

NC MEDICAID

End of Federal Public Health Emergency Communications Toolkit



Goals, strategies and sample messages to help
providers, advocates and partners keep
NC Medicaid beneficiaries informed

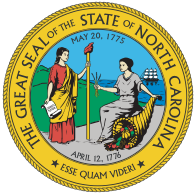
UPDATED AUGUST 3, 2022



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

ROY COOPER • Governor
KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary
DAVE RICHARD • Deputy Secretary, NC Medicaid

DATE: AUGUST 3, 2022
TO: COMMUNITY PARTNERS
FROM: DAVE RICHARD, DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR NC MEDICAID
SUBJECT: TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT BENEFICIARIES IN PREPARING FOR THE END OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

Since it began in January 2020, the federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) helped prevent NC Medicaid beneficiaries from losing their health coverage during the pandemic, even if someone's eligibility changed. The PHE also helped health care providers keep their practices running so they could deliver care to Medicaid beneficiaries.

The PHE currently extends through later this year. While we do not know for certain when the PHE will end, NC Medicaid wants to help beneficiaries and providers understand any potential impacts and steps they can take to be ready. This toolkit was developed to support stakeholders, advocates and partners with key messaging and resources to share with beneficiaries around the changes in the Medicaid eligibility determination process before and after the end of the PHE.

In approaching this work, NC Medicaid has focused on three key goals to guide our communications and engagement work around the end of the PHE:

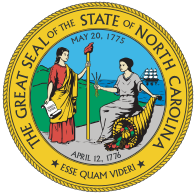
- Provide beneficiaries with the information they need to continue coverage or connect with other resources.
- Collaborate with partners, advocates, and health plans to deliver a clear message across communities.
- Use a health equity lens in all communications planning and outreach.

NC Medicaid encourages partners to use the messages, templates and other informational resources available in this toolkit in their own outreach campaigns. While partners may adjust outreach language to best meet the needs of their community, we hope that you can help us in sharing consistent messages that help beneficiaries have the information that they need while minimizing potential confusion.

NC Medicaid will update this resource and add materials as new federal guidance and additional information is available. Please visit the [NC Medicaid website](#) regularly to make sure you have the latest information and updated resources.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership.

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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

ROY COOPER • Governor
KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary
DAVE RICHARD • Deputy Secretary, NC Medicaid

FECHA: 3 DE AGOSTO DE 2022

A: SOCIOS COMUNITARIOS

DE: DAVE RICHARD, SECRETARIO ADJUNTO POR NC MEDICAID

TEMA: KIT DE HERRAMIENTAS PARA APOYAR LA PREPARACIÓN DE LOS BENEFICIARIOS DE NC MEDICAID PARA Y RESPUESTA AL FIN DE LA EMERGENCIA DE SALUD PÚBLICA

Desde que comenzó en enero de 2020, la emergencia de salud pública federal (PHE, por sus siglas en inglés) ayudó a evitar que los beneficiarios de Medicaid de Carolina del Norte pierdan su cobertura de salud durante la pandemia, incluso si la elegibilidad de alguien cambió. El PHE también ayudó a los proveedores de atención médica a mantener sus prácticas en funcionamiento para que pudieran brindar atención a los beneficiarios de Medicaid.

El PHE actualmente se extiende hasta finales de este año. Si bien no sabemos con certeza cuándo terminará el PHE, NC Medicaid quiere ayudar a los beneficiarios y proveedores a comprender los posibles impactos y los pasos que pueden tomar para estar preparados. Este conjunto de herramientas se desarrolló para apoyar a las partes interesadas, defensores y socios con mensajes y recursos clave para compartir con los beneficiarios sobre los cambios en el proceso de determinación de elegibilidad de Medicaid antes y después del final del PHE.

Al abordar este trabajo, NC Medicaid se ha centrado en tres objetivos clave para guiar nuestro trabajo de comunicación y participación hacia el final del PHE:

- Proporcionar a los beneficiarios la información que necesitan para continuar con la cobertura o conectar con otros recursos.
- Colaborar con socios, defensores y planes de salud para transmitir un mensaje claro a través de las comunidades.
- Usar una lente de equidad en salud en toda la planificación y extensión de las comunicaciones.

