pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE	NUMBER
October 1, 2026	October 1, 2026	99-26-08

SUBJECT

Updates to Beneficiary Retroactive Eligibility Periods

BY

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IMPORTANT REMINDER: All providers must revalidate the Medical Assistance (MA) enrollment of each service location every 5 years. Providers should log into PROMISe to check the revalidation dates of each service location and submit revalidation applications at least 60 days prior to the revalidation dates. Enrollment (revalidation) applications may be found at: https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/PROMISe-Enrollment.aspx.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to advise providers about the updated retroactive eligibility periods for new applicants in the Medical Assistance (MA) Program, as well as to advise providers that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services (COMPASS) "Date of First Admission or Treatment" will no longer be used to determine the MA Program application date, both effective January 1, 2027.

SCOPE:

This bulletin applies to all providers enrolled in the MA Program who render services to MA beneficiaries.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

The MA Program currently has a mandatory retroactive eligibility period for all new MA applicants of three (3) months prior to the month of application for eligibility. (See Section 1902(a)(34) of the Social Security Act (the Act)). The three (3) month retroactive eligibility period allows unpaid medical services incurred to be considered for coverage and payment.

Section 71112 of the Working Families Tax Cut (WFTC) legislation (P.L. 119-21) amends Sections 1902(a)(34) and 1905(a) of the Social Security Act (Act) to reduce the retroactive eligibility periods in Medicaid. Effective January 1, 2027, the retroactive eligibility period for individuals who may qualify for the adult expansion population (ages 19-64) under

Section 1902(a)(10)(A)(i)(VIII) of the Act will be limited to one (1) month prior to the month of application. For all other individuals who may qualify for federally funded Medicaid, the retroactive eligibility period will be limited to two (2) months prior to the month of application. The retroactive eligibility period for new MA applicants determined eligible for General Assistance state-funded MA coverage will continue to be three (3) months since the WFTC legislation changes only affect federally funded Medicaid.

PROCEDURE:

The chart below identifies the current retroactive eligibility periods for new MA applicants and updated retroactive eligibility periods, effective January 1, 2027.

	Retroactive Eligibility Period Prior to January 1, 2027	Retroactive Eligibility Period On and after January 1, 2027
Adult Expansion Group (Ages 19-64)	3 months	1 month
All other eligible individuals who qualify for a federally funded MA category	3 months	2 months
Eligible individuals who qualify for a state-funded MA category	3 months	3 months

Effective January 1, 2027, the date entered in the "Date of First Admission or Treatment" field of COMPASS will no longer be considered the MA Program application date. Instead, the specific date the application is received in the County Assistance Office (CAO) will determine the applicable retroactive period for all applications, including provider applications. The date of application is the date the application is submitted online, by phone, or the date a paper application is received in the CAO. At the time of the date of application, the category of MA an applicant will receive, if eligible, will not be known. For an expense to be covered prior to the date of the application, an individual must be eligible for MA, and the expense must fall within the allowable retroactive period outlined in federal or state regulation. If an expense falls outside of the allowable retroactive period, then it will not be covered.

RESOURCES:

Medicaid Changes Communications Toolkit:
https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/medicaid/medicaid-toolkit

Working Families Tax Credit Legislation (P.L. 119-21) full text exacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America:
https://www.congress.gov/119/plaws/publ21/PLAW-119publ21.pdf