provide services. Any license actions will be reviewed by the FCHP Credentials Committee. The determination that a licensure action is significant enough to deny participation will be made by the FCHP Credentials Committee.
2. The practitioner must have a valid, unrestricted DEA registration or provide evidence satisfactory to the FCHP Credentials Committee that their practice does not require such registration. If a practitioner does not hold a current DEA registration, the practitioner must provide the name and DEA number of the practitioner who will prescribe for them. Any actions against a practitioner's DEA, including but not limited to, denial, restriction, suspension or termination, will be reviewed by the FCHP Credentials Committee. Participation may be denied and shall be at the discretion of the FCHP Credentials Committee.
3. The practitioner must maintain admitting privileges at an FCHP contracted hospital. The practitioner must be credentialed by the designated hospital according to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Patient Care Assessment regulation, 243 CMR 3.05.
  - a. If the practitioner does not have admitting hospital privileges, the practitioner must provide adequate information regarding inpatient coverage arrangements or an explanation regarding lack of admitting privileges.
  - b. If the practitioner has any past actions against hospital privileges, including but not limited to revocation, limitation, suspension or other type of specific disciplinary action, the issues will be reviewed by the FCHP Credentials Committee. The determination that previous actions are significant enough to disqualify a practitioner for participation will be made by the FCHP Credentials Committee.
4. The practitioner must have current malpractice coverage in the amount of at least \$1 million/\$3 million. The practitioner must have no record of cancellation or suspension of professional liability insurance, or must provide evidence satisfactory to the FCHP Credentials Committee, that such a record is not indicative of sub-standard care.

---

---

## CREDENTIALING POLICY—CRITERIA

---

---

5. The practitioner's history with third party payors must be acceptable to FCHP. If the practitioner participates with Medicare/Medicaid, participation is valid and unrestricted and there is no history of sanction activity or opting out of Medicare to contract with a private payor. If a sanction exists or has existed for non-payment of a student loan, the practitioner may be eligible for participation if the practitioner has satisfied all obligations of the student loan. This will be reviewed by the FCHP Credentials Committee.
6. The practitioner's participation with insurance carriers and managed care organizations will be reviewed. Issues, including, but not limited to, suspension or revocation due to substandard practice, billing fraud or abuse, will be reviewed by the FCHP Credentials Committee.
7. The practitioner has not been convicted of, pled guilty to, or pled "no contest" to any state or federal felony charge, within the past 10 years from the date attested to on the application. Factors considered shall include, but are not limited to, the relationship of the felony to the practice of medicine, current license status and/or history of professional sanctions.
8. The practitioner must attest to lack of present or recent (within two years) illegal drug use.
9. Practitioners are required to have formal training in the area of their practice. The practitioner will limit their practice to areas in which they have received adequate training and are within the scope of their practice.
10. The practitioner does not demonstrate any reason for any inability to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without accommodation.
11. The practitioner agrees to abide by all policies and procedures of FCHP as consistent with moral, ethical and professional standards of behavior. The practitioner agrees to adhere to generally recognized standards of medical and professional ethics.

---

---

## CREDENTIALING, HEARING AND APPEALS PROCESS

---

---

### **Policy on hearing and appeals**

Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP) Credentials Committee follows its established policies in order to determine whether a provider should be granted credential status.

Certain credentialing decisions made by the FCHP Credentials Committee entitle a practitioner to regular review of such decisions ("regular review"). These decisions include, but are not limited to:

1. Denial of an initial application on the basis of any issue, which is not reportable to the NPDB;
2. Denial of a reappointment application on the basis of any issue, which is not reportable to the NPDB;
3. Suspension revoking a contract on the basis of any issue, which is not reportable to the NPDB;
4. Termination of a contract on the basis of any issue, which is not reportable to the NPDB;
5. Denial or restriction of requested participation on the basis of any issue, which is not reportable to the NPDB;
6. Issuing of a verbal warning or formal letter of reprimand;
7. Imposing a monitoring requirement as a condition to conduct participation during a provisional time period;
8. Termination of credentialing status due to revocation, limitation or suspension of practitioner's professional license to practice.

Certain credentialing decisions made by the FCHP Credentials Committee entitle a practitioner to an expanded review ("expanded review"). These decisions include:

1. Denial of an initial application for participation on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB;
2. Denial of reappointment application on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB;
3. Suspension of credentialing status on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB;
4. Termination of credentialing status on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB;
5. Denial or restriction of requested privilege on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB;
6. Reduction of a requested privilege on the basis of an issue, which would require reporting to the NPDB.

---

---

## CREDENTIALING, HEARING AND APPEALS PROCESS

---

---

### **Regular review**

The FCHP Credentials Committee will use the following process when making a decision subject to "regular review."