NC Medicaid alienta a los socios a usar los mensajes, plantillas y otra información

recursos disponibles en este kit de herramientas en sus propias campañas de divulgación. Si bien los socios pueden ajustar lenguaje de divulgación para satisfacer mejor las necesidades de su comunidad, esperamos que pueda ayudarnos en compartir mensajes consistentes que ayuden a los beneficiarios a tener la información que necesitan mientras minimiza la posible confusión.

NC Medicaid actualizará este recurso y agregará materiales como nueva guía federal y hay información adicional disponible. Visite el sitio [web de NC Medicaid](#) regularmente para asegurarse de que usted tiene la información más reciente y los recursos actualizados.

Gracias por su colaboración continua.

NC MEDICAID

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Outreach Goals, Strategies & Tactics

Communications Outreach Goals:

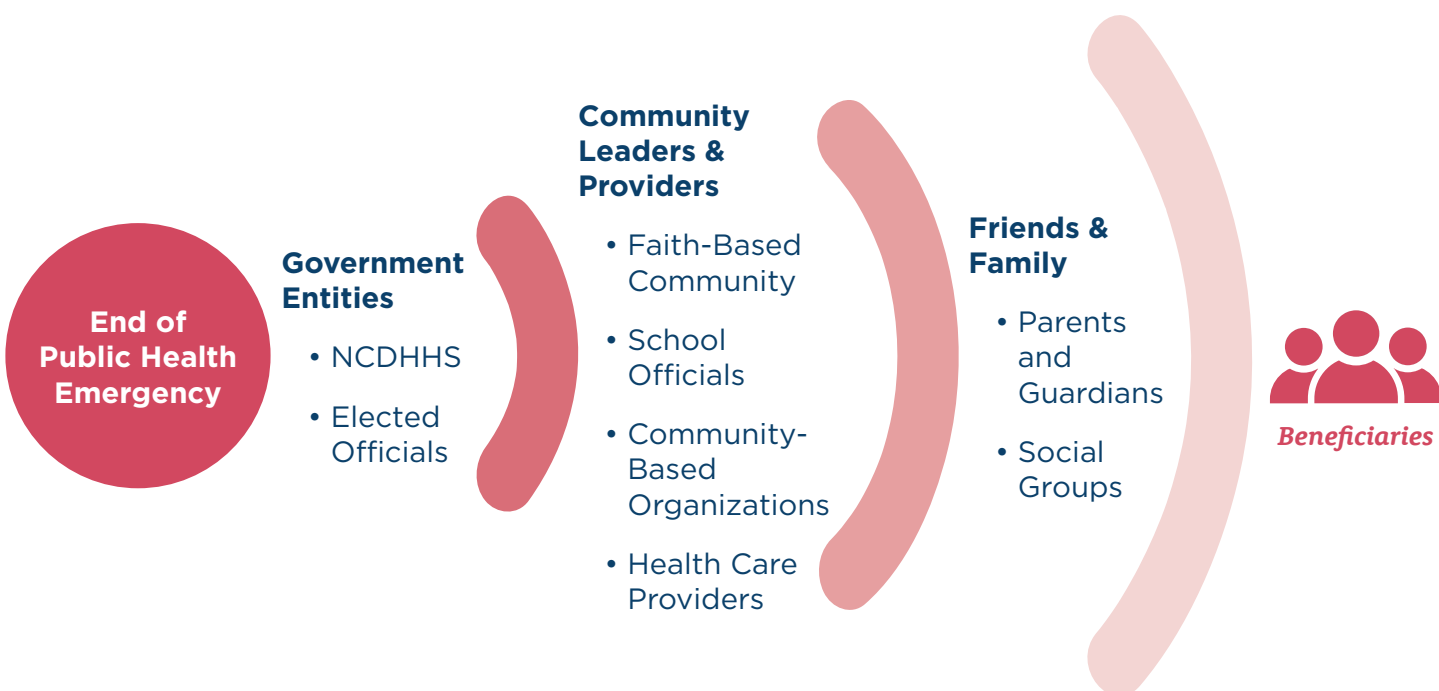
- Provide beneficiaries with the information they need to continue Medicaid coverage or connect with other resources
- Collaborate with partners, advocates, and health plans to deliver a clear and unified message across communities
- Use a health equity lens in all communications planning and outreach

Communications Outreach Strategies and Tactics

Below are optional outreach frameworks and best practices to help inform PHE ending communications plans.

