

Department of Mental Health
TRANSMITTAL LETTER

SUBJECT Preparing Decision Memorandums		
POLICY NUMBER DMH Policy 670.1	DATE JAN 08 2005	TL# 62

Purpose. To outline the procedures for preparing a Decision Memorandum (Decision Memo) for the DMH Director's review and decision.

Applicability. Applies throughout the Department of Mental Health (DMH): (Mental Health Authority (MHA), DC Community Services Agency (DC CSA), and Saint Elizabeths Hospital (SEH).

Policy Clearance. Reviewed by affected responsible staff and cleared through appropriate MHA offices.

Implementation Plans. A plan of action to implement or adhere to this policy must be developed by designated responsible staff. If materials and/or training are required to implement this policy, these requirements must be part of the action plan. Specific staff should be designated to carry out the implementation and program managers are responsible for following through to ensure compliance. Action plans and completion dates should be sent to the appropriate authority. Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (COTRs) must also ensure that contractors are informed of this policy if it is applicable or pertinent to their scope of work. *Implementation of all DMH policies shall begin as soon as possible. Full implementation of this policy shall be completed within sixty (60) days after the date of this policy.*

Policy Dissemination and Filing Instructions. Managers/supervisors of DMH must ensure that staff are informed of this policy. Each staff person who maintains policy manuals must ensure that this policy is filed in the DMH Policy and Procedures Manual.

*If any CMHS or DMH policies are referenced in this policy, copies may be obtained from the DMH Policy Support Division by calling (202) 673-7757.

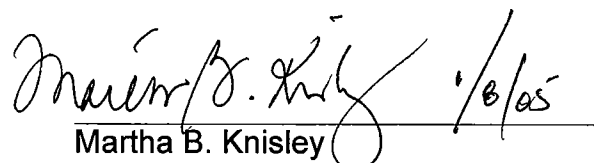
ACTION


REMOVE AND DESTROY

NONE

INSERT

DMH Policy 670.1


Martha B. Knisley
Director, DMH

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH	Policy No. 670.1	Date JAN 08 2005	Page 1
	Supersedes: NONE		

Subject: Preparing Decision Memorandums

1. **Purpose.** To outline the procedures for preparing a Decision Memorandum (Decision Memo) for the DMH Director's review and decision.
2. **Applicability.** Applies throughout the Department of Mental Health (DMH): (Mental Health Authority (MHA), DC Community Services Agency (DC CSA), and Saint Elizabeths Hospital (SEH).
3. **Authority.** Mental Health Service Delivery Reform Act of 2001.
4. **Decision Memorandum.** The Decision Memo is a document used by the DMH to facilitate a formal, coordinated review and approval process of significant/complex management proposals that may have significant impact on DMH or its services system-wide. A Decision Memo identifies alternative options or strategies for resolving a particular issue or for addressing an identified need, including recommendations for a particular course of action with anticipated impact, timing, and deadlines for consideration by the DMH Director.
5. **Policy.** The following types of issues require a Decision Memo to the DMH Director:
 - Controversial issues that can only be resolved by a decision from the DMH Director;
 - Any change in any regulation, policy, budget item, or practice of any kind that has a potential negative impact on the operation of the Department (DCCSA, SEH, MHA) or other component of the system;
 - Any expenditure outside of the DMH approved budget regardless of the purpose (including recruit actions for positions not contained on the Schedule A list of DMH budgeted positions);
 - Table of Organization changes; and
 - Any other major issue where the DMH Director requests a Decision Memo, or that is deemed by CEO, MHA deputy director or senior staff to require a decision by the Director. (Senior staff refers to managers in the Office of the Director.)
6. **Responsibility.** CEOs, MHA deputy directors and senior staff shall ensure that appropriate issues as described in Section 5 above are brought to the attention of the DMH Director for decision as required by this policy. Respective supervisors/staff should inform their CEO/deputy director of any issues that they are aware of that require a Decision Memo and may initiate the Decision Memo based on their responsibility and expertise on the issue.
7. **Format and Required Content for Decision Memos.** See Exhibit 1 attached.
8. **Routing.** Route the Decision Memo as follows:
 1. Initiating supervisor
 2. Other manager(s), if required by the organization's internal protocol
 3. Responsible CEO or MHA deputy director, as applicable (not applicable to MHA senior staff)
 4. DMH General Counsel (if legal issues are involved)

See page 3 of Exhibit 1 for a list of individuals that may have to be consulted, as appropriate.

5. DMH Director

(The DMH Director may take the issue addressed in the Decision Memo to the Executive Staff meeting for discussion and input at the Director's discretion.)

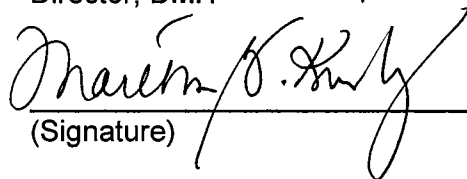
All reviewers of the document shall be sensitive to any **deadlines addressed in the Decision Memo**. This should be noted in particular when Decision Memos are required for personnel actions. The initiating supervisor should clearly identify deadlines for meeting the effective date of personnel action.

