

MA Health Care Training Forum Summer 2026 Meeting

MassHealth Updates Transcription

[MassHealth Update]

(DEBBIE RAYMOND): Good morning. Welcome to the MassHealth and Health Safety Net Updates meeting. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Debbie Raymond. I'm from the Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum team, and I will be facilitating the meeting this morning. Now we're going to turn it over to the MassHealth portion of our presentation for the MassHealth updates. Our presenter is Kara Chiev, Manager of MassHealth External Training and Communication. Go ahead, Kara.

(KARA CHIEV): Thanks, Deb. Good morning, everyone. I hope your summer is going well, and thank you for joining this quarter's MTF, the MassHealth Updates section of our quarterly meeting. Now, as we get to the agenda,

[Agenda]

today we'll talk about federal changes to eligibility rules impacting immigrants, MassHealth health plan updates, updates to the permission to share information, or the PSI form, and some member forms updates.

I will note for those attending today, this session will provide you information related to our MassHealth members and applicants. For those in the audience that would like additional information related to MassHealth providers, such as claim, billing, or other provider regulations, I do encourage you to review our Provider Services webinar slides and be on the lookout to attend next quarter's sessions with our Provider Services team. Going on to the next slide,

[Federal Changes to Eligibility Rules for Immigrants]

let's talk about federal changes to eligibility rules impacting immigrant population. Moving to the next slide.

[Changes to Eligibility Rules for Immigrants]

Citizenship and Immigration is one of the categorical factors MassHealth uses to determine eligibility. Additionally, verification of the person's immigration status is required.

As part of OB3 or HR1, federal rule changes will be implemented October 1st, which will impact certain immigrant populations. After October 1st, immigrants in the following categories will continue to be eligible for their existing MassHealth coverage. They include US citizens, lawfully present residents or green card holders after completing

the five-year bar, that means they had their green card for five years, Cuban or Haitian entrants. Now, Cuban or Haitian entrants are certain nationals of Cuba and Haiti who have permission to reside in the US based on humanitarian considerations or under special laws that apply to them. People from the Compact of Free Association or COFA nations residing in the US. COFA is an agreement between the United States and the three Pacific Island sovereign states of Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, known as Freely Associated States. These citizens are not citizens or nationals of the United States. However, vast citizens admitted to the United States under the compact may reside, work, and study in the United States for an unlimited length of time. As we move to the next slide,

[Impacted Immigration Categories]

as a result of these federal changes, the following immigrant categories may lose their current level of coverage starting October 1st.

They include refugees, asylees, parolees, and certain victims of abuse and trafficking. Approximately 7,300 members will be impacted, so notices to these members have started to go out, letting them know of the changes. I do want to note that children, members that are pregnant and postpartum, with the immigration status I just listed, will not be impacted by these changes. As we move to the next slide looking at coverage types,

[Coverage Changes for Impacted Members]

as immigration status is one factor that MassHealth used to determine eligibility, members impacted by the new federal rule changes may lose their current level of coverage because the federal government will stop providing funding.

MassHealth expects affected members' coverage to change as follows: For adults age 65 or older, they will now be eligible for MassHealth Family Assistance. Disabled adults age 19 through 64 will move to MassHealth Family Assistance as well. And MassHealth Family Assistance is one of MassHealth's comprehensive coverage types. For those non-disabled adults age 19 through 64, they will move to emergency coverage. That's MassHealth Limited plus the Health Safety Net, or HSN.

Some individuals impacted by these changes with income between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level may become eligible for ConnectorCare through the end of 2026, but would only be eligible for a Qualified Health Plan without financial assistance in 2027.

As we move to the next slide,

[Sample MassHealth Notice (page 1)]

here is a sample notice our impacted members will receive. Again, approximately 7,300 members will receive this mailing, letting them know of the rule change. This notice will also ask them to update, provide any additional immigration documents that they may have that they haven't sent to MassHealth.

If they are newly naturalized, they should submit that document, that information to MassHealth so we're able to ensure their eligibility. They continue to receive and are getting the richest benefit that they're eligible for.

The next slide is

[Sample MassHealth Notice (page 2)]

page 2 and page 3 of this notice. Again, this is informational as far as the impact to the population, the immigrant population.

[What Do Members Need to Do?]

What do members need to do? As a reminder, we want to make sure that we have the most current information on record for them, so if things have changed, like they've moved, they have a new phone number, newly pregnant, or have another change that could affect their coverage, they can update that information on the online application, or they can give MassHealth a call to let us know of that update.

