NEW YORK STATE | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

Frequently Asked Questions

Certified Residential Opportunities (CRO) ADM: A Review for Care Coordination Organizations
Training held on January 10, 2025
Recorded Training can be found in SLMS Class Code: **OPWDD-EL-CRO-ADM-RCCO-2025**
Presented by: Alexis Harrington, Associate Commissioner
Delia Tucker, Statewide Operations Director
Cindy Smul-Kukla, Statewide Certified Residential Opportunities Coordinator

CRO Referral Packets:

1. **When is it required to start using the new H005 Residential Referral Form?**
   Starting March 3, 2025, the new form must be used for all new Certified Residential Opportunities (CRO) referrals and for all annual updates to CRO packet.

2. **Until the Capacity Management Application (CMA) goes live, where should completed applications be submitted?**
   The CMA is a new electronic platform that will automate many CRO procedural tasks. The platform is housed in "Dynamics", similar to where CHOICES lives.

   Until the CMA is fully functional, all CRO referral documents will be submitted via the fillable PDFs and sent to the appropriate RFO certified housing team's email address.

   You can find these email addresses in attachment 1 with the CRO ADM.
   Region 1: Region1.CRO@opwdd.ny.gov
   Region 2: Region2.CRO@opwdd.ny.gov
   Region 3: Region3.CRO@opwdd.ny.gov
   Region 4: NYC.CRO@opwdd.ny.gov
   Region 5: LI.CRO@opwdd.ny.gov

   Please find links to all the updated CRO forms here.

3. **What is the timeframe for a psychological assessment to be considered current?**
   The report must accurately reflect a person's current functioning at the time of the referral and/or annual update. Psychological Reports do not have to be within a specific period. If the exam occurred after the developmental period (this would be considered adulthood), and the person did not have any significant events that had an impact on their functioning, the report that was submitted would be considered still valid.

4. **When submitting the H005 referral form and updating the CRO packet, does the original psychological evaluation have to be submitted again?**
   If the psychological report that was previously submitted accurately reflects the person's current functioning, then there is no need to send the evaluation again. If the psychological report remains reflective of the person current functioning level, this should be noted accordingly on the H005 form.

5. **Are the CAS/CANS required for the CRO referral packet? Will there be any exceptions made for people with an urgent need for housing?**
   As noted in the ADM, the CRO packet will not be considered complete if the CAS/CANS and DDP2 are not completed and current. In accordance with CAS protocol on the OPWDD website

"The CAS is an important part of person-centered planning process and is required for everyone 18 years or older who receives or applies for OPWDD services." “A routine reassessment is the standard reassessment that occurs at least two years after either the initial assessment or last CAS assessment. A CAS is repeated every two years, or more often if needed, to keep the information up to date." A CANS is current within one year of the assessment date.

Additionally, this remains a requirement for those who are already on the CRO list and have not yet been matched with a residential opportunity.

If there is someone with an urgent need for housing and an assessment has not been completed, the CCO/CM may follow the process to request a CAS/CANS as a priority need for the purpose of a CRO referral. If the circumstance presents an urgent need, the Certified Housing Team will have the ability to waive certain CRO referral requirements. In these instances, CCOs should indicate the date that the request for assessment has been submitted on the H005/Residential Referral Form.

6. **Should Life Plans submitted with the CRO packet be finalized, or can Care Managers submit a referral packet with an In-Process Life Plan?**
   A finalized Life Plan – approved and signed by the person/family – is required for submitting a complete CRO referral packet and any updates. An In-Process Life Plan, which does not require a signature from the person/family, is sufficient for the initial submission. However, when submitting a CRO referral packet with an In-Process Life Plan, Care Managers must send the finalized, signed Life Plan once it is completed.

7. **What if someone is in an ineligible setting (e.g., nursing home or hospital) and the Life Plan is over a year old? Should the CCO or the specialty liaison keep the referral packet active?**
   If the person remains enrolled with the CCO (billing suppressed), the assigned CM should update the Life Plan as needed, and ensure that the CRO referral packet remains current, provided the person is still actively seeking a certified residential opportunity.

   If the person is not linked with a CCO, the OPWDD specialty liaison would be the responsible party for gathering the required documents to submit a CRO referral and to keep that referral updated. Once the person is linked to a CCO, the CCO will take over all responsibilities that the specialty liaison was fulfilling.

8. **Is there a specialty liaison in each OPWDD region, or each DDSO?**
   Specialty liaisons are designated based on the specific ineligible setting. Each region has specialty liaisons to assist people who are transitioning from residential schools, forensic settings, nursing homes, etc.

9. **How do Care Managers locate historical CRO information submitted by previous Care Managers?**
   Care Managers should coordinate with their supervisors and CCO leadership to retrieve documents submitted by previous Care Managers. Additionally, it is best practice to document referrals and service request activities in Care Management notes or Life Plans for future reference.

10. **What is the process for updating a CRO referral?**
    Annual CRO referral updates will be coordinated with the date on the current signed annual Life Plan. This update process applies only to active referrals; people who have been matched with a certified residential placement and/or have accepted an offer, do not require an update.

