



## **MEPD and TW Bulletin 23-08**

**Date:** March 31, 2023

**To:** Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff  
Program Managers  
Regional Directors  
Regional Attorneys  
Hearings Officers

**From:** Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy  
State Office 2115

**Subject:** **1. COVID-19 Update: Change of Address**  
**2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail**

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The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

## 1. COVID-19 Update: Change of Address

### Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency (PHE) exists nationwide due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Additionally, on March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott also declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

H.R. 6201 (Families First Coronavirus Response Act), required Medicaid coverage to be maintained for most people active or certified for Medicaid as of or after March 18, 2020, until the end of the PHE.

HHSC received federal approval to implement a **temporary process** while Medicaid coverage is being maintained due to the COVID-19 PHE and for the duration of the state's 12 month unwinding period. HHSC can now to accept a change of address without requiring additional verification from the household when the information is received from the household's managed care organization (MCO) or has been identified through the United States Postal Service (USPS), or the National Change of Address (NCOA) database.

On January 11, 2023, HHSC received additional federal approval to adjust procedures when shelter expense information is not included with reported address changes.

This bulletin updates staff procedures. With the exception of the policy and processes listed below, staff must continue to follow policy and processes previously provided in [MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-18, 1. COVID-19 Update: Change of Address During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) and the PHE Unwinding Period](#), released on November 08, 2022.

### Current COVID-19 Policy

#### [SNAP](#)

After updating the physical address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify changes in shelter expenses. [TWH B-623 How to Report](#).

### New COVID-19 Policy

#### [SNAP](#)

The requirement for SNAP households to return shelter expense information when a verified change of address is received by HHSC is waived. Staff must send a notice

to SNAP households requesting updated shelter expenses when an address change is reported.

- If the household responds, update the shelter expense information.
- If the household does not respond, make no changes to shelter expenses until the next redetermination.

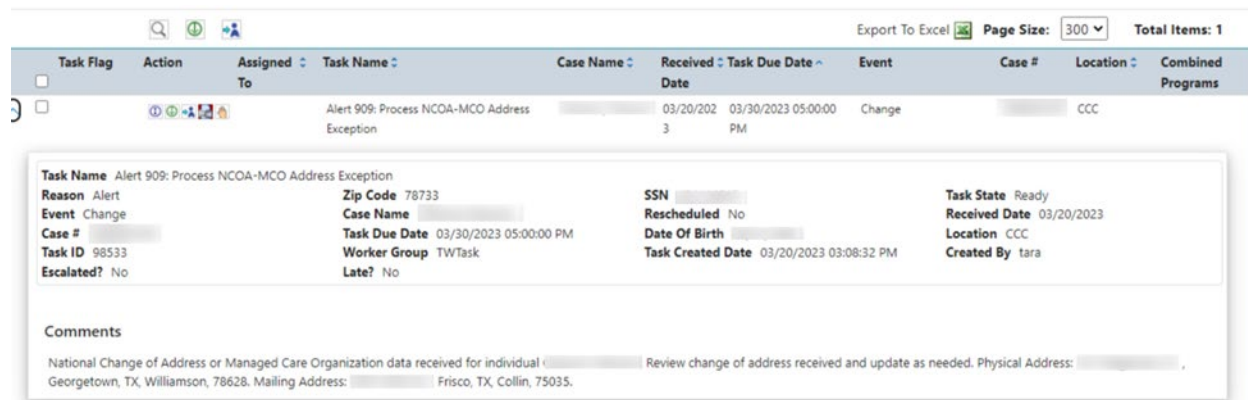
Form H0603, Shelter Cost Notice, was created to notify recipients that they can provide shelter expenses updates for SNAP households. This notice is required to be sent to households who provide an updated address and do not provide shelter expenses. This form will be retired when the temporary process ends.

**Note:** Staff are still required to follow normal policy and procedures and address shelter expenses at application and redetermination.

**New Staff Procedures**

Staff must manually process address changes until automation changes are implemented on April 22, 2023. If an exception is generated for a SNAP EDG once automation changes are implemented, staff must also manually process the change of address.