Create a “Surround Sound” with Trusted Messengers

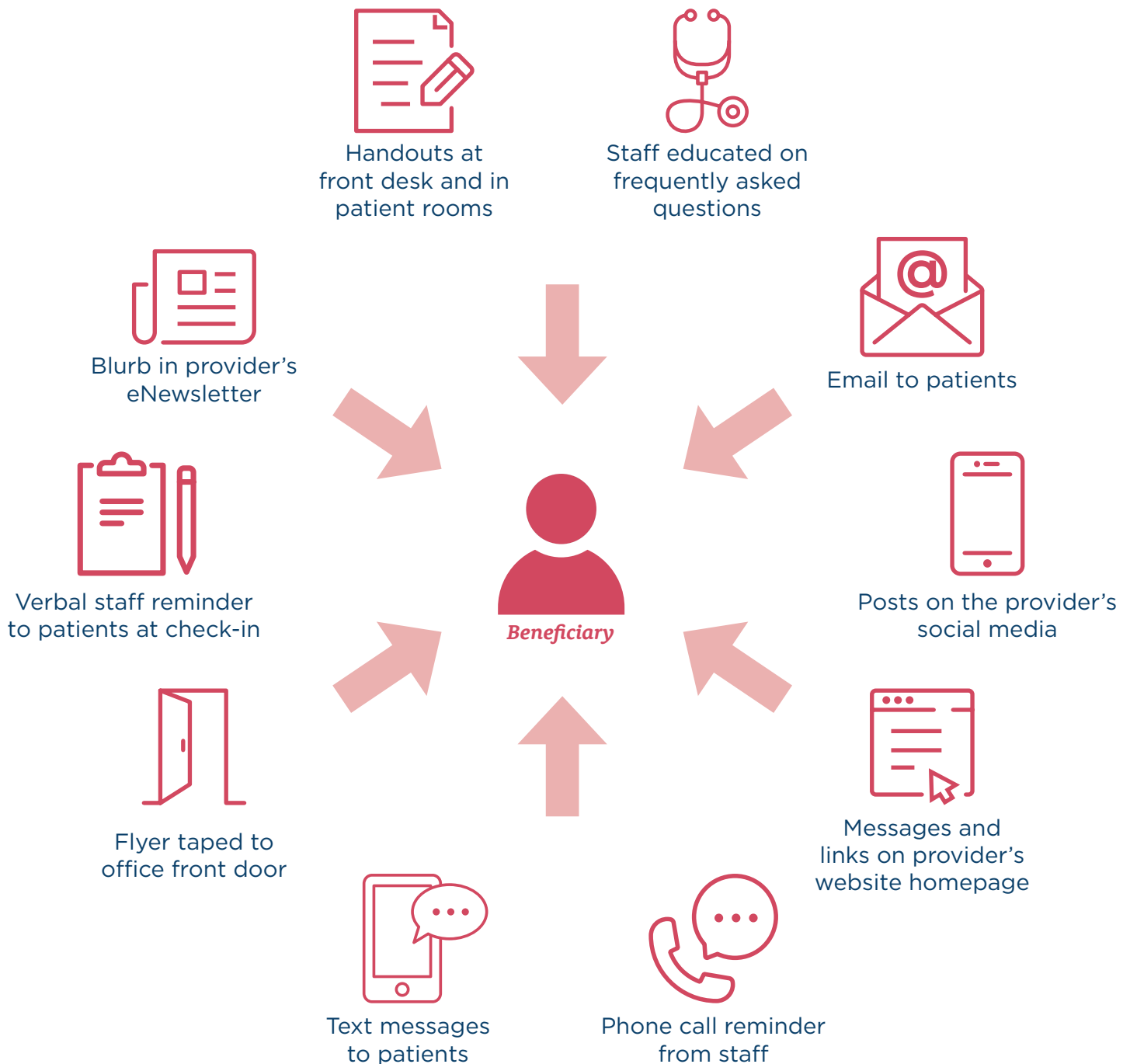
The relationship between messenger and the beneficiary is critical to effectively motivating beneficiaries to act. Identify the people and partners who can amplify your message, then equip those partners with accurate information and resources. When a beneficiary hears the call to action from someone they know, such as a social worker or neighbor, it builds trust and credibility. This improves follow-through when other stakeholders repeat the message.



