

Review of COVID Changes (as of 2/1/2021)
Benefit Planner Training 2/2021

1. Most Medicaid coverage continues during the public health emergency (PHE) period. The exception is death, loss of state residency, citizenship status or client request. A client that is eligible for Medicare Savings Program (MSP) is considered to have minimum essential coverage under the interim rule filed in 11/2020. Some clients who are no longer eligible for Categorically Needy (CN) or Alternate ABP scope of care, but are eligible for a Medicare Savings Program may have a redetermination prior to the end of the public health emergency.
2. We are allowing self-attestation to verify most eligibility factors, with the exception of citizenship/immigration status and disability. Electronic cross matches will be used to check income and resources. If we find that an eligibility factor makes an existing client ineligible, we will keep medical benefits open and review the case once the PHE is over. If we find that a client is ineligible during the application process, we can deny benefits.
3. If an eligibility review for medical benefits is not received timely, benefits will be extended for 90 days or until the end of the PHE. When processing reviews, if we find that a client is no longer eligible, benefits will still continue until the end of the PHE. At the end of the PHE, a review will be made to determine if the client is eligible for another medicaid program.
4. All HWD premiums for will be waived until the end of the quarter of when the public health emergency ends. A state plan amendment will be required to waive premiums for the two months following the month in which the PHE ends. This will also allow for advance notice to participants on when premium billing will begin. The consent to pay premiums for coverage at initial enrollment will be used to reinstate the premium requirement for continued coverage.
5. If an HWD client is no longer working at the time of their eligibility review, we are extending their eligibility until the PHE ends. At the end of the PHE, these cases will be reviewed to see if the client is eligible for another Apple Health program.
6. All HWD past-due premiums have been waived.
7. Changes in income, resources and expenses need to reported. The interim rule filed in 11/2020 indicates that states can change the post eligibility treatment of income cost of care for those on an institutional or HCB Waiver program.
8. For Medicaid purposes, the \$1200 and \$600 pandemic related stimulus checks are excluded as income in the month received and will be excluded as a resource for 12 months. It is not counted towards participation.
9. Washington received 1135 waiver authority to disregard all unemployment compensation for Classic Apple Health programs through the end of the PHE. As a result, regular state issued UC in addition to the expanded UC described in the CARES Act including the Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and Pandemic Unemployment Insurance are not countable income for Classic Apple Health groups.

Cash & Food

1. All unemployment compensation is counted toward cash and food eligibility. Supplemental food assistance payments have been issued during the pandemic and this has been done on a month to month basis. Supplemental payments bring each assistance unit up to the maximum allotment. We should also state that the Consolidated appropriations Act gave a 15% increase to all Food households from 01/2021-06/2021 on top of the max allotment

Section 702 of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2021 temporarily increases the Thrifty Food Plan maximums by 15 percent for January through June 2021

2. As of 10/22/20, when a cash/food ER is received for November 2020 through February 2021:
 - a. If it is more than 45 days before the end of the certification period, treat it as a change of circumstance.
 - b. If it is within 45 days of the end of the certification period, follow the regular ER procedure.
3. As of 10/22/20 when a cash/food review is received for November 2020 through June 2021, treat it as a change of circumstances.