



Frequently Asked Questions: Minnesota Law Allowing 16-Year-Olds to Consent for Outpatient Mental Health Services

Q: Can minors age 16 and older consent for outpatient mental health services without parental consent?

A: According to [MN Statute 144.3431](#), minors who are aged 16 or older have the legal authority to provide effective consent for nonresidential mental health services without the need for consent from any other person, including their parents.

Q: What are considered nonresidential mental health services under this law?

A: Nonresidential mental health services, as defined by this law, refer to outpatient services provided to a minor who is not residing in a hospital, inpatient unit, or licensed residential treatment facility or program.

Q: Can minors 16 and over consent for residential mental health services (i.e. crisis)?

A: No. Parental consent is still required for minors to be admitted to a residential program including crisis. However, minors can consent for mobile crisis services and do not require parental consent for mobile crisis.

Q: How does billing insurance work for minors aged 16 and older under this law?

A: Insurance plans can be billed for nonresidential services provided to minors aged 16 and older who consent to those services. Any plan that lists the minor aged 16 and older as an eligible member of that plan can be billed. Verification of coverage will occur prior to any services being rendered.

Q: Will parents be able to see charges on an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for insurance for services rendered to a minor that consents for his/her/their own services?

A: Yes, it's possible that parents may see charges related to mental health services on the Explanation of Benefits (EOB) provided by the insurance company, depending on the insurance policy and the specifics of the services rendered. It's recommended to review the insurance policy or consult with the insurance provider for clarity on this matter.

Q: What does consent mean in terms of responsibility for payment?

A: Per [MN Statute 144.347](#), providing consent for nonresidential mental health services means that the minor assumes responsibility for payment unless alternative arrangements have been made with the service provider or the insurance provider.

Q: Can minors aged 16 and older apply for a sliding fee for mental health services?

A: Yes, minors aged 16 and older may be eligible to apply for a sliding fee for mental health services. Woodland Centers billing department will determine eligibility for the sliding fee scale and the amount of discount applied based on income and dependents. Additionally, any applicable insurance must be authorized to be billed prior to the sliding fee scale being applied in order to be eligible for sliding fee discounts.

Q: Will parents be able to obtain medical records for services rendered to a minor that consents for his/her/their own services?

A: No. The minor must provide consent for verbal and/or written release of any information pertaining to outpatient treatment services that the minor consents for on their own behalf. However, a mental health professional (MHP) may inform a minor's parent or guardian of treatment if, in the MHP's judgment, failure to inform the parent or guardian would seriously jeopardize the minor's health ([MN Statute 144.346](#)).

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