Reach Beneficiaries at Every Opportunity

For a message to stick, it takes repeating. Consider identifying 10 or more engagement points where you can reach a beneficiary with PHE ending information – in person, online, and over the phone. You may use the toolkit content and sample materials, as well as create your own. As an example, a health care provider’s office may choose to deliver outreach messaging in the following ways:

Sample Outreach Plan for a Health Care Provider



Text Messages

Messaging Timing: Share with audiences any time before and after the Public Health Emergency ends.

Contact, Household and Income Changes

ENGLISH: [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION NAME] here with a reminder: If your mailing address, household size or income has changed, call or visit your local DSS ncdhhs.gov/localdss to make updates.

SPANISH: [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION NAME] NC Medicaid aquí con un recordatorio: Si su dirección postal, el tamaño del hogar o los ingresos han cambiado, llame o visite su DSS ncdhhs.gov/localdss, para hacer las actualizaciones.

Social Media Posts

Messaging Timing: Share with audiences any time before and after the Public Health Emergency ends.

Shareable Social Media Graphics: <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/End-of-PHE-Toolkit>

Post #1: General Updates

ENGLISH: Medicaid beneficiaries: Be sure to read all mail from your local DSS office. If your address, household size or income has changed, call or visit your local DSS office to report changes so you don't miss important Medicaid information: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

SPANISH: Beneficiarios de Medicaid: Asegúrese de leer todo el correo de su oficina local del DSS. Si su dirección, el tamaño de su hogar o sus ingresos han cambiado, llame o visite su oficina local del DSS para informar de los cambios y así no perder información importante de Medicaid: ncdhhs.gov/localdss



Post #2: Contact Updates

OPTION A:

ENGLISH: Don't miss out on receiving important information regarding your Medicaid benefits! Update your contact information with your local DSS office today so NC Medicaid can reach you: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

SPANISH: No deje de información importante sobre sus beneficios de Medicaid. Actualice su información de contacto con su oficina local del DSS hoy mismo para que NC Medicaid pueda comunicarse con usted: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

OPTION B:

ENGLISH: Don't miss out on important NC Medicaid benefit updates – update your contact information today. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Find your local DSS office here: ncdhhs.gov/localdss
2. Call or visit your local DSS office.
3. Update your mailing address, phone number, email address and any household size or income changes.

SPANISH: No se pierda las actualizaciones importantes de los beneficios de Medicaid de Carolina del Norte: actualice su información de contacto hoy mismo. ¡Es tan fácil como 1, 2, 3!

1. Encuentre su oficina local del DSS aquí: ncdhhs.gov/localdss
2. Llame o visite su oficina local del DSS.
3. Actualice su dirección postal, número de teléfono, dirección de correo electrónico y cualquier cambio en el tamaño de la familia o en los ingresos.



MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES
Update your contact information!
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DSS:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

The flyer features a teal background on the left with a white globe icon containing a telephone handset. The right side shows a man in a light blue shirt sitting on a couch, talking on a mobile phone while looking at a laptop. The NCDHHS logo is in the bottom right corner.



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BENEFICIARIOS DE MEDICAID
¡Actualiza tu información!
COMUNÍQUESE CON SU DSS LOCAL:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

The flyer features a teal background on the left with a white globe icon containing a telephone handset. The right side shows a man in a light blue shirt sitting on a couch, talking on a mobile phone while looking at a laptop. The NCDHHS logo is in the bottom right corner.



