Minnesota Management and Budget

Proposed Exempt Permanent Rules Relating to Policies and Procedures to Certify Entities to Deliver Consumer Assistance Services

7700.0010  APPLICABILITY AND PURPOSE.

Subpart 1.  Applicability.  Parts 7700.0010 to 7700.0090 apply to an eligible entity that is an applicant to be certified to deliver consumer assistance services through MNsure.

Subp. 2.  Purpose. Parts 7700.0010 to 7700.0090 establish the policies and procedures for certification as a consumer assistance partner through MNsure.

7700.0020  DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1.  Scope.  As used in this chapter, the terms defined in this part have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2.  Affordable Care Act.  "Affordable Care Act" means the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, Public Law 111-148, as further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act.

Subp. 3.  Applicable staff.  "Applicable staff" means any person who has access authorized under this chapter to data stored in the MNsure Web tool.

Subp. 4.  Certified application counselor.  "Certified application counselor" means an organization or individual certified through MNsure to provide consumer health insurance application and enrollment assistance without any compensation.

Subp. 5.  Commissioner.  "Commissioner" means the commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget.

Subp. 6.  Conflict of interest.  "Conflict of interest" means any business, private, or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective execution of an entity's or individual's official or professional responsibilities to the extent necessary to carry out the functions of MNsure.
Subp. 7. **Consumer assistance partners.** "Consumer assistance partners" means navigators, in-person assisters, and certified application counselors.

Subp. 8. **Cost-sharing reduction.** "Cost-sharing reduction" means reductions in cost sharing for an eligible individual enrolled in a silver level plan through MNsure or for an individual who is an American Indian or Alaska Native enrolled in a QHP through MNsure.

Subp. 9. **Enrollment.** "Enrollment" means enrolling individuals in a QHP or public health care program through MNsure, including properly utilizing the appropriate system tools, resources, and data to perform this function.

Subp. 10. **Individual tax credit.** "Individual tax credit" means premium tax credits specified in section 36B of the Internal Revenue Code, as added by section 1401 of the Affordable Care Act, which are provided on an advance basis to an eligible individual enrolled in a QHP through MNsure according to sections 1402 and 1412 of the Affordable Care Act.

Subp. 11. **In-person assister.** "In-person assister" means any organization, distinct from a navigator or insurance producer, certified through MNsure to provide in-person consumer assistance services.

Subp. 12. **Insurance producer.** "Insurance producer" has the meaning defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 60K.31.

Subp. 13. **MNsure.** "MNsure" means the "Minnesota Insurance Marketplace" under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 62V, created as a state health benefit exchange as described in section 1311 of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148, and further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act.

Subp. 14. **Navigator.** "Navigator" has the meaning described in section 1311(i) of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), Public Law 111-148, and further defined through amendments to the act and regulations issued under the act.
Subp. 15. **Qualified health plan or QHP.** "Qualified health plan" or "QHP" means a health plan that meets the definition in section 1301(a) of the Affordable Care Act, Public Law 111-148, and has been certified by the board according to Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.05, subdivision 5, to be offered through MNsure.

7700.0030 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; CERTIFIED CONSUMER ASSISTANT PARTNER.

Subpart 1. **Federal prohibitions.**

A. Consumer assistance partners must not be health insurance issuers, subsidiaries of a health insurance issuer, or professional associations that include members of or lobby on behalf of the insurance industry according to federal requirements in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210(d).

B. Consumer assistance partners must not have a conflict of interest during the term serving as a navigator or in-person assister.

1. Navigator organizations must not receive any compensation directly or indirectly from any health insurance issuer in connection with the enrollment of any individuals or employees in a qualified health plan or a nonqualified health plan as specified in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210(d)(4).

