

NUMBER

#20-21-01

DATE

February 7, 2020

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and
Staff

Financial Assistance Supervisors
and Workers

Mille Lacs Tribal TANF

Tribal Chairpersons and Tribal
Health Directors

Health Care Eligibility
Operations (HCEO) Managers,
Supervisors, and Staff

ACTION/DUE DATE

Read information and
implement March 4, 2020

EXPIRATION DATE

February 7, 2022

DHS Announces a Change in Service Delivery for Medical Assistance Applicants and Enrollees Temporarily Absent from Minnesota

TOPIC

A change in health care service delivery for Medical Assistance (MA) applicants and enrollees who are temporarily absent from Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days.

PURPOSE

To provide information about health care service delivery for Medical Assistance (MA) applicants and enrollees who are temporarily absent from Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days.

CONTACT

County, tribal agencies and DHS workers should submit policy questions via HealthQuest.

All others should direct questions to the following:

Health Care Eligibility and Access (HCEA) Division
PO Box 64989
540 Cedar Street St. Paul, MN 55164-0989

SIGNED

THOMAS MOSS
Interim Assistant Commissioner Health Care Administration

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

A 2019 Minnesota law requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify Medical Assistance (MA) applicants and enrollees who are temporarily absent from the state for more than 30 consecutive days, and to deliver MA coverage to these applicants and enrollees via the fee-for-service system rather than through managed care.

The policies described in this bulletin apply to all MA applicants and enrollees. However, DHS is implementing this change in two phases. Phase one will include MA for families with children, adults without children, and former foster care youth. MA applicants and enrollees who are age 65 and older, blind or who have disabilities and other MA populations will be included in phase two.

This does not apply to health care programs other than MA.

II. Definition of Temporary Absence

MA eligibility is only available to Minnesota residents. If an applicant or enrollee is not physically present in Minnesota, he or she is still considered to be a resident of Minnesota if he or she meets a condition for temporary absence.

Temporary absence refers to circumstances where one or more household members are absent from a household, but the absent member(s) remain part of the household.

Reasons for the temporary absence include but are not limited to:

- School attendance or training
- Job search or employment, including working out of state
- Illness or hospitalization
- Vacation
- Military service
- Natural disaster or catastrophe
- Personal or family emergency
- Visits with a non-custodial parent or other relatives

A temporary absence also includes when an applicant or enrollee who lives alone or lives with others is absent from Minnesota with the intent to return to the state when the reason for the absence ends. There is no limit for how long a person may be temporarily absent from the state. Applicants or enrollees are no longer considered temporarily absent from the state if they receive Medicaid benefits in another state. An applicant or enrollee's temporary absence from the state does not affect his or her eligibility for MA.

An MA applicant or enrollee must continue to meet all eligibility requirements to qualify for MA throughout a temporary absence.

See [EPM section 1.4 MHCP State Residency](#) for more information about temporary absence policy.

III. Action Required

Effective March 4, 2020, MA applicants or enrollees who are members of families with children, adults without children, and former foster care youth who report that they are temporarily absent from Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days must receive their MA benefits via the fee-for-service system. Exclude MA applicants and enrollees who are receiving MA benefits through a managed care plan for the duration of their temporary absence from Minnesota, if they will be temporarily absent from Minnesota for more than 30 consecutive days.

The date the applicant or enrollee left the state is considered day one in determining whether the temporary absence from Minnesota will last for more than 30 days. The last day of the temporary absence is the date the applicant or enrollee attests he or she is returning to Minnesota, or the date the applicant or enrollee actually returns.

DHS will post specific instructions for county, tribal and DHS workers in upcoming SIR announcements and ONEsource procedures.

IV. Legal Authority

Laws of Minnesota 2019, 1st Spec. Sess., chapter 9, article 7, sections 19 and 34.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling 651-431-2670 (voice) or toll free at 800-657-3739 or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.