



## Social Security Newsletter

This is a newsletter of interest to professionals who provide services to potential Social Security disability and SSI claimants. © 2023

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### Federal Medicaid Changes Require Action to Continue Coverage

*The end of the pandemic health emergency means all Medicaid recipients are required to renew or lose benefits.*

**DURING THE PANDEMIC**, the federal government declared a health emergency and passed legislation that allowed all Medicaid recipients to continue the program. There were no reviews.

**THAT PROGRAM ENDED** on March 31, 2023. States have 12 months to determine who still qualifies for Medicaid.

**ALL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS** are required to renew, or they will lose their benefits. This will be their first renewal since March 2020.



**THIS IS GOING TO** be messy. Many Medicaid recipients have moved and may not have a current address on file. Many will not understand the notices. There is no consistent method across states for doing these reviews.

**HISTORICALLY, IN SOME** states almost half of the people who lose Medicaid do so because they have not responded to a renewal

notice. One estimate in California is that between 2 million and 3 million people will lose their Medi-Cal coverage and will have to transfer to the state marketplace program. As of March 2023, approximately 15.5 million people were on Medicaid in California.

**EACH STATE WILL** determine how to do these reviews. Some, such as Illinois, will do rolling reviews over a 12-month period. That means that no one will really know when their renewal date is until they get contacted by the State.

**SOME WILL SEND** requests by mail. At least one state is sending the renewal notice electronically if the Medicaid recipient has registered online (Texas).

**MANY PEOPLE WHO** have been able to access the health care system with their Medicaid coverage are going to lose access to doctors and medications.

**THIS ADDITIONAL** workload is being added to state agencies which, in many cases, are severely understaffed already. The expected delays in processing the renewals will be challenging.

**REVIEWS WILL LOOK** at income and household size. Each state has

its own rules on income cut-offs with most between 100-200 percent of the federal poverty level. Of course, the federal poverty level varies per state. In 2023, the Alaska poverty level income for a single person is \$18,210 while in Hawaii it is \$16,770 for a single person.

**HEALTH INSURANCE** is critical to access the health care system. Social Security disability applications are determined by the findings of current treating medical providers. Without access, many people who may qualify for disability will be hard pressed to obtain medical services necessary to not only treat their debilitating medical conditions, but also claim disability.

#### Assistance Available

To learn more about this intersection between law and medicine, and how your agency or support group can provide more assistance, please call us for one of our free in-service sessions.