

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>21-013</p>	Subject/Title	Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) Independent Assessment
	Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informational Memorandum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Instruction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy Guide
	Issuance Date	02/01/2021
	Obsolete Date	N/A
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Due Date	N/A	
Due to	N/A	
Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Starting February 1, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), in collaboration with contractor Maximus, will begin testing a new service called the Independent Assessment for all children and youth referred to the Regional Placement Unit/Juvenile Justice Assessment Unit (RPU/JJAU) for residential services. The Independent Assessment service will be in a testing phase from February 1 to March 31, 2021. After that, MDHHS will fully implement the service as part of the transition to the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) in April. This communication provides guidance as to the caseworker's role and what to expect during the Independent Assessment test phase.

Maximus will present information about the Independent Assessment at a Live Teams Event on February 4 from 2:00-3:00pm. An invitation to the event will be sent to all foster care and juvenile justice staff.

Background

MDHHS contracted with Maximus to provide independent assessments of children referred for potential residential services. The independent assessment is necessary to determine the appropriate level of care for children in foster care and will demonstrate Michigan's compliance with the QRTP requirement of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). Maximus assessors will use the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) evidence-based tool developed by Dr. John Lyons as part of the assessment.

Referral Process

Caseworkers and RPU/JJAU will follow these consecutive steps when making referrals to the Independent Assessor:

1. The caseworker will submit a referral for residential services to the RPU/JJAU.
2. If the RPU/JJAU concurs with the referral for residential services, the RPU/JJAU will complete an independent assessment referral using the MDHHS-5847, *Assessment for Determination of Placement Referral*.
3. The RPU or JJAU will send the referral to the Independent Assessor.
4. The Independent Assessor will contact the caseworker to discuss the child's situation. The Independent Assessor will then contact the child/youth, parents, and other individuals involved.
5. The Independent Assessor will complete the assessment and submit a Determination Report to the RPU/JJAU.
6. RPU/JJAU will distribute the report to the youth and caseworker.

Test Phase

From February 1 through March 31, MDHHS and Maximus will test the process flow, quality of data, timeline for completion of assessment, and algorithm of the CANS. During the test phase, the report will offer a recommendation rather than a determination of placement, and RPU/JJAU may still choose to place the child/youth in residential services even if the report recommendation is community placement. If the report recommends community services, the case will undergo a review the week after completion of the assessment. The youth, caseworker, and their supervisor will be invited to the review. Business Service Center (BSC) and county directors will also be invited to the case review. *The reviews during the test phase will provide needed information to tweak the independent referral process before the go-live date of April 1, 2021. Assessments completed during the test phase will have valuable information for case planning and should be reviewed by the caseworker and residential services provider, if applicable.*

About Maximus

Maximus is nationally recognized for the work they do with states across the country to manage complex programs and ensure that individuals receive the appropriate care and supports necessary to improve their quality of life. Enduring commitment to process innovation and service excellence has led the company to a role as the industry's leading provider of high-quality, conflict free assessment services for persons with intellectual, behavioral health, and developmental disabilities, as well as older adults and individuals with physical disabilities and complex medical conditions.

Program Support

Beginning February 1, 2021, please reference the contacts and support resources below for any questions regarding QRTP processes, referrals, or inquiries regarding the independent assessment process. Additional communication updates will be shared by MDHHS and Maximus in the months ahead.

Maximus Help Desk Contacts

MichiganQRTP@maximus.com | 833-664-7787 (833-6MI-QRTP)

User Tools and Resources

The **Michigan QRTP User Tools** page will be a repository for important program updates, forms, and other reference materials: www.maximusclinicalservices.com/svcs/michigan_qrtp

MDHHS Contact Support

For questions regarding the Michigan QRTPs Independent Assessments, please contact:

Mary Chaliman, Manager, Child Welfare Medical and Behavioral Health

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Chalimanm2@michigan.gov | 517-898-0707

For questions regarding the implementation of QRTP, please contact:

Sarah Goad, MSW, Manager, Foster Care Program Office

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

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