The CRO packet will also need to be updated when there is a significant change in a person's life that has an impact on residential supports. All updated packets should include:

a. H005 Certified Residential Opportunities referral form with all needed updates
b. Updated signed Life Plan or treatment plan with a signature (if a Life Plan is not available)
c. Current physical exam (cannot be more than 365 days old)
d. Psychological report that is reflective of the person's current functioning level
e. Current DDP2 (within 2 years)
f. Current CAS/CANS depending on age (CAS is every 2 years, CANS is annually)

11. Will there be notifications when a CRO packet is about to become inactive, or an annual review is due?

CCOs are expected to update a person's CRO referral packet in alignment with the person's annual Life Plan. Care Managers should submit an updated CRO referral packet at the time of a person's annual Life Plan meeting if the person wishes to keep an active referral packet shared with providers for a certified residential opportunity. Once the Capacity Management Application (CMA) is fully functional, the system will enable the RFO to send out letters notifying a CM/CCO that a CRO referral needs an annual update. If updates are not received within a certain timeframe, the RFO will send out a letter notifying the CCO and person/family that the CRO packet will be deactivated due to outdated information.

12. If a person requests a change to their residential support category, how can we review the paperwork previously submitted and sent to the provider agencies?

A change in a person's residential support category requires updated documentation that accurately represents the person's current situation and support needs. Previously submitted documentation that has already been reviewed would be insufficient for this purpose. Currently, the RFO certified housing teams share the completed and most recent CRO packets with residential providers that have appropriate vacant opportunities. Once the Capacity Management Application (CMA) is implemented, CCOs and Care Managers will have access to the current referral packet shared with the providers.

13. If a CRO referral was submitted a few years ago for a person that wants to move to NY so they can be closer to family, does a new referral have to be submitted on the H005?

Yes, at least annually CRO referral packets must be updated based on the date of the annual Life Plan or annual treatment plan (if Life Plan is not available). For CRO packets to remain active and be shared with providers all required documents must be kept updated.

14. If a person declines a possible screening, will they be removed from the CRO?

A person has the right to decline provider requested meetings to complete a screening of a potential residential opportunity. In accordance with the CRO ADM "The Certified Housing Team may reevaluate a person's designation of residential support category based on updates to referral information or other significant indications or change to a person's residential needs, <u>including if a person has repeatedly declined previous offers of certified residential opportunities</u>."

15. What if a person wants a new housing opportunity – for example, if they currently live in an IRA and are unhappy with their placement?

A person has the right to request a move to another certified setting or another residential provider. The Care Manager should first determine whether a specific issue is prompting the

request. If a problem is identified, the Care Manager must work with the provider and person to resolve the concern. However, if a resolution cannot be reached, or the request stems from a desire to relocate to a different geographic area outside the current provider's catchment, or from a general interest in a new residential provider, a new CRO referral packet should be submitted to facilitate the move.

16. **What if more than 30 days have passed since the Care Manager submitted the documents and no response has been received?**
    The Care Manager and CCO are welcome to contact the Certified Housing Team at the RFO to inquire about the status of the submitted CRO referrals. All inquiries must be sent to the regional CRO emails addresses listed on the OPWDD website attachment 1 here.

17. **If a Care Manager submits a CRO referral but does not reply promptly to a follow-up email from the RFO, will the person become ineligible for housing opportunities?**
    If a CRO packet is incomplete, it will not be reviewed by the Certified Housing Team. Consequently, certified residential opportunities will not be authorized. The Housing Team requires all necessary documentation and prompt responses to clarifying questions in order to accurately determine the need for a certified setting. Furthermore, if a CRO referral packet is out of date, it will not be considered for a targeted referral for a potential residential opportunity. Since Care Managers serve as the main source of information in the CRO referral process, it is imperative that they remain responsive.

18. **Is there a reason why Access to Residential Opportunities Committee (AROC) meeting requirements vary by region?**
    In accordance with the CRO ADM, "AROC meetings occur at least monthly and are held in the form and format that best meets that area's needs. Meetings may be held more frequently, as deemed appropriate by the RFO."

19. **Does the H004 include information about a person's right to appeal their assigned support category?**
    Yes, page 2 of the H004 Notification of Residential Support Category form contains information regarding how a person can request reconsideration of their assigned support category.

Notice of Decisions (NOD):

20. **When Care Managers go through the CRO referral process and receive the NOD.15, do Care Managers still need to submit a Request for Service Authorization (RSA) or Service Amendment Request Tool (SART) to request Residential Habilitation units?**
    An RSA or SART is not required to apply for a certified residential opportunity. However, if a Care Manager is submitting an RSA or SART for other waiver services AND the person is also seeking certified residential services, the request for residential services should be clearly indicated on the RSA/SART along with the other waiver services the person is seeking.

21. **Can someone be denied from the CRO or will they be assigned the lowest support category of current need?**
    A person will receive a notice of decision (NOD.15) after a complete CRO referral is submitted and reviewed. The NOD will either authorize or deny a person for Certified Residential Opportunities. Due process rights will be sent to the person/family and the Care Manager with the NOD.15.

22. For a fair hearing, does the 60-day period begin on the date indicated on the Notice of Decision (NOD.15) or the date the NOD is received?

A person has up to 60 days from the date on the NOD.15 to request a fair hearing and/or a conference if they disagree with the determination documented on the NOD.15.

Capacity Management Application (CMA):

23. Can CCOs view all agency vacancies?

No, CCOs do not have access to Residential Provider vacancies. CCOs will only have access to information for the person enrolled with them. Additionally, in phase 3 of the CMA development, CCOs will have access to each person's screening reports submitted by providers.

24. Will the CMA enable Care Managers to see which agencies have received the referral packet for someone?

No, Care Managers will not be included in the communications between the RFO and Residential providers as it pertains to targeted referrals. Instead, providers will contact the Care Manager directly to request assistance with coordinating a screening meeting with the person/family. Note that in phase 3 of the CMA development, CCOs will have access to screening reports for those enrolled with them.