



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY**

626 8th Avenue, SE • P.O. Box 45502 • Olympia, Washington 98504-5502

April 6, 2023

Babs Roberts
Division Director, ESA
Department of Social and Health Services
724 Quince St. SE
Olympia, WA 98504

Beth Krehbiel
Director, Division of Field Services, DDA
Department of Social and Health Services
1009 College St. SE Ste 100 MS: 45310
Lacey, WA 98503

Catherine Kinnaman
HCS Director
Department of Social and Health Services
4450 10th Ave SE MS: 45600
Lacey, WA 98504

Trinity Wilson
Division Director
Washington State Health Care Authority
PO Box 45531
Olympia, WA 98504

Carla Reyes
Chief Operating Officer
Health Benefit Exchange
810 Jefferson St. SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Leaders:

SUBJECT: Resuming operations after the Public Health Emergency (PHE) - Apple Health (Medicaid) Eligibility

In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), the Health Care Authority (HCA) in partnership with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) took steps to ensure that clients maintained their Apple Health (Medicaid) coverage as required by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. In December 2022, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which separates the continuous eligibility requirement from the PHE.

This Act was followed by a Department of Health and Human Services announcement indicating that the PHE will end May 11, 2023.

This guidance is intended to inform the timing and ongoing flexibilities for all Apple Health policy and operations for the twelve-month unwinding period which began April 2023 and ends with the April 2024 renewals. For specific program information, please see the secondary memos related to either Classic or MAGI Apple Health.

Automatic renewals and reinstatements of coverage

During the PHE, coverage was automatically renewed in three-month increments for clients who failed to complete a renewal. Renewals will no longer be extended after April 2023.

Clients who were found to be ineligible during the PHE were reinstated and coverage continued unless they died, moved out of state, or requested closure. As of April 1, 2023, termination of coverage for all reasons resumed.

Verification

During the PHE, clients experiencing difficulties related to COVID-19 were provided an additional 30 days to submit verification upon request. On April 1, 2023, requests for verification resumed to determine ongoing eligibility.

After the PHE ends in May 2023, clients can still request additional time and be granted at least 15 additional days. Subsequent time shall be granted, if needed, depending on the client's specific circumstances. As always, we must be flexible with what types of verification clients are able to provide.

Citizenship and immigration status and the reasonable opportunity period

Clients can attest to their citizenship and immigration status and can have up to a 90-day reasonable opportunity period to provide verification of their status if it cannot be verified with existing cross matches. If clients need additional time to get their verification, more time can be granted as needed.

If a client is closed for failure to provide verification after their reasonable opportunity period, they can reapply and be granted subsequent reasonable opportunity periods.

Medical expenses for medically needy

During the PHE, the agency could accept self-attestation of medical expenses to assist a client to meet their medical needy spenddowns. After May 2023, clients must provide proof of their expenses to meet their spenddowns ongoing.

Retroactive medical coverage

Clients can request medical coverage for up to three months prior to their month of application if they have medical bills. Clients can attest to their income and resources for their retroactive months and the agencies will verify using readily available data sources prior to requesting verification from the client.

Returned mail – updated processing procedures

The agencies are making good faith efforts to obtain updated contact information of all Apple Health clients prior to their upcoming renewals during the 12-month unwind. This includes multiple attempts at asking clients to update their contact information via postcards, outreach, the Ambassador program, media, and a waiver allowing managed care organizations to share the client's updated contact information with the HCA.

For any returned renewal mail the agency receives and the agency is able to make contact with the client to get their updated contact information, the agency can attempt to complete the renewal over the phone or if unable to, resend the renewal to their new address. The agency will give the client an additional 30 days to complete their renewal.

When there is no forwarding address, the agency will attempt to contact the client using at least 2 modalities, including phone, email, or mail, prior to terminating for whereabouts unknown.

The agency will verify with the client, using at least 2 modalities, including phone, email, or mail, anytime the agency receives returned mail indicating the client has moved out of state. Should you have any questions, contact: AHeligCovid19@hca.wa.gov.

Resources

[Public health emergency and Apple Health](#)

[Redetermination overview](#)

[General verification](#)

[Citizenship and immigration status – general requirements](#)

[Apple Health for the medically needy and spenddown overview](#)

[Medicare and spenddown](#)

[Retroactive certification period](#)

[Residency](#)

Sincerely,



Jason McGill,

Division Director

Medicaid Programs Division

By email

cc: Charissa Fotinos, MD, MSc, Medicaid and Behavioral Health Medical Director, HCA
Joey Anderson, Chief, Field Operations, ESA, DSHA
Amanda Aseph, Office Chief, ALTSA, DSHS
Deanna Ballard, Social Service Programs Administrator, ESA, DSHS
Clifford Leach, Operations Administrator, ESA, DSHS
Aren Sparck, Tribal Affairs Administrator, OTA, HCA
Ronnie-Sue Johnson, Deputy of Field Operations, ESA, DSHS
Rebecca Carrell, Deputy Division Director, MPD, HCA
Shannon Monroe, Deputy Assistant Director, MCS, HCA
Marcell Birdsall, LTC Specialty Unit Manager, DDA, DSHS
Maggie Clay, Deputy Section Manager, MPD, HCA
Dana Eklund, Deputy Section Manager, MCS, HCA
Celia Moodenbaugh, Deputy Section Manager, MCS, HCA
Karin Kramer, Apple Health Communication Manager, COM, HCA
Jessica Diaz, Section Manager, MPD, HCA
Thanh Dizon, Section Manager, MCS, HCA
Amy Dobbins, Section Manager, MPD, HCA
Michael George, Section Manager, MCS, HCA
Todd Slettvet, Section Manager, MPD, HCA
Erin Summers, Social Services Program Manager, ESA, DSHS

DSHA and HCA Apple Health (Medicaid) Leadership

April 6, 2023

Page 4

Glory Dole, Clinical Nurse Specialist, MPD, HCA
Colette Jones, Clinical Nurse Specialist, MPD, HCA