



## ***Division of Behavioral Health Services***

### *Division of Compliance*

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**TO:** RBHA and TRBHA CEOs

**FROM:** Cory Nelson  
Deputy Director

Margaret McLaughlin  
Branch Chief of Compliance

**SUBJECT:** **POLICY CLARIFICATION: Serious Mental Illness (SMI) Eligibility Determination for inmates in the Department of Corrections (DOC)**

**DATE:** April 11, 2014

This memorandum is intended to clarify the responsibilities of Tribal and Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (T/RBHAs) and T/RBHA providers in meeting the Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services' (ADHS/DBHS) expectations regarding requirements in the following ADHS/DBHS Policy and Procedures Manual Section (see <http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/policy/index.php>):

- *SMI Eligibility Determination*

An SMI eligibility designation/determination is done for purposes of determining eligibility for community-based behavioral health services. The Arizona Department of Health Services recognizes the importance of evaluating and determining the SMI eligibility for inmates in the Department of Corrections (DOC) with impending release dates in order to appropriately coordinate care between the DOC and the community based behavioral health system. As such, this policy clarification memorandum clarifies ADHS' expectations to permit inmates of DOC pending release within 6 months, who have been screened or appear to meet the diagnostic and functional criteria, to be referred for an SMI eligibility evaluation and determination. Inmates of DOC whose release date exceeds 6 months are not eligible to be referred for an SMI eligibility evaluation and determination.

The expectations outlined in this policy clarification memorandum are effective immediately. ADHS will incorporate this requirement in the next revision of the ADHS/DBHS Policy and Procedures Manual. T/RBHAs must update the T/RBHA editions of the Provider Manual.

Questions regarding this clarification may be directed to the ADHS/DBHS Policy Office at (602) 364-4656.