

NC Division of Services for the Blind Policies and Procedures Independent Living Older Blind

Case Closure

Current effective date: 09/14/17

Revision history: n/a

Closure Statuses

Cases may be closed in the following statuses:

- 08 closure prior to eligibility determination or when determined ineligible
- 26 successful closure - rehabilitated
- 28 unsuccessful closure after development of service plan
- 30 unsuccessful closure after determined eligible but services not yet implemented

Available closure statuses are contingent upon the status the case is currently in. Cases in the status in the left column may be closed in a status in the corresponding right column.

Currently in Status	May Close in Status
00	08
02	08
10	30
12	28
18	26 or 28

Closure Documentation and Decision-Making Guidelines:

The counselor is responsible for documenting, as applicable:

- The reason for closure and the opportunities provided to the consumer for input into the closure decision
- That the consumer was informed of her/his right to (re)apply for services
- That the applicant/consumer was informed of her/his rights and how to contact the Client Assistance Program (for cases in status 02 or later)
- That the applicant was informed in writing of the case closure (for cases in status 02 or later)
- That the applicable ILR/ILOB Unsuccessful/Successful Closure Amendment was completed (for cases closed in status 26 or status 28)

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Individuals who experience a long-term inability to participate with their rehabilitation program may have their cases closed in accordance with the guidelines below. Causes of a long-term inability to participate may include not participating due to other significant health concerns, admission to hospitals or rehabilitation programs, imprisonment, family concerns or chronically declining opportunities for participating in independent living skills training for unknown reasons.

When closing cases due to the consumer declining to continue with services, counselors need to take into consideration factors in the consumer's life which may impact his/her participation with services. New or worsening health problems and family member health concerns may temporarily impact an individual's ability to participate in a rehabilitation program. Additionally, issues related to adjusting to vision loss may result in a reluctance to fully participate in services. The counselor is expected to utilize techniques to motivate consumers to participate in their rehabilitation program prior to following closure procedures which result in unsuccessful closure and to document the attempts to motivate consumers in the case file.

When deciding to close a case on a consumer who is experiencing a long-term hospitalization and/or in-patient rehabilitation program, the counselor should take additional factors into consideration other than length of stay in a facility. Other factors include the prognosis for recovery, the amount of time until the consumer is expected to be able to resume participation in the rehabilitation program and the consumer's stated interest in resuming their rehab program when able to do so.

Individuals who have asked for their cases to be held open but have declined to participate in services, despite being offered opportunities to participate in services on numerous occasions, may have their cases closed after a period of 12 months of declining to participate in services. In these situations, individuals must have been offered a minimum of four opportunities for appointments to engage in activities related to achieving their planned goals. Individuals who have declined to participate in services for a period of 24 months shall always have their cases closed. Individuals whose cases are closed have the right to reapply for services.

When a consumer cannot be located, the counselor should first check the Social Security Information Form in the case management system for information on consumer status. If this information shows that the consumer is deceased or has moved out of state, the case will be closed. A Case Note referencing applicable information from the Social Security Information Form is needed.

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When closing due to inability to locate a referral, applicant or consumer for other reasons, the counselor must make a reasonable number of documented attempts to contact the applicant (as described below) or, if appropriate, the applicant's representative, to encourage the applicant's participation. Prior to closing an applicant or consumer due to an inability to locate, the following criteria needs to be met:

- Documentation of attempted contact after no response from the client over the course of at least 90 days.
- A minimum of three phone calls to client/representative (phone calls should be made at least two weeks apart to allow the consumer time to respond).
- Gather information from other Division staff that may have had contact with the consumer.
- If there is no response to phone calls, a letter should be sent requesting a response in the client's preferred format.
- For consumer's who are able to access email, the counselor should send an email with "read receipt" selected.
- The counselor may elect to go to the client's last known address and leave a note/letter.
- The counselor may elect to send a letter by certified mail.

Status 08: Closure from Status 00 Prior to Determination of Eligibility

Cases may be closed in status 08 from status 00 (prior to the determination of eligibility) when the individual has moved outside of NC, died, cannot be located or has declined services. All closure documentation and decision-making guidelines should be followed.

Status 08: Closure When Determined Ineligible

Cases may be closed in status 08 from status 02 when the individual has moved outside of NC, died, cannot be located, has declined services or was found ineligible for services. All closure documentation and decision-making guidelines should be followed.

See the policy on "Eligibility" for more information.