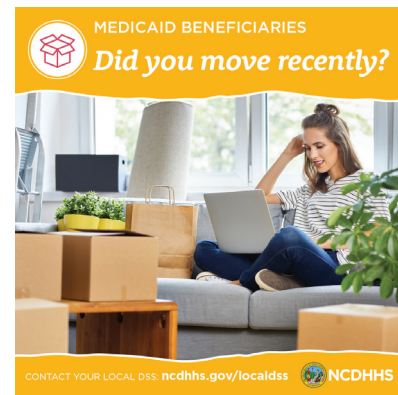
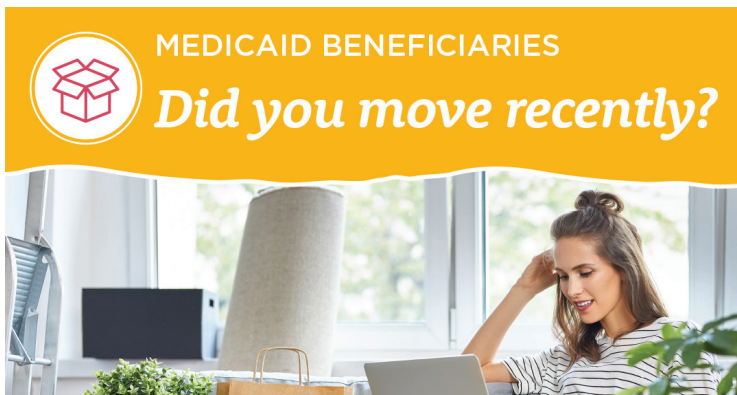
BENEFICIARIOS DE MEDICAID
¡Actualiza tu información!
COMUNÍQUESE CON SU DSS LOCAL:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

The flyer features a teal background on the left with a white globe icon containing a telephone handset. The right side shows a man in a light blue shirt sitting on a couch, talking on a mobile phone while looking at a laptop. The NCDHHS logo is in the bottom right corner.

Post #3: Change in Address

ENGLISH: Medicaid beneficiaries: Did you recently move? Remember to update your address with your local DSS office! Don't miss out on important benefits information in the mail. Report a change in mailing address to your local DSS office today so NC Medicaid can reach you: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

SPANISH: Beneficiarios de Medicaid: ¿Se ha mudado recientemente? Recuerde actualizar su dirección en la oficina local del DSS. No se pierda la información sobre los beneficios importantes en el correo. Comuníquese hoy mismo un cambio de dirección postal a su oficina local del DSS para que NC Medicaid pueda localizarle: ncdhhs.gov/localdss



Post #4: Change in Household Size

ENGLISH: Medicaid beneficiaries: Are you pregnant or has your household size changed? It is important to notify your local DSS office of household changes now because they may impact your Medicaid eligibility. Call or visit your local DSS office to report changes: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

SPANISH: Beneficiarios de Medicaid: ¿Está usted embarazada o ha cambiado el tamaño de su familia? Es importante que notifique ahora a su oficina local del DSS los cambios en el hogar porque pueden afectar a su derecho a Medicaid. Llame o visite su oficina local del DSS para informar de los cambios: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

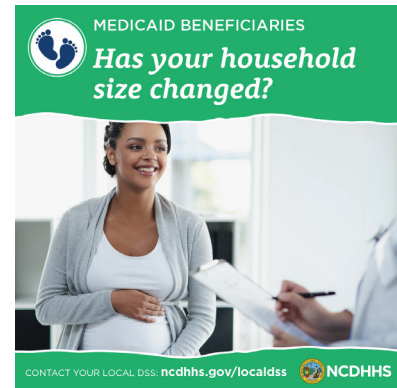


MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES

Has your household size changed?

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DSS:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss


 NCDHHS



MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES

Has your household size changed?

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DSS: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

 NCDHHS



BENEFICIARIOS DE MEDICAID

¿Está ha cambiado el tamaño de su familia?

COMUNÍQUESE CON SU DSS LOCAL:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

 NCDHHS



BENEFICIARIOS DE MEDICAID

¿Está ha cambiado el tamaño de su familia?

COMUNÍQUESE CON SU DSS LOCAL:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

 NCDHHS

Post #5: Change in Income

ENGLISH: Medicaid beneficiaries: Have you started a new job or had a change in income? It is important to notify your local DSS office of income changes now because they may impact your eligibility. Call or visit your local DSS office: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

SPANISH: Beneficiarios de Medicaid: ¿Ha empezado un nuevo trabajo o ha tenido un cambio de ingresos? Es importante que notifique ahora a su oficina local del DSS los cambios de ingresos porque pueden afectar a su elegibilidad. Llame o visite su oficina local del DSS: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES
Has your income changed?
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DSS:
ncdhhs.gov/localdss

MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES
Has your income changed?
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BENEFICIARIOS DE MEDICAID
¿Ha empezado un nuevo trabajo?
COMUNIQUESE CON SU DSS LOCAL:
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ncdhhs.gov/localdss NCDHHS

Email Messages

Messaging Timing: Share with audiences any time before and after the Public Health Emergency ends.