We also encourage them to read and respond to any notices from MassHealth. Members can also create a MyServices account to see their eligibility notice and they should be on the lookout for more information. If they have questions or need help, they can contact MassHealth at our main 800-841-2900 number. We have MassHealth enrollment centers across the state. They can also visit any of the enrollment centers. They can also seek assistance from a certified assister, either a CAC or a Navigator that's closest to them. If they are unsure about the type of documents we have on file for them, we do encourage them to submit the information, and we will look through all of what they've provided us.

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[MassHealth Health Plans Update]

let's talk about MassHealth Health Plan.

[Reminder of Managed Care Enrollment Regulation Updates and Impact]

MassHealth has updated its Managed Care Enrollment rules. Under these changes, approximately 15,000 members will have their MassHealth benefits provided through

the fee-for-service delivery system instead of through managed care. This change does not impact the members' eligibility. These updates are focused on the delivery system through which members get their services. Members impacted by this transition will receive a notice from MassHealth letting them know of when they will transition to fee-for-service, which means they'll have access to MassHealth networks of providers and specialists.

MassHealth is transitioning members by January 1st of 2027. For services, members will be covered directly by MassHealth instead of a health plan. MassHealth works with many providers and can help members find doctors that are right for them. Members can continue to see their providers if the provider is a MassHealth fee-for-service provider.

Going on to the next section,

[Permission to Share Information (PSI) Form]

now let's talk about the revised Permission to Share Information form. Going on to the next slide,

[Permission to Share Information Form]

the Permission to Share Information or PSI form lets MassHealth and the Health Connector share a member's eligibility information or eligibility notice with another person or organization identified by the individual.

For example, it can be a friend, a relative, a caregiver, or someone who helps them fill out a MassHealth or Health Connector form or application, or a social worker, a lawyer, or a healthcare advocacy group. Individuals may give MassHealth and the Health Connector permission to talk to another person or organization about their eligibility, share copies, and share copies of notices with the individuals.

What's changed with the PSI form?

[Changes to the PSI Form]

As you heard, the function of the PSI form did not change. However, we did remove the member records request section and direct member and their authorized representative to the MassHealth privacy office to request past records or by completing the new Authorization to Release MassHealth or Health Connector records. This is the section of the form for which members may request their records. Also, this form, as you will notice, is now co-branded with the Massachusetts Health Connector. For those applicants and their consumers, they'll be able to also use this PSI form for a request.

[How to Request Release of Records]

How to request release of records. If the member is looking to retrieve records of claims past MassHealth applications and related documentation, past MassHealth notices, copies of drug and alcohol treatment information or other specific information, they should use the new Authorization to Release MassHealth or Health Connector records. Members have the right to access their information or can grant another person access to their information, but again, if they are looking for their record, they would use this new Authorization to Release MassHealth or Health Connector records form.

[How to Cancel the PSI Form]

Expiration of the forms. Both forms will automatically expire 12 months from the date the form was signed, unless a different date was provided on the form. If the member or the PSI wants to cancel that PSI form, they can do it at any time by contacting MassHealth. They can call MassHealth customer service or by mail making that request. They will need to provide us with the member's name, their MassHealth ID, and the name of the person that's on the PSI. That information is needed if they are requesting by mail.

As far as the Authorization to Release MassHealth and Health Connector records, that can also be canceled at any time. They can send an email or a letter to our MassHealth Privacy Office. Here we have the email for our privacy office as well as the mailbox in Boston for our team.

Moving to the next slide.

[Forms in Additional Languages]

The PSI form is available in multiple languages as well as a web version and Adobe Acrobat. It's available in English, Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Our forms are available on the MassHealth website.

[Member Forms in Adobe Sign]

Lastly, member forms that have been updated on the web and folks can access it through Adobe Sign include

[Forms in Adobe Sign]

our Medicare Savings Program application, the MSP application. The application is for Massachusetts residents on Medicare with limited income who may qualify for help paying Medicare costs through Medicare Savings Program. Again, the Permission to Share form can also be submitted through the web or by paper. Another form that is

also now available in Adobe Sign is the MassHealth Noncustodial Parent form, which is used to provide MassHealth information regarding the other parent that does not live in the household.

Lastly, MassHealth Disability Supplement forms, both forms are available or will be available in Adobe Sign format.

[Thank You!]

(DEBBIE RAYMOND): I thank everybody for their time today, participation, and engagement, and a special thanks to our presenters and our SMEs for all their expertise. Have a great day, everybody. Stay dry. Bye-bye.