Staff must review the Task List Manager (TLM) task Comments section for the address and update in TIERS as needed.



**TLM Alert Name/Number:** Alert 909: Process NCOA-MCO Address Exception

**TLM Task Comments Language:**

National Change of Address or Managed Care Organization data received for individual (Name). Review change of address received and update as needed.  
 <New Physical Address>/<New Mailing Address>

### Cases with Active SNAP

Update the physical, mailing and issuance addresses, as needed, and update changes in shelter expenses if provided. Access Data Collection from Left Nav and pull the case in Change Action or its current Case Mode:

- a. Navigate to **Individual Information** → **Household Address**:
  - i. Click *Edit* icon(s) for *Mailing* and *Physical* address record(s).
  - ii. Update *Effective Begin Dates* using *Two Minute Tip: Effective Begin Date (EBD) When Client Moves*.
  - iii. Update other dates using the *What Date is Used? Job Aid*.
  - iv. Update *Mailing* address accordingly and complete LUW.
  - v. Update *Physical* address, confirm *County name* field and complete LUW.
- b. Navigate to **Wrap Up** → **Issuance Address**:
  - i. Update *Issuance* address, if needed and record(s) as appropriate and complete LUW.
- c. Send out Shelter Cost Notice when shelter costs are not provided, navigate to **Correspondence** → **Generate Manual Correspondence**:
  - i. Enter Case Number and click Search.
  - ii. Select *Form H0603-Shelter Cost Notice*.
  - iii. Mark the radio button next to Head of Household and click Preview.
  - iv. Click *Update* and complete LUW.
- d. Run eligibility and sustain case.
- e. Document in **CADS** that action was taken on Alert 909, address was updated, and a notice was sent for shelter expenses.
- f. Complete TLM task(s).
- g. Record the outcome in EWMS as *Complete*.

**Note:** If USPS returns the Form H0603 or other correspondence, follow steps for returned mail policy in item #2, COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail, of this bulletin.

### Cases with no Active SNAP or HTW

Update the physical, and mailing addresses, as needed. Access Data Collection from Left Nav and pull the case in Change Action or its current Case Mode:

- a. Navigate to **Individual Information** → **Household Address**:
  - i. Click *Edit* icon(s) for *Mailing* and *Physical* address record(s).

- ii. Update *Effective Begin Dates* using *Two Minute Tip: Effective Begin Date (EBD) When Client Moves*.
  - iii. Update other dates using the *What Date is Used? Job Aid*.
  - iv. Update *Mailing* address accordingly and complete LUW.
  - v. Update Physical address, confirm County name field and complete LUW.
- b. Navigate to **Wrap Up** → **Issuance Address**:
- i. Update *Issuance* address, if needed record(s) as appropriate and complete LUW.
  - c. Run eligibility and sustain case.
  - d. Document in CADS that action was taken in Alert 909 and address was updated.
  - e. Update TLM task(s).
  - f. Record the outcome in EWMS as *Complete*.

**Note:** Reported out-of-state address changes follow regular change policy. Households must provide verification of Texas residence. If the household does not provide verification or provide verification that shows they no longer reside in Texas, deny the case.

## Automation

### [All Programs except HTW](#)

Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) will automatically update the mailing address when a change of address is received from an MCO, or information has been identified through USPS, or the NCOA database. It will also add the case comment below on the case record, and autogenerate Form H0603 if the case contains a SNAP EDG.

*National Change of Address or Managed Care Organization data received for individual (Name). Review change of address received and update as needed. <New Physical>/<Mailing Address>*

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 114.2 on April 22, 2023.

## Correspondence

Form H0603, Shelter Expense Notice, was created to verify shelter expenses updates for SNAP households. The form will be retired when the temporary process ends.

**Handbook**

Handbook updates are not required.

**Training**

Training titled R114.2 MCO and NCOA Address Update Exception will be available in PALMS on Thursday, April 13, 2023.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin. Staff will be notified when the policy no longer applies.

