



## MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-18

**Date:** November 08, 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: Change of Address During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period**  
**2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period**  
**3. Residence Verification Requirements for Former Foster Care Children**

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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 \(TWH\)](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. COVID-19 Update: Change of Address During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period

### 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 (PHE).

HHSC has received federal approval to implement a **temporary process** for the duration of the COVID-19 PHE and the 12-month period following the end of the PHE to accept change of addresses 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.

### Current Policy

#### [All Programs](#)

A change of address reported by someone outside of the household must be verified. ([TWH A-761](#), Verification Sources, and [MEPDH D-3400](#), Change of Address)

#### [SNAP](#)

When a change of address is reported, households are required to report associated changes in shelter costs such as rent and mortgage or utilities. ([TWH B-621](#), What to Report, and [TWH A-1429](#), Shelter Costs)

### COVID-19 Policy

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

When a report of change of address is received from an MCO, or a change of address has been identified through USPS or NCOA database, staff update the mailing and physical in-state address without requiring additional verification from the household.

When a report of change of an out-of-state physical address is received from an MCO or NCOA database, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify residence.

### 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 a change of address is reported.

### MEPD

After updating the physical address, staff must verify support and maintenance and living arrangement at the next redetermination.

### SNAP

After updating the physical address, staff must follow current policy and procedures to verify possible changes in shelter expenses.

## **Staff Procedures**

### Cases with no Active HTW or SNAP

Update the physical, mailing and issuance addresses as needed. Access **Data Collection** from Left Nav and pull the case in *Ongoing 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 record(s) as appropriate and complete LUW.
- c. Document in **Case Comments** and clear task(s).

### Cases with Active SNAP

Update the physical, mailing and issuance address as needed and verify changes in shelter expenses. 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 record(s) as appropriate and complete LUW.
- c. Navigate to **Expenses** → **Shelter Expenses**:
  - i. Click *Edit* icon for applicable *Shelter Expense* record.
  - ii. Update the *Date Paid*, *Frequency* and *Expense Amount* fields as reported and complete LUW.
  - iii. If shelter expenses have not been reported, attempt calling the client to obtain updated information or verification of expenses.
  - iv. If no response, set *Verification* field to *Not Verified* and complete LUW.
- d. Run eligibility (to trigger *Form H1020, Request for Information or Action*).
- e. To pend for utility expenses, navigate to **Correspondence** → **View Pending Correspondence**:
  - i. Enter Case Number and click Search.
  - ii. Select *Form H1020-Request for Information or Action*.
  - iii. Mark the radio button next to Head of Household and click Preview.
  - iv. Document the following statement in Other Comments box:

*"Please provide verification of your out-of-pocket heating or cooling costs or utility expenses by (10th day). The following are acceptable sources of proof: Utility company bill or statement, cancelled check or statement from utility company employee."*
- f. Run eligibility and confirm SNAP EDG pends correctly.
- g. Document in **CADS**, including attempts made to contact the household.
- h. Update TLM task(s).
- i. Record the outcome in EWMS as *Pend*.

**Note:** If USPS returns the *Form H1020* or other correspondence, follow returned mail policy below (2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period).

Out-of-state address changes or reports follow regular change policy. Households must provide verification of Texas residence and shelter expenses. If the household does not provide verification or provide verification that shows they no longer reside in Texas, deny the case.

### Processing Missing Information

Access the case in *Change Action* or its current *Case Mode*. If the household:

