



TEXAS
Department of Assistive
and Rehabilitative Services

Mary Wolfe
Assistant Commissioner
Disability Determination Services

Terrell I. Murphy
Commissioner

February 22, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is following up on and confirming our telephone discussion last week regarding the use of extenders. It has come to the attention of the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Disability Determination Services (DARS DDS) that some of the psychologists who perform consultative examinations across the state are utilizing interns or extenders to conduct the entire consultative examination including the mental status exam (MSE). Per federal regulations pertaining to "Acceptable Medical Sources" for establishing a medically determinable impairment, the DDS cannot accept reports from consultative examinations that were performed in their entirety by an intern or extender.

Effective March 1, 2010, the MSE portion of all psychological exams must be performed by a licensed psychologist, not an extender or intern. It is not sufficient for the psychologist to review and sign the reports without personally meeting and evaluating the claimants. Extenders may still be utilized to take claimant histories and administer standardized testing. In addition, when the services of an extender are utilized, they must sign the reports along with the psychologist.

On March 1, 2010, we will assume you are in full compliance. If you have any questions, please contact me at anne.panko@ssa.gov or (512) 437-8645. Thank you for your ongoing participation in the Social Security Disability program and your interest in serving the citizens of Texas.

Sincerely,

Anne Panko, Directorate Manager
Medical Relations

Partnerships for Independence
Disability Determination Services Division
Post Office Box 149198
Austin, Texas 78714-9198