## 2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail

### Background

HHSC received federal approval to implement a **temporary process** while Medicaid coverage is being maintained due to the COVID-19 PHE and for the duration of the state's 12 month unwinding period. HHSC can now accept in-state returned mail address updates without requiring additional verification from the household.

H.R. 2617 (the Consolidated Appropriations Act, (CAA), 2023), established additional conditions under the FFCRA that HHSC must comply with prior to terminating eligibility based on returned mail for Medicaid recipients.

This bulletin replaces information previously provided on [MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-18, 2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) and the PHE Unwinding Period](#), released on November 08, 2022.

### Current Policy

#### All Programs except HTW and SNAP

If the returned mail indicates a new in-state address, staff update the mailing and physical address without requiring additional verification from the household.

If there is no forwarding address or the returned mail indicates a new out-of-state address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence. [TWH B-638](#), Returned Mail, [MEPDH C-8000](#), Responsibility to Provide Information and Report Changes, and [MEPDH E-8500](#), Change of Permanent Living Arrangement.

#### HTW

The Healthy Texas Women (HTW) program will not be included in this temporary policy change due to confidentiality concerns. Staff must follow current policy and procedures when returned mail is received for HTW recipients. TWH [B-638 Returned Mail](#)

#### MEPD

After updating the physical address, staff must verify support and maintenance and living arrangement at the next redetermination. [MEDPH E-8000](#), Support and Maintenance

#### SNAP

If the returned mail indicates a new or forwarding in-state address, staff update the mailing and physical address and follow current policy to verify shelter expenses. Follow steps in item #1, [MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-18, 1. Change of Address During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) and the PHE Unwinding Period](#).

If the returned mail indicates a forwarding out-of-state address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence. [TWH B-638](#) Returned Mail.

#### *SR1 and SR2 Households*

If there is no forwarding address, staff must verify the physical address and shelter expenses at the next redetermination.

#### *SR3 Households*

If there is no forwarding address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence and shelter expenses.

**Note:** The SNAP SR household designation can be identified in the **Eligibility Summary** after clicking on the SNAP EDG. As a reminder:

- SR 1 households meet the SR criteria described in [TWH A-2350](#), Streamlined Reporting Households and have income below 130 percent Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- SR 2 households meet the SR criteria described in TWH A-2350 and have income above 130 percent FPL.
- SR 3 households do not meet the SR criteria in TWH A-2350.

### **New COVID-19 Policy**

#### *Medical Programs except HTW*

Based on new federal guidance, HHSC is required to attempt to contact Medicaid recipients prior to terminating coverage whenever mail is returned to the agency in response to a redetermination of eligibility. Staff must follow the below steps for Returned Mail in addition to the current policy and processes outlined in the [Change and Alert Guide surrounding a Change for Returned Mail](#).

### **Staff Procedures**

#### *Incomplete Information*

When returned mail is received, staff must review the case record and take appropriate action to obtain the household's new address and address any changes in shelter expenses.

Step 1: If the address listed on the original mailing contains an error or is missing information, such as an apartment number, staff must correct the address.

Step 2: Manually resend the returned mail to the corrected address.

- i. Reprint the returned mail notice.
- ii. Left Navigate to **Correspondence** - *View History Correspondence*:
  - Case or Application radio button: Select the Case radio button.



- Case or Application #: *Print Begin Date*: Enter the date listed on the returned mail correspondence.
- *Print End Date*: Enter today's date.
- Document Title—select the exact document from the dropdown or use the default of All.
- Click Search.

