



**To:** Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) Physicians, Providers, and Pharmacies  
**From:** Health Plan of San Joaquin Pharmacy Department  
**Date:** October 16th, 2014  
**Subject:** Update to Pharmacy Emergency Supply Override Policy  
**Products:** Medi-Cal, SJHA, AIM

## UPDATE TO PHARMACY EMERGENCY SUPPLY OVERRIDE POLICY & PROCEDURE

### Overview

The purpose of the Emergency Override Policy is to allow a pharmacist, under his/her clinical judgment, supply up to 3 days-worth of medication(s) not covered by the HPSJ formulary while waiting to obtain HPSJ authorization, if the “emergency” meets the following definition: **“For use of alleviation of severe pain and/or the treatment of unforeseen medical conditions, which, if not treated immediately, would lead to disability or death.”**

In the past, HPSJ has required pharmacies to complete an “Emergency Medication Supply Form” to document an emergency fill and HPSJ would enter authorization the next business day when the issued medication supply met the Emergency Supply Program requirements. Utilization of the form has been low and many members have gone without needed medications. To improve use of the program, **HPSJ now enables pharmacies to enter a universal code into the prior authorization field to allow pharmacies to dispense up to a 3-day supply of medications in emergency situations.**

**Emergency Prior Authorization Code: 9999998 (six ‘9’s followed by an 8)**

### Procedure

#### Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014:

1. When a patient requires a medication **for use of alleviation of severe pain and/or the treatment of unforeseen medical conditions, which, if not treated immediately, would lead to disability or death**, a pharmacist may at his/her clinical discretion use/allow entry of the emergency supply authorization code.
2. The code may be used any time of the day (including weekends). The code is entered into the Prior Authorization Code field in the pharmacy’s software.
3. The pharmacist will bill the PBM for a **3-day supply** of medication, using the above code and subsequently dispense the medication to the HPSJ/SJHA member.
4. When using the Emergency PA code, the pharmacist must still contact the provider and/or initiate a prior authorization request.
5. Each morning, a report detailing which member, pharmacy, and drug overrides were performed the previous day will be generated and reviewed by The Plan Pharmacists to assure medical necessity and medical appropriateness.
  - a. Prior approval is not needed for dispensing the 3-day emergency supply. Non-formulary medications may be dispensed under the conditions stated above.
6. Notification of the prior authorization decision to pharmacies and provider will occur under normal pharmacy authorization policies.
  - a. If the medication is not approved beyond the 3-day emergency supply and a formulary alternative medication is recommended, the pharmacy will contact the physician for a prescription for an authorized medication.

7. A pattern of misuse is dispensing a 3-day supply of medication that does not meet an emergency or medical necessity criteria in more than one occasion. If the drug is not used for emergency purposes as defined in the regulations, it is misused.

**Rules/Restrictions on Emergency Supply Dispensing:**

1. The Emergency PA code will only override medications requiring **Prior Authorization, Step Therapy**, or are **Non-Formulary**.
2. The Emergency PA Code will **not** override: Member eligibility, mandatory generic substitution, or medications excluded from the benefit (e.g., medical foods, erectile dysfunction drugs, fertility drugs).
3. The Emergency PA Code may **only be used once per drug/strength per 365 days**.
4. For situations where pharmacy and/or plan electronic systems are not functioning, the Emergency Supply Request form will still be accepted (available at [www.hpsj.com](http://www.hpsj.com)).
5. **When using the Emergency PA code pharmacies must still contact the provider and/or initiate a prior authorization request.**
6. A pattern of abuse of the Emergency PA code may result in suspension of the code for the pharmacy in question.

*Pharmacies are encouraged to post this in an area visible to staff for reference.*