



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Brandon Cwalina, ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov

Shapiro Administration Committed to Helping Pennsylvanians Amid Major Federal Changes to Medicaid Renewals, SNAP



Pittsburgh, PA – Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Acting Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh and representatives from East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM), East Liberty Family Health Center, and Pennie® today highlighted how the Shapiro Administration, Pennie, and community organizations are collaborating to support Pennsylvanians through federal changes to Medicaid and CHIP renewal requirements so they can protect their health and stay covered.

“Now that we have returned to pre-pandemic renewal requirements, everyone who receives their health coverage through the state will need to complete a renewal sometime in the next year,” said **Acting Secretary Arkoosh**. “I urge any Pennsylvanian who receives health coverage through the state to be aware of changes to our Medicaid and CHIP programs and take action so they can protect themselves and stay covered. Keep your contact information up to date with DHS, watch for information about your renewal, and when it is your turn, complete your Medicaid or CHIP renewal on time to stay covered.”

The federal public health emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed for individuals to remain enrolled in Medicaid even if they became ineligible based on regular eligibility criteria, except in certain circumstances. This is also known as the Medicaid continuous coverage requirement. A federal law ended the continuous coverage requirement on March 31, 2023. All Pennsylvanians receiving Medicaid or CHIP must complete their annual

renewal when it is due to maintain their Medicaid or CHIP coverage. **No one will lose Medicaid or CHIP coverage without first having an opportunity to renew their coverage.**

Pennsylvanians can update their contact information, report changes in their personal circumstances, and check their renewal date:

- Online at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS
- Via the free myCOMPASS PA Mobile App
- By calling 1-877-395-8930 (215-560-7226 if they live in Philadelphia)
- By calling 1-800-986-KIDS (5437) if they are currently enrolled in CHIP

Renewals will be completed over 12 months at a person's usual time of renewal, and renewals due in April 2023 will be the first to be affected by the end of continuous coverage. If a person is found ineligible for coverage or does not complete their renewal on time, their Medicaid coverage will end. Pennsylvanians who are no longer eligible for Medicaid will be referred to other sources of affordable medical coverage, like CHIP and Pennie®, so they have no lapse in quality, affordable health care.

"Having health coverage means breathing a sigh of relief in vulnerable moments of illness or injury. Pennie is Pennsylvania's unbiased marketplace on which all health plans must cover a full range of medical services and preventative care," noted **Pennie External Affairs Director Chachi Angelo**. "Pennie is specifically tailored for Pennsylvanians by providing access to a wide variety of affordable, quality plan options, particularly for those found ineligible for Medicaid or CHIP. If cost is a barrier to coverage, know that many customers can find plans for under \$10 a month ."

Pennie® is Pennsylvania's official health insurance marketplace and the only place to get financial assistance to help lower the cost of high-quality coverage and care. Those who are no longer eligible for Medicaid coverage can apply for coverage through pennie.com, and some individuals will have their information securely transferred from Medicaid or CHIP for an easier enrollment process. Customers can simply call Pennie Customer Service at 1-844-844-8040 or find Pennie-certified pros at pennie.com/connect.

In addition to changes to Medicaid renewals, those who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits saw a decrease in payments in March due to the end of federal pandemic-era policy. Since early 2020, SNAP recipients have been receiving an extra Emergency Allotment (EA) payment every month, but SNAP recipients will now receive just one SNAP payment moving forward. All SNAP households will lose a minimum of \$95 a month in SNAP benefits with a statewide average loss of \$181 per household. Additionally, [a recent change to Social Security Income following the 2023 cost of living adjustment](#) will cause some seniors and people with disabilities to experience, on average, a further \$40 decrease in monthly benefits due to the end of SNAP EAs.

Governor Shapiro's budget proposal to increase the minimum SNAP benefit for household with seniors and individuals with disabilities by 50% and provide universal free breakfast to all children in public school is designed to help combat the effects of the benefit decrease on the most vulnerable Pennsylvanians.

East End Cooperative Ministry in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood is seeing "... a dramatic and skyrocketing increase in food pantry and community meals demand. Inflation and other factors are crippling the budgets of the impoverished and we believe the disappearance of SNAP benefits is clearly a key factor," said **EECM VP of Development and PR Michael Bartley**.

To learn more about the end of SNAP extra payments and resources in your community, visit www.dhs.pa.gov/SNAPCares.

To learn more about Medicaid and CHIP renewals and access educational resources, visit www.dhs.pa.gov/phe.

For more information on health insurance options available to Pennsylvanians, visit www.pa.gov/healthcare.

NOTE: Additional photos and video of speakers are available by emailing ra-pwdhspressooffice@pa.gov.

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