**Search Results**

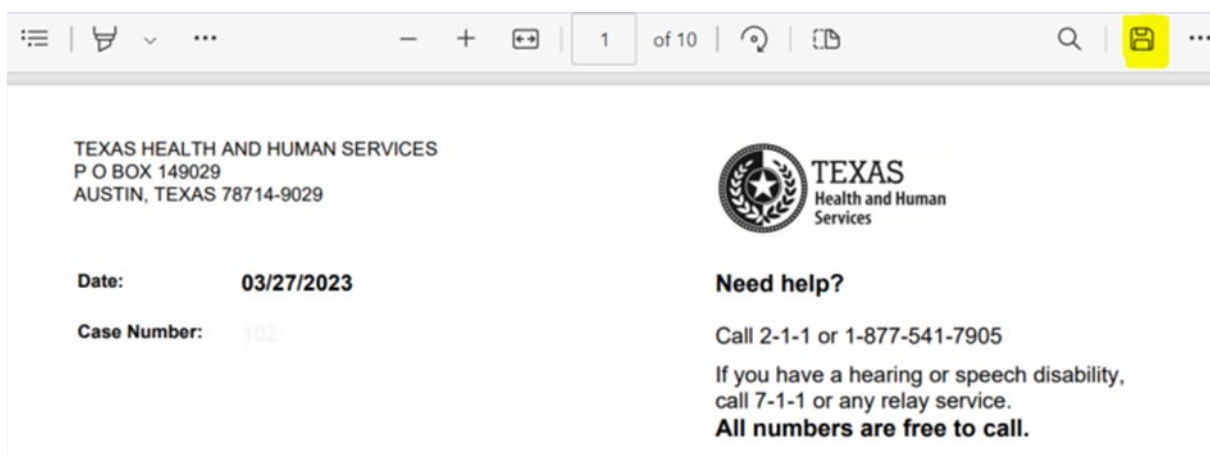
Select	Correspondence ID	Document Description	Print Date	Print Type	Print Mode
<input type="radio"/>		TF0001 - Notice of Case Action	03/27/2023	Original	Batch

- Select: Select the radio button of the correct document.
- Click Next.

**History Correspondence Detail ?**

History Correspondence Detail			
<b>ID Type:</b>	Case	<b>Date Requested:</b>	03/27/2023
<b>Case or Application #:</b>		<b>User ID:</b>	
<b>Print Mode:</b>	Batch	<b>Print Type:</b>	Original
<b>Recipients:</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>		

- Click *Generate Form*.
- View the document. Use the scroll bars to scroll through the pages.



- iii. Save As PDF- <Household Last Name-last 4 digits of Case number>
- iv. Email- [Designated staff in your local office. The designated team member will be determined by your Regional Director.](#)
- v. **Subject line** – Returned Mail- Forward – Case number (last 4)
  - CC- Your Supervisor
- vi. **Body** – “Please forward returned mail for (Case Name), (Case #), by (TIERS ID).”
  - Include the new forwarding address.

Step 3: Staff must document the action taken on the case on TIERS case comments.

- vii. Document in CADS: “Following MEPD and TW Bulletin #23-08; resending returned mail to household.”

#### Returned Mail with a Forwarding Address

If the returned mail indicates a new in-state address.

- Step 1: Staff must first conduct a cold call to attempt to confirm the address.
- If the cold call is successful or unsuccessful, staff must document the attempt on TIERS case comments.

Step 2: Update the mailing and physical address accordingly.

Step 3: Manually resend returned mail to the forwarding address. **See steps above.**

#### Returned Mail with no Forwarding Address

If there is no forwarding address or the returned mail indicates a new out-of-state address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence.

#### HTW

Staff must continue to follow current policy and procedures when returned mail is received for HTW recipients.

#### MEPD

Staff must follow the new COVID-19 policy. After updating the physical address, staff must verify support and maintenance and living arrangement at the next redetermination.

#### SNAP

If the returned mail indicates a new or forwarding in-state address, staff update the mailing and physical address and follow the new COVID-19 Policy and Procedures for "Cases with Active SNAP" in this bulletin.

**Note:** If the returned mail indicates a forwarding out-of-state address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence.

### **Automation**

#### All Programs except HTW

Before correspondence is mailed out by the print vendor, case address information will be compared against the NCOA database to determine if there is a forwarding address. If there is, correspondence will be forwarded to the NCOA forwarding address on file and the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) will update the address for that case in TIERS.

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 114.2 on April 22, 2023

### **Correspondence**

Correspondence changes are not required.

### **Handbook**

Handbook updates are not required.

### **Training**

Training is not required.

### **Effective Date**

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin. Staff will be notified when the policy no longer applies.