2. In-person assister organizations must follow the requirements pursuant to Minnesota's Level One Establishment Notice of Grant Award, Special Terms and Conditions, Attachment B, #19. "In order to provide services that meet the requirements of Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, sections 155.205(d)-(e), and 155.405, individuals performing in-person assistance functions must operate in a fair and impartial manner and must meet and adhere to appropriate conflict of interest standards which include, but are not limited to the following: Do no receive any direct or indirect compensation from an issuer in connection with enrolling consumers in health plans; and are not subsidiaries of an issuer or associations that include members of, or lobby on behalf of, the insurance industry."
4.1 Subp. 2. **Qualifications.**

A. Organizations participating in the in-person assister program must demonstrate the ability to carry out those responsibilities as defined by the board.

B. Organizations participating in the in-person assister program must accomplish the following:

(1) demonstrate proven connections to the communities MNsure will serve, or demonstrate the ability to form relationships with consumers, including uninsured and underinsured consumers;

(2) successfully complete MNsure's certification training program; and

(3) comply with any privacy and security standards applicable to MNsure.

4.11 Subp. 3. **Eligible organizations.** Eligible consumer assistance organizations are any of the following organizations or entities able to demonstrate to the board that the entity has existing relationships, or could readily establish relationships with consumers in Minnesota, including uninsured and underinsured consumers, likely to be eligible to enroll through MNsure: 501(c)(3) community-based organizations, for-profit businesses, government agencies, and any other organization recognized by the Office of the Secretary of State including, but not limited to:

A. community and consumer-focused nonprofit groups;

B. trade, industry, and professional associations;

C. farming organizations;

D. religious organizations;

E. chambers of commerce;

F. insurance producers, subject to subpart 1;

G. coalitions and collaborative efforts are encouraged;
H. tribal organizations; and

I. state or local human services agencies.

7700.0040 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING CONSUMER ASSISTANCE SERVICES THROUGH MNSURE.

Subpart 1. Duties and responsibilities. The in-person assister program aligns with federal requirements specified in Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 155.210(e), which require any consumer assistance partner participating in the in-person assister program to, at a minimum, perform the following activities:

A. maintain expertise in eligibility, enrollment, and program specifications and conduct public education activities;

B. provide information and services in a fair, accurate, and impartial manner, and this information must acknowledge other health programs;

C. facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans offered in MNsure;

D. provide referrals to any applicable office of health insurance consumer assistance or health insurance ombudsman established under section 2793 of the Public Health Service Act, or any other appropriate state agency or agencies for any enrollee with a grievance, complaint, or question regarding an enrollee's health plan, coverage, or a determination under such plan or coverage; and

E. provide information in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to the needs of the population being served by MNsure including individuals with limited English proficiency; and ensure accessibility and usability of tools and functions for individuals with disabilities according to the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Subp. 2. Consumer assistance. Consumer assistance partners and insurance producers shall guide consumers through the application and enrollment process and facilitate access...
to the range of health coverage options available through MNsure by providing the following services, including but not limited to:

A. informing consumers of health insurance options and advising consumers regarding the value of coverage, in addition to explaining insurance options available through MNsure;

B. informing individuals of application processes, required documentation, mandated requirements, and any exemption criteria;

C. providing information and referrals to small employers on enrollment in the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) and any tax provisions, including credits and penalties, potentially affecting small employers;

D. gauging eligibility for MNsure and providing referrals to appropriate support services or programs for further assistance, such as free health clinics;

E. providing nonmedical referrals, to the extent possible, according to MNsure referral guidance;

F. explaining program eligibility rules and providing application assistance for Medicaid/CHIP, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions;

G. assisting with the entry, or overseeing the entry of information into enrollment tools and resources, including final submission of information;

H. advising American Indians and Alaskan Natives on benefits specified by the Affordable Care Act, such as cost-sharing reductions, income exclusions, special open enrollment periods, and exemption from minimum health care coverage mandate;

I. addressing questions regarding the submission of eligibility and enrollment verification documentation;
facilitating referrals to insurance producers for individuals and families enrolling
in qualified health plans through MNsure and requesting additional plan enrollment assistance;

K. facilitating referrals to community organizations, counties, or other appropriate nonprofit or public entities when individuals and families require technical expertise and assistance beyond the scope of consumer assistance partners or insurance producers;

