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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- PRESCRIPTION BENEFIT MANAGER
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Introduced By: Representative Charlene Lima

Date Introduced: February 26, 2026

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 21 of the General Laws entitled "FOOD AND DRUGS" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 38

4 PRESCRIPTION BENEFIT MANAGER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

5 **21-38-1. Short title.**

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as "Prescription Benefit Manager Accountability
7 Act".

8 **21-38-2. Definitions.**

9 (a) "Prescription benefit manager" or "PBM" means any person or entity that administers
10 or manages prescription drug benefits on behalf of a health insurer, health plan, or other third party
11 payer.

12 (b) "Prescribing practitioner" means a physician or other health care provider licensed and
13 authorized under the laws of this state to prescribe prescription medications.

14 **21-38-3. Mandatory fulfillment of prescribed medication.**

15 (a) Whenever a prescribing practitioner prescribes a specific medication for a patient, the
16 prescription benefit manager or any entity responsible for processing or approving the prescription
17 shall approve and authorize coverage of that specific medication as written if the prescribing
18 practitioner submits a notarized letter stating:

1 (1) The medical necessity for the specific medication prescribed; and
2 (2) That alternative medications are not as effective or are not clinically appropriate for the
3 patient.

4 (b) Upon receipt of the notarized letter described in subsection (a) of this section, the
5 prescription benefit manager shall not substitute, deny, or require step therapy for a different
6 medication.

7 **21-38-4. Denial requirements and medical review.**

8 (a) Any denial of a prescribed medication shall be made only after review by a licensed
9 health care professional with documented medical expertise in the specific medication or the
10 medical condition for which it is prescribed.

11 (b) The prescription benefit manager shall document, at the time of denial:

12 (1) The name, license number, and specialty of the reviewing health care professional;

13 (2) The relevant medical expertise; and

14 (3) The clinical basis for the denial.

15 (c) Such documentation shall be provided to the prescribing practitioner and the patient
16 upon request.

17 **21-38-5. Enforcement.**

18 (a) Any violation of this chapter shall constitute an unfair or deceptive act or practice and
19 may be enforced by the attorney general.

20 (b) The department of health may promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement
21 this chapter.

22 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- PRESCRIPTION BENEFIT MANAGER
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

1 This act would require prescription benefit managers to approve a specific medication
2 prescribed by a doctor when supported by a notarized medical necessity letter and require that any
3 denial be reviewed and documented by a licensed medical expert.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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