9. **Notification of the Director's Decision**. The Director will indicate approval or disapproval directly on the Decision Memo and return it to the responsible CEO, MHA deputy director or senior staff, as applicable. The originator of the Decision Memo shall provide copies of that final document which reflects the Director's decision to other DMH officials that the document was routed through, as well as to DMH managers who were consulted.

10. **Maintenance of Decision Memorandums**. The original Decision Memo shall be maintained by the responsible CEO/MHA deputy director or senior staff who initiated it. A copy shall be maintained in the DMH Director's office.

Approved by:

Martha B. Knisley
Director, DMH


(Signature)

1/8/05
(Date)

Memorandum

JAN 08 2005

TO: Martha B. Knisley
Director, DMH

THRU: Name/Title
MHA Deputy Director or CEO, as applicable

FROM: Name
Title

DATE:

SUBJECT: Subject of the Issue to be addressed in the Decision Memo

The purpose of this section is to accurately summarize the most important points of the entire memo. After reviewing this section, the DMH Director can decide which detailed sections must be reviewed in order to make a decision. The summary consists of the following bullets, and should be brief enough to be contained on the first page. For issues that are not complex, the summary may serve as the entire body of the memo.

Summary Section:

- **Issue:** In this first bullet, the author should summarize in two or three sentences the issue to be resolved. These sentences should reflect a brief and accurate summary of the "Issue" section below.
- **Options:** In this bullet, the main options for addressing the issues should be summarized in two or three sentences.
- **Recommendation:** The recommended action should be presented here.
- **Parties Consulted:** This bullet should list those individuals consulted on the decision at hand, and must indicate whether or not they agreed with the recommended option. A list of individuals who may have to be consulted and sign off requirements are listed on page 3.

Detailed Discussion Section:

Issue

This section presents in detail the issue to be addressed. It should generally not run longer than one page. The authors should consider whether portions of the description of the issue, such as detailed background information can be included in an attachment rather than in the body of the document.

Options

Issues requiring a Decision Memo will typically be of significant importance and complexity, and therefore must involve multiple options for resolution. These options should be clearly numbered and presented, with at least one or two sentences describing each. Every memorandum should include the option, "do nothing" for the Director's consideration.

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As options are presented, the relative advantages of each should be described based on relevant criteria. Although unique issues will require unique assessments, the author should at least comment on any relevant legal, clinical, operational, political, and financial implications that surround the options discussed. This may require significant consultation with CEOs, deputy directors or senior staff at MHA, or others with expertise in a particular area, so that the views of others are documented and represented as part of the final Decision Memo.

Recommendation

The author should clearly recommend one of the options presented in the previous section, including a discussion of timing and deadlines. The justification for this recommendation should then be presented, along with the anticipated effects of taking the recommended action.

Parties Consulted

In conjunction with the assessment of legal, operational, political, financial, and other considerations made above, this section should indicate which parties **inside or outside** the Department were consulted about the issue at hand, and indicate their concurrence or other position and rationale on a separate sheet, see page 3.

Director's Decision

In this section, the Director will sign to indicate approval of the recommended option, or will provide comments to indicate pursuit of an alternate course of action. Each Decision Memo should include the following notation:

Director's Comments:

Approved

Disapproved

Director's Signature

Date

Additional Background

Any additional information or background materials relevant to the subject addressed by the Decision Memo should be provided in electronic form or by hard copy along with the original Decision Memo.

CONSULTATION CLEARANCE SHEET

(Use a separate sheet to obtain the response to the Decision Memorandum and signature of the respective manager(s) consulted. All reviewers of the document shall be sensitive to any deadlines addressed in the Decision Memo.)

The originator shall obtain consultations from the individuals below as follows:

- DMH General Counsel (if legal issues are involved)
- Deputy Director of Fiscal and Administrative Services (if fiscal matters are involved)
- DMH Fiscal Officer (if fiscal matters are involved)
- Deputy Director of Programs, Policy and Planning (if it involves/affects consumer care or provider issues)
- Deputy Director, Office of Accountability (if accountability issues are involved)
- DMH Director, Division of Human Resources (if personnel issues are involved)
- DMH Chief Clinical Officer (if it involves clinical services, records, pharmacy and medication practices, etc.)
- DMH Chief Compliance Officer (if it involves decisions that have implications for meeting compliance/regulatory requirements)
- CEO of SEH (if it involves/affects SEH)
- CEO of DCCSA (if it involves/affects DCCSA)

- List and obtain signatures of any subject matter experts/responsible managers within the Department who were consulted, if not already identified above.

- List names, titles, and phone numbers of any parties outside of the Department who were consulted.

The following notation shall follow the name and title of each individual consulted and signatures shall be obtained (signature not required for parties outside of DMH):

Subject of Issue:

Comments:

Concur Non-Concurrence

Signature

Date