1. **Provides** the missing information requested, update the case accordingly.
  - a. Navigate to **Expenses** → **Shelter Expenses**:
    - i. Click *Edit* icon for pending *Shelter Expense* record.
    - ii. Update the *Date Paid*, *Frequency* and *Expense Amount* fields as reported and complete LUW.
  - b. Navigate to **Standard Allowance - Summary**:
    - i. Click *Edit* icon for Standard Allowance record.
    - ii. Set each question to YES or NO according to information provided and complete LUW.
  - c. Run eligibility and verify results.
  - d. Document in **CADS**.
  - e. Dispose case and clear TLM task(s).
  - f. Review *Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action*, for accuracy.
  - g. Select all *Programs tested for* and record the outcome in EWMS.
2. **Does not provide** missing information requested, **do not deny** SNAP EDG for failure to provide. Disallow the expense:
  - a. Navigate to **Expenses** → **Shelter Expenses**:
    - i. Click *Edit* icon for unverified *Shelter Expense* record.
    - ii. End date *Shelter Expense* record accordingly.
    - iii. Zero out the expense and complete LUW.
  - b. Navigate to **Standard Allowance – Summary**:
    - iv. Click *Edit* icon for Standard Allowance record.
    - v. Set each question to NO and complete LUW.
  - c. Run eligibility and verify results.
  - d. Document in **CADS**.
  - e. Dispose case and clear TLM task(s).
  - f. Review *Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action*, for accuracy and update or correct with comments, if necessary.
  - g. Select all *Programs tested for* and record the outcome in EWMS.

**Note:** If removal of the deductions causes the household to exceed the income limit, deny for failing the program income limit.

### **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. Staff will be notified when the policy no longer applies.

## 2. COVID-19 Update: Returned Mail During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period

### 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 (PHE).

HHSC has received federal approval to implement a **temporary process** for the duration of the COVID-19 PHE and the 12-month period following the end of the PHE to accept in-state returned mail address updates without requiring additional verification from the household.

### Current Policy

#### [All Programs](#)

If mail is returned to Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), staff must:

- Confirm the household did not previously report a change in address.
- If a new or forwarding address was not reported, contact the household to confirm their address. For SNAP, explore shelter expenses, as necessary. ([TWH B-623](#), How to Report, TWH [B-638](#), Returned Mail, MEPDH C-8000, Responsibility to Provide Information and Report Changes, and MEPDH E-8500, Change of Permanent Living Arrangement).
- If unable to contact the household:
  - For cases with no active SNAP, deny the EDG(s) using the denial reason "*Unable to Locate.*"
  - For cases with active SNAP, send *Form H1020* to request information or verification of address and possible change in shelter expenses. If the household does not respond by the *Form H1020* due date, deny pending EDG(s) using the denial reason "*Failure to Provide.*"

### COVID-19 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.

#### 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.

#### MEPD

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 current policy to verify shelter expenses. Follow steps in item #1, COVID-19 Update: Change of Address During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the PHE Unwinding Period, of this bulletin.

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

#### *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 Streamlined Reporting (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.

#### **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. Staff will be notified when the policy no longer applies.

### **3. Residence Verification Requirements for Former Foster Care Children**

#### **Background**

Under federal law, youth who age out of foster care in Texas at age 18 or older and who were receiving Medicaid when they aged out are eligible for Medicaid coverage up to age 26 through the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program.

Senate Bill (S.B.) 1059, passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, requires the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to accept self-attestation of Texas residence from a youth formerly in foster care at application or renewal.

#### **Current Policy**

##### [FFCC](#)

Verify Texas residence for youth formerly in foster care applying for and certified for FFCC Medicaid at application and at renewal ([TWH E-800, Residence](#) or [TWH A-760, Verification Requirements](#)). Documents that can verify Texas residence include utility bills, a lease agreement or rental receipt, a statement from a non-relative, a mortgage receipt, a Texas Driver's License or Department of Public Safety ID card, and a voter registration card ([TWH A-761, Verification Sources](#)).

#### **New Policy**

##### [FFCC](#)

Accept self-attestation of Texas residence for youth formerly in foster care applying for and certified for FFCC Medicaid at application and renewal.

#### **Automation**

In addition to updating the verification requirements for Texas residence, youth formerly in foster care and certified for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid will be automatically tested for FFCC if their SSI Medicaid is terminated.

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 114 on December 10, 2022.

#### **Correspondence**

To further streamline the renewal process, the Form H1206-FFCC, Health Care Benefits Renewal, will be updated to make it easier for youth formerly in foster care to complete.

Changes to Form H1206-FFCC will be implemented December 10, 2022.

**Handbook**

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the April 2023 revision.

**Training**

Training titled R113.2 General Information will be made available in PALMS on Friday, December 2, 2022.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 114 currently scheduled for December 10, 2022.