

Relating to Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs and Pharmaceutical Discount Purchasing Cards

This Act directs 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 Pharmaceutical
2 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 to
6 the [Department for the Aging’s] website and its affiliated sites pertaining to pharmaceutical
7 assistance programs and pharmaceutical discount purchasing cards. The [Commissioner of the
8 Department for the Aging] shall cooperate with the [Commissioner of Health] by ensuring that
9 such information is available on the [department for the Aging’s] website.

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

15 C. The [Commissioner of Health and the Commissioner of the Department for the Aging]
16 shall coordinate the dissemination of information to the public regarding any pharmaceutical
17 discount purchasing card programs while maintaining a neutral posture regarding such programs.
18 In addition, with such funds as may be made available, the [Commissioner of Health and the

19 Commissioner of the Department for the Aging] shall disseminate information to the public
20 concerning recent congressional actions relating to pharmaceutical benefits to be provided under
21 the Medicare program and how such benefits may help senior citizens with the costs of
22 pharmaceutical benefits.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

52 (2) identifying common elements; and

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

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

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

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

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

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