

Relating to Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs and Pharmaceutical Discount Purchasing Cards

This Act Requires the state Commissioner of Health and the state Commissioner of the Department for the Aging to develop a single application form for citizens to use to seek eligibility for various pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards. The Commissioners must obtain copies of the application forms used by such pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards in the state, compile a list of the various information required to complete such application forms, identify common elements, and analyze the forms for readability and simplicity. Upon completion of this analysis, the Commissioners must then design a single, concise application form that is logically formatted, written in clear and easily comprehensible language, and covers any and all data that may be required to obtain eligibility for any such pharmaceutical assistance program or pharmaceutical discount purchasing card. Upon completion of the design for the single concise application form for pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards in the state, the Commissioners must place such application form on their respective departments' websites and cooperate with the programs and pharmaceutical companies to encourage the use of the design throughout the state. In order to perform the duties provided in the new subsection, the Commissioners may appoint an advisory task force of stakeholders to assist them in this endeavor.

Submitted as:

Virginia

[Chapter 318, 2004](#)

Status: Enacted into law in 2004.

Suggested State Legislation

(Title, enacting clause, etc.)

1 Section 1. [*Short Title*.] This Act may be cited as “An Act Concerning
2 Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs and Pharmaceutical Discount Purchasing Cards.”

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4 Section 2. [*Alternative Means of Disseminating Information*.]

5 A. The [Commissioner] shall create links from the [Department of Health’s] website
6 to the [Department for the Aging’s] website and its affiliated sites pertaining to
7 pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards. The
8 [Commissioner of the Department for the Aging] shall cooperate with the [Commissioner of
9 Health] by ensuring that such information is available on the [department for the Aging’s]
10 website.

11 B. The [Commissioner] shall ensure that all clinical sites administered by local health
12 departments are provided with adequate information concerning the services of the
13 [Department for the Aging], including, but not limited to, its toll-free telephone number and
14 its website information on pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount
15 purchasing cards.

16 C. The [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the Department for the
17 Aging] shall coordinate the dissemination of information to the public regarding any
18 pharmaceutical discount purchasing card programs while maintaining a neutral posture
19 regarding such programs. In addition, with such funds as may be made available, the
20 [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the Department for the Aging] shall
21 disseminate information to the public concerning recent congressional actions relating to
22 pharmaceutical benefits to be provided under the Medicare program and how such benefits
23 may help senior citizens with the costs of pharmaceutical benefits.

24 D. The [Commissioner] shall establish a toll-free telephone number, to be
25 administered by the [Department of Health], which shall provide recorded information
26 concerning services available from the [Department for the Aging], the [state Agencies on
27 Aging], and other appropriate organizations for senior citizens.

28 E. The [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the [Department for the
29 Aging] shall develop a strategy, in coordination with the [state Agencies on Aging] and other
30 private and nonprofit organizations, for disseminating information to the public concerning
31 the availability of pharmaceutical assistance programs and for training senior citizen
32 volunteers to assist in completing applications for pharmaceutical assistance programs and
33 pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards.

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35 Section 3. [*Application Forms.*] In addition to the responsibilities set forth in Section
36 2 of this Act, the [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the Department for the
37 Aging] shall encourage pharmaceutical manufacturers to include application forms for
38 pharmaceutical discount purchasing card programs on their respective websites in a format
39 capable of being downloaded and printed by consumers. When practicable, the website
40 maintained by the [Department for the Aging] shall include direct links to such forms.

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42 Section 4. [*Feasibility and Standards for Developing a Single Application Form.*]

43 A. The [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the Department for the
44 Aging] shall report to the [Governor] and [General Assembly] by [October 30, 2004], on the
45 feasibility of developing a single application form for residents of this state to use to seek
46 eligibility for the [nearly 50] pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical
47 discount purchasing cards.

48 B. In determining feasibility, the [Commissioners] shall obtain copies of the
49 application forms used by such pharmaceutical assistance programs and pharmaceutical
50 discount purchasing cards in this state. [Commissioners] should review and analyze such
51 forms, and their analysis should include but not be limited to:

52 (1) compiling a list of the various information required to complete such
53 application forms;

54 (2) identifying common elements; and

55 (3) analyzing the forms for readability and simplicity.

56 B. Upon completion of this analysis, the [Commissioners] shall assess the feasibility
57 of designing a single, concise application form that is logically formatted, written in clear
58 and easily comprehensible language, and covers any and all data that may be required to
59 obtain eligibility for any such pharmaceutical assistance program or pharmaceutical discount
60 purchasing card.

61 C. To assist them in completing the responsibilities set forth in subsections A and B
62 of this section, the [Commissioners] may appoint an advisory task force of stakeholders.

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64 Section 5. [*Severability.*] [Insert severability clause.]

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Section 6. [*Repealer.*] [Insert repealer clause.]

Section 7. [*Effective Date.*] [Insert effective date.]