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Status 26: Successful Closure/Rehabilitated

Cases may be closed in status 26 from status 18 when:

- The individual and the ILRC consider the outcome to be satisfactory and agree that the individual is functioning more independently
- The provision of ILOB services has contributed to the achievement of the stated goals
- Progress towards all planned goals has been documented in the case file.
- The individual has been provided an opportunity to exercise informed choice in learning about ILOB outcome options and selecting the ILOB goals.
- A completed ILR/ILOB Successful Closure Amendment is in the case file. The closure amendment should be signed by the consumer and counselor, describe the basis on which an individual has been determined to have achieved his or her independent living goals and contain information on the consumer's rights as well as Client Assistance Program contact information. It is the counselor's responsibility to obtain the individual's signature on the ILR/ILOB Successful Closure Amendment at the time of case closure.

When all planned services have been provided but the consumer cannot be located to sign the closure amendment, the case may be closed in Status 26 only if all of the below criteria have been met. This option should occur **in rare situations**. Prior to pursuing this option, the counselor must first check the Social Security Information Form in the case management system for information on consumer status. If this information shows that the consumer is deceased the case must be closed in status 28, regardless of the amount of services that were provided. A Case Note referencing applicable information from the Social Security Information Form is needed.

The counselor must have made a reasonable number of documented attempts (as described below) to contact the applicant or, if appropriate, the applicant's representative. Prior to closing a consumer in status 26 without a signed closure form, the following criteria must be met:

- The provision of ILOB services must have contributed to the achievement of the stated goals and this must be clearly documented in the case file.
- The individual and the ILRC will have previously agreed that the individual is functioning more independently as a result of receiving ILOB services.
- The individual was informed of service choices throughout the case and was informed of their rights and contact information for the Client Assistance Program.

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- There must be documentation of attempts to contact the consumer over the course of at least 90 days.
- A minimum of three phone calls to client/representative (phone calls should be made at least two weeks apart to allow the consumer time to respond) must have been made and documented.
- Information from other Division staff that may have had contact with the consumer should have been gathered.
- If there was no response to phone calls, a letter should have been sent requesting a response in the client's preferred format.
- For consumers who are able to access email, the counselor should send an email with "read receipt" selected.
- The counselor may elect to go to the client's last known address and leave a note/letter.
- The counselor may elect to send a letter by certified mail.
- In the rare circumstances when it is needed, the ILRC's supervisor should review and approve the closure prior to closing in status 26 when the consumer cannot sign the closure amendment.

Status 28: Unsuccessful Closure After Development of Service Plan

Cases may be closed in status 28 from status 12 or status 18 when the individual has moved outside of NC, has died, cannot be located, has declined services or is unable to continue participating in services to achieve her/his goals.

Cases closed in status 28 should contain a completed ILR/ILOB Unsuccessful Closure Amendment in all applicable cases. The ILR/ILOB Closure Amendment should be signed by the consumer and counselor, should describe the reason for service discontinuation and provide information on the consumer's rights as well as Client Assistance Program contact information. It is the counselor's responsibility to obtain the individual's signature on the ILR/ILOB Unsuccessful Closure Amendment.

Neither a consumer nor consumer representative signature is required on the closure amendment when the individual is no longer in NC or is deceased. A Case Note referencing applicable information from the Social Security Information Form is needed.

In rare instances, the case may be closed in status 28 without a consumer signature on the closure amendment when the consumer refuses to sign the closure amendment, cannot be located or when the individual's medical condition is rapidly progressive or terminal.

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However, documentation is needed to justify the lack of consumer or consumer representative signature. This documentation should include:

- Documentation of the reason for closure and the opportunities provided to the consumer for input into the closure decision
- Documentation that the applicant/consumer was informed, if possible, of her/his rights and of Client Assistance Program contact information. When the individual cannot be located this information should be mailed to the most recent known address.
- Documentation that the consumer was informed, if possible, of her/his right to (re)apply for services.
- The ILRC's supervisor should review and approve the closure prior to closing in status 28 when the consumer has not sign the closure amendment.

Status 30: Closed after determined eligible, but plan not yet developed

Cases may be closed in status 30 from status 10 when the individual has moved outside of NC, has died, cannot be located or has declined services. An individual closed in status 30 will have been declared eligible for ILOB services, but is withdrawing or unable to participate with service prior to a plan for services being developed. All closure documentation and decision-making guidelines should be followed.

Status 32: Post-Closure Services

See "Case Statuses" policy for more information