The committee shall notify the practitioner by mail of the credentialing action. Such notice shall state the reason for the action and shall notify the applicant that he/she may have the action reviewed by submitting additional evidence, including statements by a relevant source, to correct the record as it relates to the reasons for the action, within 30 days of such notification. The committee shall appoint an impartial review official or a panel of impartial officials not in direct economic competition with the providers to conduct any further fact finding it deems necessary, using methods of its choice, during a 30 calendar day period following the receipt of practitioner's request for review of the decision. The impartial official or panel shall make a recommendation to the FCHP Credentials Committee that it maintain or modify its initial decision. The practitioner shall be informed of the decision of the committee within 10 days of its next meeting. This decision shall be final.

---

---

## EXPANDED REVIEW

---

---

### Expanded review

The FCHP Credentials Committee will use the following process when initiating action against the practitioner, in those instances in which the action would be subject to "expanded review."

1. The FCHP Credentials Committee chairperson shall, by certified mail, notify the practitioner that a decision has been reached to take action against the credentialing/recredentialing status of the practitioner. The FCHP Credentials Committee chairperson shall provide the reason for the proposed action and the right to request a hearing.
2. The notice shall inform the practitioner of practitioner's right to: be represented by an attorney or other person of the practitioner's choice; have a record made of the proceedings, copies of which may be obtained by the practitioner upon payment of a reasonable charge; call, examine and cross-examine witnesses; and present evidence determined to be relevant by the hearing office, regardless of its admissibility.
3. The practitioner will have 30 calendar days after receiving the notice to submit a written request for a hearing.
4. Failure of the practitioner to request a hearing within the specified time period would constitute a complete waiver of rights to such a hearing and/or appellate review, and would allow the initial decision to stand.
5. If the provider requests a hearing, the hearing shall be scheduled on a date no less than 30 calendar days of the notice of the request for a hearing except where the practitioner requests an earlier date. The committee will use its best efforts to accommodate requests for an earlier hearing date. Written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing, as well as the composition of the Hearing Panel, shall be sent to the practitioner within 15 calendar days of practitioner's request for a hearing.
6. The composition of the Hearing Panel is described below.
7. Following the hearing, the Hearing Panel shall provide the practitioner a copy of its decision in writing by registered or certified mail within ten (10) calendar days including a statement of the basis for the decision. Also, a copy of its decision shall be rendered to the FCHP CEO. The decision of the Hearing Panel shall be considered final.
8. A decision to reduce, suspend or terminate participation for a period of longer than 30 days is reported to the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine and the National Practitioner Data Bank/Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank by the credentials manager as required by the reporting statute.
9. In the event that the decision of denial stands, reapplication to FCHP will not be considered for a one year period of time from the date on the letter notifying the provider of the decision of the Hearing Panel or at the discretion of the FCHP Credentials Committee.

---

---

## EXPANDED REVIEW

---

---

### **Composition of the Hearing Panel for Expanded Review**

The FCHP CEO or designee shall appoint a panel of three (3) individuals, one of who is an FCHP medical director, who had not previously been involved in the case. The FCHP medical director shall be designated as the chair. The other two (2) practitioners shall be similarly licensed practitioners (e.g., M.D. physician reviews M.D. physician) as the practitioner who initiated the appeal, neither of whom are in direct economic competition with the petitioner nor are partners in practice and who have not acted as accusers, investigators or decision makers in the same matter being appealed. At least one (1) individual shall be practicing the same specialty as the petitioner.

The petitioner shall have the right to challenge the impartiality of any member of the Hearing Panel. Challenges should be filed within five (5) calendar days of the notice of the composition of the Hearing Panel. The chair shall rule upon such challenges, unless he/she is challenged, in which case, the FCHP CEO shall rule on such a challenge.

---

---

## PRACTITIONERS' RIGHTS

---

---

### **Practitioners' right to review information**

Credential files are maintained as confidential medical review documents of the FCHP Credentials Committee and are used solely for the purpose of conducting professional credentialing and medical peer review activities.

A practitioner has the right to review information submitted in support of their credentialing application, except as prohibited by law. This does NOT include the right to review references or recommendations or other information that is peer review protected.

### **Practitioners' right to correct information**

In the event any discrepancies are noted in the credentialing process, the FCHP Credentials Committee chairperson and/or the credentials manager will contact the practitioner by phone or in writing. The practitioner must provide a written explanation and/or correct erroneous information within 15 days of notification to the FCHP Credentials Committee chairperson and/or the credentials manager. Failure to comply within 15 days will result in the application process being terminated. Contact the credentials manager at Fallon Community Health Plan for further information.