

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 00304**

---

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESENTED BY:

***Ronald Mariano***

\_\_\_\_\_

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to define the use of observation services.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PETITION OF:

NAME:

*Ronald Mariano*

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

*3rd Norfolk*

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 00304

By Mr. Ronald Mariano of Quincy, petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 00304) of Ronald Mariano relative to clinically appropriate ongoing short term treatment, assessment and reassessment health care observation services coverage and assistance. Joint Committee on Financial Services.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

An Act to define the use of observation services.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 8 of Chapter 118E of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2008 Official  
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the definition of “Medical benefits” the following  
3 new definition:

4 “Observation Services”, a defined set of clinically appropriate healthcare services which include  
5 ongoing short term treatment, assessment, reassessment, furnished while a decision is being  
6 made regarding whether recipients of medical assistance will require further treatment as hospital  
7 inpatients or whether they are able to be discharged from the hospital.

8 SECTION 2. Section 12 of chapter 118E of the General Laws, as so appearing, is further  
9 amended by inserting at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

10 The division and its contractors shall classify a medical assistance recipient as requiring or  
11 receiving observation services based on the medical judgment of the treating healthcare provider  
12 after due consideration of the recipient's presenting signs and symptoms. The recipient shall be  
13 deemed as meeting observation status if the treating healthcare provider determines that the  
14 recipient's diagnosis and treatment course remains unclear, or requires short-term monitoring  
15 and diagnostic assessment by clinical staff. For services extending beyond 24 hours in duration,  
16 should the recipient require active treatment of his condition, the recipient shall be deemed  
17 admitted to the facility as an inpatient; provided however, that the treating healthcare provider  
18 may authorize observation status for services provided beyond 24 hours based on the need for  
19 continued short-term monitoring and diagnostic assessment. The division and its contractors  
20 shall not retroactively reclassify the recipient from an approved inpatient authorization to  
21 observation, for either a portion or the entire stay, after the determination by the treating  
22 healthcare provider and authorization by the division that the recipient shall be admitted as an  
23 inpatient.

24 SECTION 3. Section 1 of chapter 176O of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby  
25 amended by inserting after the definition of "network" the following new definition:

26 "Observation Services", a defined set of clinically appropriate services which include ongoing  
27 short term treatment, assessment, reassessment, that are furnished while a decision is being made  
28 regarding whether the insured will require further treatment as hospital inpatients or whether  
29 they are able to be discharged from the hospital.

30 SECTION 4. Section 12 of chapter 176O, as so appearing, is further amended by inserting the  
31 following new subsection (f):

32 (f) The carrier and its contractors shall classify an insured as requiring or receiving observation  
33 services based on the medical judgment of the treating healthcare provider after due  
34 consideration of the insured's presenting signs and symptoms. The insured shall be deemed as  
35 meeting observation status if the treating healthcare provider determines that the insured's  
36 diagnosis and treatment course remains unclear, or requires short-term monitoring and diagnostic  
37 assessment by clinical staff. For services extending beyond 24 hours in duration, should the  
38 insured require active treatment of his condition, the insured shall be deemed admitted to the  
39 facility as an inpatient; provided however, that the treating healthcare provider may authorize  
40 observation status for services provided beyond 24 hours based on the need for continued short-  
41 term monitoring and diagnostic assessment. The carrier and its contractors shall not retroactively  
42 reclassify the insured from an approved inpatient authorization to observation, for either a  
43 portion or the entire stay, after the determination by the treating healthcare provider and  
44 authorization by the insurer that the insured shall be admitted as an inpatient.

45 SECTION 5. The Division of Insurance and the Office of Medicaid shall promulgate regulations  
46 implementing the provisions of this Act no later than 90 days following the effective date. The  
47 regulations as set forth, shall be effective in contracts between carriers, the Office of Medicaid,  
48 and their contractors, with health care providers that are entered into, renewed, or amended on or  
49 after the effective date of this Act.