L. explaining, discussing, and interpreting coverage and policies with consumers to facilitate plan selection;

M. assisting with plan comparison based upon individual priorities, including but not limited to metal tier levels, quality ranges, providers including, but not limited to, specialty care, pharmaceutical, dental and eye care, and total cost estimation including utilization and health status; and

N. facilitating initial premium payment on behalf of MNsure.

7700.0050 CERTIFICATION TRAINING.

Subpart 1. Consumer assistance partners. MNsure shall develop a certification training program, administer Web-based training, and administer assessment of proficiency for the navigator, in-person assister, and certified application counselor programs. Training shall be made available to eligible entities by MNsure. Documentation of certification training completion shall be maintained by MNsure. To receive and maintain MNsure certification, all applicable staff of an organization serving as a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor must complete the following required training modules with a minimum passing score, determined by MNsure, on all assigned training coursework. Modules include, but are not limited to those specified in items A to E.
A. MNsure Web tool that includes training on the use of the public Web site, online enrollment tools, and navigation of the navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor landing page.

B. Affordable Care Act 101 that includes training on basic information on available public health care programs, referrals to other consumer assistance organizations serving MNsure, underserved and vulnerable populations, privacy and security as specified in part 7700.0080, and conflict of interest as specified in part 7700.0070.

C. Public health care programs, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, and means of appeal and dispute resolution.

D. Qualified health plan includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, the range of qualified health plan options offered through MNsure, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution.

E. State of Minnesota licensure requirements to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** MNsure shall establish minimum certification training standards for insurance producers certified to serve MNsure. Training and assessment of proficiency for insurance producers shall be administered by MNsure. Training shall be made available to eligible insurance producers by MNsure. To receive and maintain certification to serve MNsure, all appropriate staff of an organization serving as a certified insurance producer must complete the required training modules in items A to E with a minimum passing score, determined by the board, on all assigned training coursework.

Modules include, but are not limited to:

A. MNsure Web tool that includes training on the use of the public Web site, online enrollment tools, and navigation of the insurance producer landing page;
B. Affordable Care Act 101 that includes training on basic information on available public health care programs, referrals to other consumer assistance organizations serving MNsure, underserved and vulnerable populations, privacy and security as specified in part 7700.0080, and conflict of interest as specified in part 7700.0070;

C. public health care programs, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution;

D. qualified health plans includes training on eligibility and enrollment rules and procedures, the range of qualified health plan options offered in MNsure, and the means of appeal and dispute resolution; and

E. defined contributions includes training on federal requirements and MNsure online enrollment tools for small employers to provide a defined contribution towards a qualified health plan for their employees.

7700.0060 CERTIFICATION.

Subpart 1. Consumer assistance partners. Before providing any services on behalf of MNsure, a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor must be certified by MNsure by meeting the criteria in items A to F:

A. enter into a formal agreement with MNsure by responding to MNsure solicitation for the navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor program;

B. select, manage, and monitor individual navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor staff and direct them to meet MNsure certification training standards by ensuring that all applicable navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor and appropriate staff participate in required MNsure sponsored training under part 7700.0050;

C. comply with MNsure conflict of interest standards as specified in part 7700.0070;
10.1  D. comply with MNsure privacy and security standards as specified in part 7700.0080;

10.2  E. comply with MNsure account creation process; and

10.3  F. comply with recertification requirements to be determined by MNsure.

Subp. 2. **Insurance producers.** Before providing any services through MNsure, an insurance producer must be certified by MNsure by meeting the criteria in items A to G:

A. maintain active licensure in good standing as an insurance producer with the Accidental and Health Line of Authority pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, sections 60K.30 to 60K.56;

B. inform MNsure of the intent to serve MNsure;

C. ensure that all insurance producer and applicable staff and subcontractors participate in required MNsure certification training specified in part 7700.0050;

D. disclose to MNsure which health carrier's qualified health plans offered through MNsure the insurance producer is authorized to sell;

E. comply with MNsure privacy and security standards specified in part 7700.0080;

F. comply with the MNsure account creation process; and

G. comply with recertification requirements to be determined by MNsure.

Subp. 3. **Noncompliance.** At MNsure's discretion, certification may be withdrawn from a navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor or individual for noncompliance with the certification requirements in subpart 1. At MNsure's discretion, certification may be withdrawn from an insurance producer organization or individual for noncompliance with the certification requirements in subpart 2.

