

Shasta Transition

Over the last few months, the Tribe has been working to transition the administration of its health care plans for both Tribal Members and employees away from Shasta Administrative Services and over to our new administrator, Forest County Potawatomi. While we are happy to report that the transition is still progressing as planned, the situation at Shasta has slowly deteriorated and we are actively looking to find ways to support Shasta in its efforts to keep processing claims as it winds down.

As a precaution and to help minimize claims processing issues, we are asking Tribal Members and Employee plan members to consider postponing any elective and non-essential services until after July 1, 2024. This will help smooth the transition until we begin service with our new administrator. We are working diligently to support the transition in the best way we can and understand that many of you will have questions and concerns. Please be patient with us and with staff as we navigate this challenging situation. We will continue to provide updates as they become available.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Transition

Q: Will this impact my care?

A: We don't anticipate this affecting anyone's care. However, if your provider has any problems they should email question@shastatpa.com.

Q: Do I need to look for a new doctor or provider?

A: No. At this time, we don't foresee a change in coverage. Our goal is to make this transition as seamless possible.

Q: How do I get a preauthorization done?

A: At this time, please leave a message at 541-504-2777 or email question@shastatpa.com.

Q: What should I do if I'm having trouble with one of my claims?

A:

- Tribal Members: Tribal Members wishing to speak to someone at the Tribe may contact Melody Baker at 503-879-2011, Kayla Leno at 503-879-1406, Erica Mercier at 503-879-2080, Barbara Steere at 503-879-2487 or Lisa Zappia at 503-879-2197 in the Clinic's Business Office. Those wishing to speak to someone at Shasta should email question@shastapa.com.
- Employees: Employees having trouble with a claim should contact Tammy Gould in the Tribe's Human Resources Department. She can be reached at tammy.gould@grandronde.org. Those wishing to speak with someone at Shasta should email question@shastapa.com.

Q: What should I do when I get a past due notice from my provider?

A:

- Tribal Members: Tribal members can bring past due notices to the Business Office staff, email them to skookum@grandronde.org or leave them at Patient Registration at the Grand Ronde Clinic.
- Employees: Employees who receive a past due notice from their provider should scan and email their notices to Tammy Gould in Human Resources. She can be emailed at tammy.gould@grandronde.org.

Q: Why is the Tribe transitioning away from Shasta?

A: In 2023, we heard from several members and employees that their medical claims were not being processed. This was the result of a problematic software conversion Shasta made which caused them to fall behind. As a result, some of our employees and members report that they had lost their doctors or had been sent to collections. In the end, we felt that this decision was one that is in everyone's best interest. We want to have those under our plans served to the best of our ability and superior service is something we are looking for in a new TPA.

Q: Is this for everyone?

A: Yes. The new TPA will be taking over all of the Tribe's plans. The Tribe has plans for both Tribal members and employees. Skookum is the Tribal member plan for those in and out of the area. The Tribe also has an employee plan for Tribal government, Grand Ronde Fuel and Spirit Mountain Casino employees.

Q: When will the transition happen?

A: We are still working on specific details with the new TPA but we are hoping to have the transition completed by July 1, 2024.

Q: What can we expect?

A: As with any transition, there may be bumps along the way, but our staff is working diligently to make the transition as smooth as possible. Tribal members and employees can at least expect to get new Health Insurance cards when we transition to the new TPA.

Shasta

Q: Is the Tribe done with Shasta now?

A: No, the Tribe is still involved with Shasta since we have more than 7,000 lives covered by our plans and we rely on TPA services to help administer claims. The Tribe is interested in the successful administration of claims under our plans and will be involved until we have transitioned to a new TPA. It is not known at this time whether additional contributions to Upqwena will be needed for additional loans to Shasta.

Q: Is Shasta closing?

A: Yes. They have sent notice to all their clients stating that they will close.

Q: What happens to our ownership when Shasta closes?

A: If the company liquidates, our 51% ownership goes away.

Q: Did we know this was coming?

A: The Tribe was hopeful that Shasta would be sold to an interested buyer. However, when that buyer withdrew, we realized the need to take this other approach.

Q: Did the other owner of Shasta make the financial investments like the Tribe did?

A: No. The only financial contributions have come from the Tribe.

Q: How many loans have been made to Shasta?

A: The Tribe owns Upqwena LLC for the purpose of funding small business enterprises. The Tribe has made several capital contributions to Upqwena which has then made loans to Shasta. To date, the LLC has provided almost \$ 2 million to Shasta to help with ongoing operational expenses in an effort to ensure claims are being processed under the Tribe's plans.

Q: Will the Tribe get its money back if Shasta closes?

A: It is unlikely that the Tribe will get all its money back. The Tribe has made contributions to Upqwena to be loaned to Shasta in an effort to keep operations going and claims processing while the Tribe transitions its plans. We want our plan participants' claims processed and paid any and all contributions have been made in an effort to minimize processing delays and plan disruption.

Q: We know Shasta was behind on processing claims, why did this happen?

A: Shasta acquired a new software program, and that transition did not go as smooth as planned; as a result, it created a back log of claims that weren't being timely processed.

Q: Have they caught up on claims?

A: They have caught up on claims for the most part and most of their software issues have been resolved. However, the company has lost clients and is in financial hardship. They have largely relied on loans from Upqwena to fund operational expenses it cannot cover.