ENGLISH: Subject Line: Don't Miss Out on Important NC Medicaid Benefits Updates

Dear Medicaid beneficiary,

Take 5 minutes today to make sure NC Medicaid can reach you with important benefit updates. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Step 1: Find your local DSS office here: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

Step 2: Call or visit your local DSS office.

Step 3: Update your information:

- Mailing and residence address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Household size
- Income
- Job

NOTE: If there have been no changes to your personal information, no action is needed.

Sincerely,

SPANISH: Asunto: No se pierda las importantes actualizaciones de los beneficios de NC Medicaid

Estimado beneficiario de Medicaid,

Tómese 5 minutos hoy para asegurarse de que Medicaid de Carolina del Norte pueda comunicarse con usted para informarle sobre las actualizaciones importantes de los beneficios. ¡Es tan fácil como 1, 2, 3!

Paso 1: Encuentre su oficina local del DSS aquí: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

Paso 2: Llame o visite su oficina local del DSS.

Paso 3: Actualice sus datos:

1. Dirección postal y de residencia
2. Número de teléfono
3. Dirección de correo electrónico
4. Tamaño del hogar
5. Ingresos
6. Trabajo

NOTA: Si no ha habido cambios en su información personal, no es necesario realizar ninguna acción.

Atentamente,

eNewsletter Blurb

Messaging Timing: Share with audiences any time before and after the Public Health Emergency ends.

ENGLISH: Don't miss out on important North Carolina Medicaid and NC Health Choice benefits information! If your phone number, mailing address, household size or income have changed, call or visit your local DSS (ncdhhs.gov/localdss) to update your information. If there have been no changes to your personal information, then no action is needed.

SPANISH: No se pierda las importantes actualizaciones de los beneficios de NC Medicaid y NC Health Choice! Si su número de teléfono, dirección postal, tamaño de la familia o ingresos han cambiado, llame o visite su DSS local para actualizar su información. (ncdhhs.gov/localdss) Si no ha habido cambios en su información personal, no es necesario realizar ninguna acción.

Planning for the End of the Public Health Emergency (PHE)

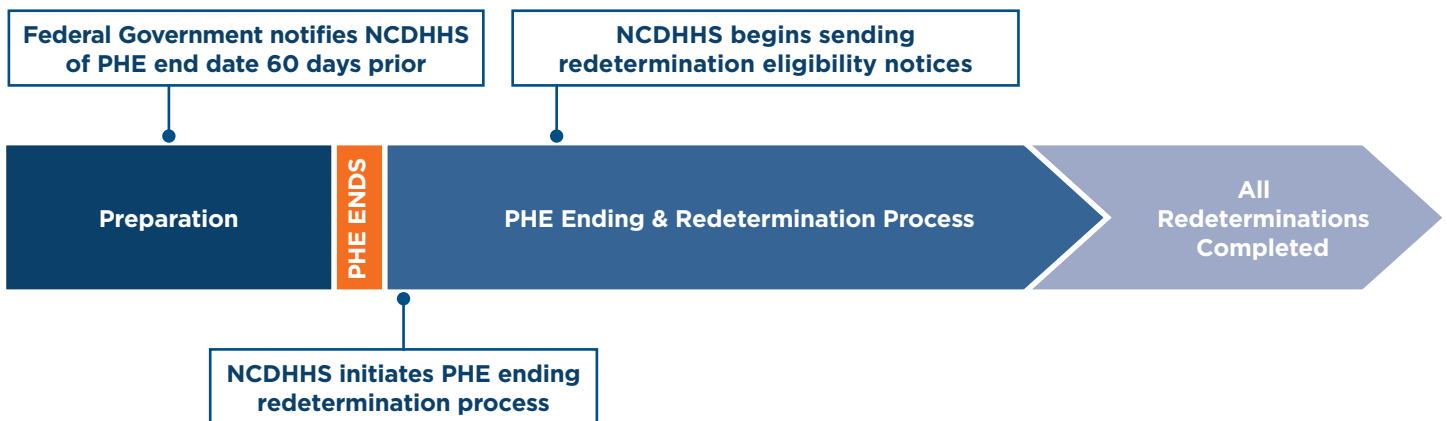
This fact sheet provides additional information for community partners on NC Medicaid’s planning efforts for the end of the federal PHE, including guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In January 2020, the federal government declared a public health emergency (PHE) due to COVID-19. For Medicaid, the PHE allowed beneficiaries to keep their health coverage during the pandemic, even if someone’s eligibility changed. The PHE also helped health care providers keep their practices running so they could deliver care to Medicaid beneficiaries.