Subp. 4. **Monitored performance.** At MNsure's discretion, navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer performance may be
monitored during the certification period. Through reporting on performance of responsibilities required by the formal agreement with a navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor, MNsure may require an underperforming entity to develop and implement a time-limited performance improvement plan. If performance does not improve to MNsure's satisfaction, certification to provide services through MNsure may be withdrawn.

7700.0070 CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Subpart 1. Framework; consumer assistance partners. MNsure shall provide consumers with impartial, high-quality, community-based education and information, and in-person application and enrollment assistance through certified navigators, certified in-person assisters, and certified application counselors. In order to ensure the delivery of high quality services, to minimize or eliminate the existence of conflicts of interest and ensure integrity, MNsure will:

A. screen for potential conflicts of interest during the navigator, in-person assister, and certified application counselor selection process and throughout the term of engagement with these entities;

B. require initial and ongoing training that includes instruction on providing impartial education and in-person assistance with consumer selection of a qualified health plan;

C. require the navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor to disclose all affiliations that may present a direct, indirect, or perceived conflict of interest;

D. monitor the navigator, in-person assisters, or certified application counselor's performance and practice through reporting;
E. monitor the navigator, in-person assister, or certified application counselor
through feedback tools on the MNsure Web site and through qualitative and quantitative
evaluation tools;

F. actively solicit customer satisfaction feedback on experience with MNsure; and

G. as circumstances command, where a conflict of interest arises, require
mitigation, revocation of certification, or termination of partnership with a navigator,
in-person assister, or certified application counselor.

Subp. 2. Insurance producers. All current conflict of interest requirements in
Minnesota statutes and rules shall apply to insurance producers.

7700.0080 PRIVACY AND SECURITY.

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, part 155.260, MNsure shall require
a navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer to
annually attest that its data security and privacy practices are compliant with the applicable
federal and state laws and supportive of MNsure data security and privacy practices.
Any navigator, in-person assister, certified application counselor, or insurance producer
must have specific authorization from MNsure prior to accessing data through MNsure
according to Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.06, subdivision 8. The authorization must
be immediately and permanently revoked under Minnesota Statutes, section 62V.06,
subdivision 8, for any willful violation of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13. MNsure has
the right to inspect, assess, and audit a navigator, in-person assister, certified application
counselor, or insurance producer's data security and privacy practices. Inadequate data
security and privacy practices may result in termination of certification at the discretion of
MNsure.

7700.0090 COMPENSATION.

Subpart 1. In-person assister.
A. Infrastructure grants.

(1) MNsure shall award in-person assister infrastructure and outreach grants for operations and outreach through a competitive process. The competitive process shall be based on solicitation and at MNsure's discretion grants will be established based on the criteria outlined in the solicitation.

(2) Disbursements of grant funding shall be paid per contract agreed to between the entity and MNsure.

B. Payment per enrollment. Organizations serving as in-person assisters shall receive payment for each successful enrollment into a qualified health plan.

(1) The rate of payment may be set by MNsure. The initial payment rate and any subsequent changes to the payment rate must be published in the State Register. The payment rate will be effective upon publication and applicable for all work completed on or after the payment rate effective date.

(2) Payments shall be paid to in-person assisters until funds are depleted.

Payments shall be made directly to the organization or entity.

C. Pay-for-performance payments. At the discretion of MNsure, additional pay-for-performance payments may be established to address specific performance measures including, but not limited to, targeted geographic areas, specific population barriers, disparities, or distinctive outreach activities.

Subp. 2. Certified application counselors. Certified application counselors shall not receive payment from either MNsure or from health carriers that offer health plans through MNsure.