



MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-08

Date: May 09, 2022

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: Processing a “Move Out of Household”
Change for Medicaid Recipients**
2. COVID-19 Update: Medicaid Recipients Who Are Incarcerated
**3. COVID-19 Update: Voluntary Withdrawal from Medicaid
During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency**

The information in this bulletin provides temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Staff will be notified when the COVID-19 policy and clarifications should no longer be used for processing case actions and determining eligibility. 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 \(TWH\)](http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

1. Processing a “Move out of Household” Change for Medicaid Recipients

Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency 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. HHSC is providing the following temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

COVID-19 Current Policy

[Medical Programs](#)

HR 6201 (Families First Coronavirus Response Act) requires states to maintain Medicaid coverage for most people active or certified for Medicaid as of or after March 18, 2020.

Do not deny a person receiving Medicaid as of March 18, 2020 unless the person:

- Voluntarily withdraws;
- Dies;
- Moves out of state; or
- Is not considered validly enrolled due to being certified in error at application or HHSC’s OIG has determined the person fraudulently received Medicaid and coverage should be denied.

Moving out of the household is not a valid reason to deny a recipient’s Medicaid during the COVID-19 public health emergency unless the person moved out of state.

Previous instructions for processing a case when a person has moved out of the household are included in the “Staff Procedures for Moves Out of Household Exception” in MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 20-13, COVID-19 Policy Updates #8, 1. Update: Processing Case Actions for Medicaid Programs released on May 12, 2020 and MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 20-15, COVID-19 Policy Updates #10, 1. Update: Processing Case Actions for Medicaid Programs released on June 5, 2020.

COVID-19 New Policy

Medical Programs

To ensure Medicaid eligibility is maintained during the COVID-19 public health emergency, staff procedures for when a person has moved out of the household have been updated.

The procedures are listed below.

1. Update the person's Individual Level Address in the Individual Address LUW if a new address is provided when the person leaves the household. A future project will update TIERS to allow correspondence to be sent to the Individual Level Address.
2. Update the date on the Individual Household Status page and select "Out of Household." TIERS will remove the recipient from the household's other benefits (SNAP, TANF or both) and terminate the recipient's Medicaid EDG.
3. Follow normal policy to process the change if the Head of Household reports a change in address or if the Head of Household leaves the household.
4. Add case comments "PSR 899960. Left household." The PSR will only run on cases that have this case comment.
5. Dispose the EDG. A PSR will reopen the person's Medicaid on their original case. Only the person's Medicaid will be reopened. The person will not be added back to the household's SNAP or TANF case.

Reminder: TIERS automatically creates a new case for a Healthy Texas Women (HTW) recipient 18 years old or older, if the recipient is still eligible for HTW. If TIERS does not automatically create a new case, follow the procedures outlined above.

Second Level Review

Staff must request a second level review (SLR) in EWMS for all TW Medicaid and MEPD "moved out of household" changes. Staff who do not work in EWMS should follow their internal SLR procedure. Use the procedures outlined in the EWMS Release Notes for HELP-3 and SLR Orange Track Processes released on December 10, 2020, to request a SLR. The steps are as follows:

- Click the "SLR Referral" button in EWMS to generate the SLR request.
- Select EDG Override on the pop-up message and click submit to send your SLR request.
- When an SLR Reviewer has completed their review, a message will display showing the updated count of requested/received and the task for the current day will display in your personal queue as "Suspended - SLR Response".
 - Click "Resume" to finish any necessary actions.

- Review the response.
 - If “Approved”, complete the TIERS action and TLM and EWMS tasks according to policy and procedures. The SLR process is complete.
 - If “Denied”, update the case in TIERS based on policy and/or guidance from the reviewer. Click “SLR Referral” to re-send the task for review if necessary.

Automation

Automation changes are not required.

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.

2. COVID-19 Update: Medicaid Recipients Who Are Incarcerated

Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency 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. HHSC is providing the following temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

COVID-19 Policy Clarification

Medical Programs

HR 6201 (Families First Coronavirus Response Act) requires states to maintain Medicaid coverage for most people active or certified for Medicaid as of or after March 18, 2020. Do not deny a person receiving Medicaid as of March 18, 2020 unless the person:

- Voluntarily withdraws;
- Dies;
- Moves out of state, or
- Is not considered validly enrolled due to being certified in error at application or HHSC's OIG has determined the person fraudulently received Medicaid and coverage should be denied.

Incarceration is not a valid reason to terminate Medicaid eligibility during the COVID-19 public health emergency. However, Medicaid eligibility may be suspended while the person is incarcerated.

For all Medicaid recipients, except TP 44 recipients incarcerated in a Texas Juvenile Justice (TJJD) or Juvenile Probation Department (JPD) facility, process reports of confinement following normal policy and processes. ([TWH B-510](#), Termination of Medical Coverage for People Confined in a Public Institution and MEPDH, D-3800, People Confined in a Public Institution) TIERS will automatically reinstate the terminated Medicaid EDG back to active status after disposal and add the following case comment: "Medicaid eligibility is being sustained due to COVID-19."

TP 44

For children incarcerated in a secured juvenile facility, Centralized Benefit Services (CBS) staff suspend the child's Medicaid when their incarceration is reported by TJJD or JPD staff. ([TWH B-520](#), Medicaid Suspension) Upon release, the child's Medicaid is reinstated. ([TWH B-530](#), Medicaid Reinstatement) During the COVID-19

public health emergency, if the Medicaid certification period expired while the child was confined, CBS staff must certify the youth for a new certification period upon their release. CBS staff should call in a Help Desk ticket if they are not able to certify the youth for a new certification period upon the youth's release from a TJJD or JPD facility.

Automation

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Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Handbook updates are not required.

Training

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Effective Date

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3. COVID-19 Update: Voluntary Withdrawal from Medicaid During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Background

On January 27, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared that a public health emergency 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. HHSC is providing the following temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

COVID-19 Policy Clarification

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Medicaid recipients can be transferred to another Medicaid eligibility group after a change in circumstances, if they meet the eligibility criteria and the new group provides the same or higher tier of coverage. (MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 20-30, Update: Processing Transfers for Medicaid Programs) Medicaid recipients cannot be transferred to an eligibility group that provides a lower tier of coverage.

If a recipient chooses to voluntarily withdraw from an eligibility group with a higher tier of coverage to enroll in a lower tier of coverage (e.g. HTW or Community Attendant Services), staff must document the recipient's voluntary withdrawal from the higher tier of coverage in case comments. ([MEPDH Q-5000](#), Qualifying Individuals)

Additionally, staff must document the recipient's voluntary withdrawal if they request to withdraw from all medical benefits.

Automation

Automation changes are not required.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Handbook updates are not required.

Training

Training is not required.

Effective Date

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