While we do not know when the PHE will end, NC Medicaid wants to help beneficiaries and providers understand any potential impacts and steps they can take to be ready.

To minimize the number of people who lose Medicaid coverage, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is working with states and other stakeholders to inform beneficiaries about the redetermination process and share other health insurance options that may be available to them.

PHE Ending & NC Medicaid Eligibility Redetermination Timeline



In North Carolina, local DSS offices continue to conduct Medicaid eligibility redeterminations during the PHE; however, per federal guidance, no beneficiaries have been terminated or reduced in coverage. The eligibility requirements for NC Medicaid have not changed. When the federal PHE ends, local DSSs will initiate redeterminations as they are due. Redeterminations will be completed within a year after the end of the PHE. The typical redetermination process takes 90 days. NC Medicaid applications will continue to be processed timely by local DSSs.

Communications Approach for the End of the PHE

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) is working with partners on communications in preparation for the end of the PHE with these goals in mind:

- **Provide beneficiaries with information** they need to continue coverage or connect with other resources.
- **Collaborate** with partners, advocates and health plans to deliver a clear message across communities.
- **Use a health equity lens** in all communications, planning and outreach.

Beneficiaries will receive various notifications (postcards, email, text messages and social media) about updating their contact information with their local departments of social services (DSSs), including mailing address, household size and income.

COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing and Treatment Coverage Group (MCV)

NC Medicaid eligibility coverage will end for beneficiaries within the COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing and Treatment population (MCV) at the end of the PHE. This population is excluded from NC Medicaid Managed Care and will receive a Medicaid eligibility termination notice prior to the end of the PHE directing them to the Health Insurance Marketplace for coverage. Please note that the MCV limited coverage is for COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and treatment only. Those with full Medicaid benefits will continue to be covered for COVID-19 related health services.

Actions Beneficiaries Can Take Today

Starting now and through the end of the PHE, beneficiaries should ensure their information is correct and up to date with their local DSS.

Beneficiaries can find their local DSS on the Local DSS Directory: ncdhhs.gov/localdss

- **Report all changes, including updating address and other information:**
 - Do not miss important benefit communications – provide a current mailing address, phone number and contact information to the local DSS (ncdhhs.gov/localdss).
 - Report any life changes to the local DSS as these may impact beneficiary coverage (ncdhhs.gov/localdss). These changes may include marriage or divorce, the birth of a baby, starting a new job or moving to another state.
- **Check their mail:**
 - The local DSSs will send a notice if any information is needed. It is very important to respond if DSS asks for information.

Other ways to stay informed:

- Follow NCDHHS on social media for updates [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#) | [LinkedIn](#)
- Check the NC Medicaid COVID-19 webpage at medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/COVID often for updates

Other Health Care Options

Beneficiaries who may have lost Medicaid coverage have options to find affordable health insurance:

- Contact the NC Navigator Consortium at 1-855-733-3711 or go online at navigators.net/schedule-assistance to schedule an appointment for free in-person assistance with health insurance applications
- Find a plan on the Health Insurance Marketplace healthcare.gov/

Frequently Asked Questions

The questions and answers below, as well as website links, are meant to inform our partners and provide resources where beneficiaries can get more information.

What is the public health emergency (PHE) and how does it affect North Carolina Medicaid and NC Health Choice beneficiaries?

In January 2020, the federal government declared a public health emergency (PHE) due to COVID-19. For Medicaid, the PHE allowed beneficiaries to keep their health coverage during the pandemic, even if someone's eligibility changed. The PHE also helped health care providers keep their practices running so they could deliver care to Medicaid beneficiaries.

