



ASAM Criteria Updates for Adult Substance Use Services

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) periodically updates the standards of care delineated in the ASAM criteria for the treatment of substance use disorders and co-occurring conditions. Louisiana uses ASAM criteria to establish Medicaid treatment guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence. On October 5, 2023, Hazelden Betty Ford released the digital version of The ASAM Criteria – 4th Edition, Volume 1 for adults, which revised certain standards and levels of care for serving the adult population.

If the revisions included in this updated edition are adopted, it will require numerous changes to Louisiana documents, inclusive of the Medicaid State Plan, Behavioral Health Service Providers licensing rule, and the Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual. The Office of Behavioral Health is researching changes that would be needed to rules, regulations, and policies to align with Volume 1 of The ASAM Criteria – 4th Edition for adults and is partnering with the Medicaid managed care organizations (MCO) to plan for operational implementation of the updated criteria if these revisions are adopted.

Transition to ASAM Criteria- 4th Edition for adults is dependent on implementation readiness and budget availability. Should LDH pursue implementation it will require approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of the needed State Plan Amendment (SPA), promulgation of required rules, and revisions to the Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual. If implemented these revisions will occur during calendar year 2024, and the revisions will require operational changes at the MCO and the provider levels. Providers will be kept informed about the status of approvals and revisions as they are finalized via updates to this Informational Bulletin. Pending budget allocation, CMS approval and the publication of rules and the Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual revisions, the anticipated effective date for providers to come into compliance is January 1, 2026.

Providers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the revisions included in The ASAM Criteria – 4th Edition for planning and preparation purposes. The digital and print versions are now available for purchase from Hazelden Publishing: [ASAM Criteria and Levels of Care \(hazeldenbettyford.org\)](https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org)

LDH has published Informational Bulletin 24-02 for your reference [IB24-02 revised 6.26.24.pdf \(la.gov\)](#).

For questions or concerns regarding any bulletin, contact United Healthcare Community Plan at 1-866-675-1607.

