

St. Vincent PACE

Grievance and Appeals Process

We want to be sure that all Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE Participants are satisfied with the care they receive. Please let us know right away if there is a problem or concern about your care or if you feel you are not receiving services that you need.

Participant Grievance Process

A grievance is a written or verbal complaint expressing dissatisfaction with the service delivery or quality of care furnished by St. Vincent PACE, whether medical or non-medical in nature. We will give you written information on the grievance process when you enroll, and at least annually thereafter.

You, your family member, or your authorized representative may file a grievance with any St. Vincent PACE associate, either verbally or in writing, at any time. If you have a grievance after hours, you may telephone the on-call administrator at 317-754-4565 or TTY 317-754-4570.

Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will provide you with a written acknowledgment of the grievance and provide you the specific steps, including the time frame for response, that will be taken to resolve the grievance. Additionally, your grievance will be filed and logged in the Grievance Log, this information will be documented and reported as part of St. Vincent PACE quality improvement plan.

Grievances will be resolved as soon as possible but not later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date the grievance is received by St. Vincent PACE. The grievance and the resolution to the grievance will be discussed with you and a final resolution will be sent to you in writing.

If you are not satisfied with the resolution proposed by St. Vincent PACE, you may contact the St. Vincent PACE Executive Director to request further action. The Executive Director will continue to work with you to achieve a resolution that will be agreeable to you. The St. Vincent PACE Executive Director will utilize the resources of the program, i.e. the Interdisciplinary Team, the Ethics Committee, to make his/her decision as long as it does not jeopardize the confidentiality of the grievance. If you file a grievance, you will continue to receive services the same as before you filed the grievance or according to your plan of care. Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE associates maintain the confidentiality of your grievance, and will not discuss your grievance with other Participants or anyone else not involved in investigating your grievance.

Participant Appeals Process

If Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE denies, reduces, suspends, terminates or does not pay for a service that you feel is necessary for your health; you, your family member, or your authorized representative have the right to request an appeal of St. Vincent PACE's decisions. When you enroll, at least annually thereafter, and whenever we deny a request for service or payment, reduce or terminate your service, your Team will provide you written information about the denial and about how to file an appeal. You may also request information on our appeal process at any time.

If you file an appeal, you will continue to receive the healthcare services the same as before you filed the appeal. If Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE is proposing to reduce or terminate services you are already receiving, you can request to continue those services during the appeal process. However, if the appeal does not favor you, then you will be responsible for payment of the services in question. Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE associates will not discuss your appeal with anyone not involved in investigating your appeal.

Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE Internal Appeal Process

You, your family member, or your authorized representative may file an internal appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving notification from Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE that your request for service(s) or payment has been discontinued, reduced, or denied.

An internal appeal can be filed using the following methods:

- File your appeal, either verbally or in writing, with your St. Vincent PACE Social Worker, Site Director, or the Executive Director
- File your appeal verbally by calling St. Vincent PACE at 317-754-4565 or TTY 317-54-4570
- In writing by faxing your appeal to (463) 212-7840, or by mailing/delivering your written appeal to:

Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE
Attention: Director of Social Services
5435 W Pike Plaza Road
Indianapolis, IN 46254

Once received by St. Vincent PACE, you will receive acknowledgement within one (1) business day that your appeal was received. A person not involved in the initial decision and who does not have a stake in the outcome will evaluate your appeal. This person will be both impartial and appropriately credentialed in the field(s) or discipline(s) related to

the appeal. You or your family or caregiver may present or submit relevant facts and/or evidence for review, in person as well as in writing, for consideration during the appeal process. St. Vincent PACE will make a decision on the appeal as promptly as your health condition requires but no later than thirty (30) calendar days after receiving the request for an appeal.

At the time of making the appeal, if you believe your life, health or ability to regain or maintain maximum function would be seriously jeopardized if the disputed service is not provided, you may request an Expedited seventy-two (72) Hour Appeal Review.

By requesting this type of appeal, a decision will be reached on an expedited appeal as quickly as your health condition requires, but no later than 72 hours after the appeal is received. The 72 hour time frame may be extended up to fourteen (14) calendar days if you or your family or caregiver request the extension or if the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) authorizes St. Vincent PACE to do so because we have justified the need for additional information and have shown that the extension is in your best interest. The seventy-two (72) Hour process will not begin until the request is received. Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will document in writing all verbal requests.

Decisions on Appeals

Whether a standard appeal or an expedited appeal, all appeal decisions by Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will be given in writing. For decisions resulting in denial, the written notice will include the specific reason(s) for the denial, an explanation of why the service would not improve or maintain your overall health status, information on your right to appeal the decision, and a description of your external appeal rights. If Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE decides your request was appropriate, then the service or payment in question will be arranged and provided as quickly as your health requires.

External Appeals Process

If you are unhappy with the outcome of St. Vincent PACE's appeal review, you have additional appeal rights under Medicaid and Medicare.

Depending on your eligibility, you may choose to file an external appeal to either Medicare or Medicaid, but not both. Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will assist you in choosing either the Medicare or Medicaid external appeal process and will forward information accordingly on your behalf. St. Vincent PACE can assist you with an external appeal. If you wish for us to assist you with submitting the external appeal on your behalf, external appeal requests must be made to the PACE Executive Director within fourteen (14) calendar days of receiving a written outcome of your internal appeal.

Medicare External Appeals Process

If you are eligible for Medicare and wish to use the Medicare appeal process, you must go through the St. Vincent PACE appeal process before your appeal can go to an outside appeals organization. We will send your appeal to a separate independent review entity (IRE) that Medicare has designated as the agency for reviewing external appeals. A written request for reconsideration must be filed with the IRE within 60 calendar days from the date of the decision by the internal third party reviewer.

The Medicare IRE for external appeals will either maintain our original decision or change our decision and rule in your favor. If the Medicare designated agency's decision is in your favor, St. Vincent PACE must provide you the service as quickly as your health condition requires. If you have requested a payment for a service that you have already received, we will pay for the service.

Indiana Medicaid External Appeal Process

If you choose to appeal using Medicaid's external appeals process, this can be done through the state's Medicaid Fair Hearing Process. An appeal with the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) can be requested in two ways:

1. **Mail.** You can mail a written request for a fair hearing request to the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration at **Indiana at Family and Social Services Administration, Office of Hearings and Appeals, MS 04 402 W Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46204**
2. **Fax.** You can fax a written request for a fair hearing request to the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration to **317-232-4412 (Attn: Office of Hearings and Appeals).**

Appeals to the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) must be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt of the Notice of Action from Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE, and must identify the issue being appealed.

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) will respond with a written notice informing you of the results of your appeal. If the decision is in your favor, Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will provide or pay for the service in question as quickly as your health requires.

Note: Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will continue to provide the service(s) in question until a final decision on the appeal has been made. You might have to pay for the services if the appeal decision is not in your favor. Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE or its provider can bill you for the costs of the appealed services, but only if you sign a form in advance saying that you understand you may have to pay for the services Ascension Living St. Vincent PACE will continue to provide you with all of the other services that have been authorized by your Interdisciplinary Team.