While we do not know when the PHE will end, NC Medicaid wants to help beneficiaries and providers understand any potential impacts and steps they can take to be ready.

How will the end of the PHE affect NC Medicaid coverage?

Throughout the pandemic, North Carolina DSSs have continued to conduct eligibility redeterminations, but most beneficiaries did not have their coverage terminated or reduced, per federal guidance. We do not know when the PHE will end, but when it does, all beneficiaries will be redetermined for Medicaid eligibility and those who are no longer eligible will have their coverage terminated. The eligibility requirements for Medicaid have not changed. Here is what we know now:

- Federal partners have indicated that states will receive a 60-day notice before formally ending the PHE.
- Following the end of the PHE, states must redetermine eligibility for all Medicaid members over a 12-month period.
- **NC Medicaid will not take action to terminate or reduce benefits without making efforts to contact or assist beneficiaries through the eligibility redetermination process.**
- Beneficiaries who have coverage for COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccination only will immediately lose coverage and be referred to the Health Insurance Marketplace. Please note that the MCV limited coverage is for COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and treatment only. Those with full Medicaid benefits will continue to be covered for COVID-19 related health services.

What should beneficiaries do now?

- If there have been changes to personal information, beneficiaries should:
 - Call or visit their [local DSS office](#) and report all changes to ensure they do not miss any information about their Medicaid coverage. Examples of changes may include:
 - Mailing and physical address
 - Phone number
 - Email address
 - Household size
 - Income
 - Job/employment

Note: If there have been no changes to personal information, no action is needed.

- Check their mail.
- Follow NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

What should providers do now?

- Check beneficiary eligibility in NCTracks before each visit.
- Check the [NC Medicaid COVID-19 Guidance and Resources webpage](#) and review [Medicaid provider bulletins](#) frequently for the most up-to-date information.

What will happen if there is a change to a beneficiary's NC Medicaid eligibility?

Per federal guidelines, states will have 12 months to determine whether Medicaid beneficiaries are still eligible for coverage. NC Medicaid does not yet know when this process will start but will not terminate or reduce benefits without completing a full eligibility determination. We want all eligible North Carolinians to be covered and stay covered. If coverage continues, beneficiaries will receive a notice in the mail. If a beneficiary no longer qualifies for Medicaid services, they will receive:

- Notice of when their Medicaid coverage will end
- Information on how to request an appeal
- Information about the Health Insurance Marketplace and other affordable health care coverage options

What are other health care coverage options?

- In North Carolina, several non-profit organizations offer free, in-person assistance with health insurance applications. To schedule an appointment, please call 1-855-733-3711 or go online to [NC Navigator Consortium](#).

- Those who are not eligible for Medicaid or NC Health Choice may be eligible for health insurance – and receive help paying for it – through the [Health Insurance Marketplace](#). Learn more by visiting the Health Insurance Marketplace online or calling 1-800-318-2596.
- After applicants complete an application, the Health Insurance Marketplace will tell them if they qualify for health care coverage and financial help.

Where can beneficiaries get more information?

- NC Medicaid will keep beneficiaries up to date through mailed notices, the [NC Medicaid COVID-19 Guidance and Resources webpage](#), [NC Medicaid Beneficiary webpage](#), [NC Medicaid Beneficiary Portal](#) and NCDHHS social media. A beneficiary should contact their [local DSS](#) to **make sure personal and household information is up to date so they get important information.**

Additional Resources

Beneficiaries and partners may reference the following resources for more information.

1. For questions about Medicaid eligibility, beneficiaries can find helpful information on the [NC Medicaid Beneficiary webpage](#). Beneficiaries may also contact their [local DSS office](#) for resources and support.
2. If beneficiaries no longer qualify for Medicaid, they may qualify for health care coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. To learn more, go to [HealthCare.gov](#) or call 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325).
3. To learn more about other affordable health care options, beneficiaries can also visit the NC Navigator Consortium at [ncnavigator.net/schedule-assistance](#).
4. Keep up to date with the latest news by following the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).
5. Please continue to check the NC Medicaid's COVID-19 information webpage for additional guidance and resources for Medicaid beneficiaries, providers, and partners: [medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/COVID](#).