

Procedural Standard 05-1

February 12, 2007

TO: All Disability Reviewers and Physician Advisors
FR: Augustus Adams, Ph.D., Director, Disability Evaluation Services
BY: Sherry Campanelli, Program Compliance Manager
RE: Disability determination in cases involving pregnancy

Purpose: This procedural standard describes the policies and processes to follow and the documentation required when adjudicating claims involving pregnancy for both MassHealth and the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) program clients.

Background: A pregnancy without complications will not be found to constitute a disability for MassHealth since the necessary 12 months duration can not be met.

However, for Transitional Aid to Families With Dependent Children (TAFDC) applicants, an uncomplicated pregnancy in the last trimester is deemed to equal the Department of Transitional Assistance Medical Standard CMR 203.540 F, Impairment of Renal Function.

In all cases involving pregnancy, medical documentation must include the estimated date of confinement (EDC) by a competent medical authority as found in 106 CMR 203.565.

Procedure: Reviewers should record the EDC on the Medical Standard F to facilitate accurate decision-making and timely processing for clients who list pregnancy as an impairment. For TA cases with uncomplicated pregnancy in the last trimester that are being approved on that basis alone, annotate the top of the DTA Medical Standard F in brackets under the heading "No Ob-Gyn Medical Standard". The onset date is established as of the beginning of the third trimester. Use decision codes as follows: SS1 (N/A), EAEDC (N/A), and TAFDC (110.) Generally, on deemed approval pregnancy cases in the last trimester, Physician Advisors (PA) assign a disability review date for three months post EDC unless there is medical reason to set a later review date.

For TA pregnancy-involved cases likely to result in denial, (client is not in third trimester, does not have complications, and pregnancy is the only impairment), expedited processing is required. The reviewer refers the case for a physical residual functional capacity (RFC) assessment by a Physician Advisor and adjudicates immediately upon completion of the RFC.

When a TA complicated pregnancy case or a multiple impairment case involving pregnancy is pending receipt of medical information and/or is pending a consultative examination and

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subsequently reaches the third trimester, development is discontinued immediately and the case allowed under the instructions for uncomplicated pregnancy noted above.

Summary: Uncomplicated pregnancy does not, in and of itself, support a finding of disability except under the TAFDC program in the last trimester. Pregnancy with complications and/or pregnancy with other impairments should be developed fully and evaluated as usual. However, when a TA case reaches the third trimester while *in process*, further development is suspended and a favorable decision based on the instructions for normal pregnancy is made as expeditiously as possible.