



## Update 07/15/2024

The deadline for Medicaid redetermination has been extended until August 15th, with loss of coverage occurring on September 1 if beneficiaries do not respond or are no longer eligible. We thank the state for their swift and diligent response; however, we still aim to share the testimonials of our community members and emphasize the importance of Medicaid Redetermination.

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Thursday, July 18, 2024

Grace Hou, Deputy Governor of Health and Human Services  
State of Illinois  
100 W. Randolph Street  
Chicago, IL 60601

Lizzy Whitehorn, Director  
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
401 S. Clinton  
Chicago, IL 60607

Dear Deputy Governor Hou and Director Whitehorn,

Thank you for your prompt response to our collective request for an extension of the Medicaid Redetermination deadline for beneficiaries of the state's Health Care Benefits for Immigrant Adults (HBIA) and Health Care Benefits for Immigrant Seniors (HBIS) programs. As healthcare providers, safety net clinics, nonprofit organizations, and community health workers, and local policy makers we are deeply concerned about the significant difficulties these beneficiaries are facing as they navigate the Redetermination application process for the first time.

Our health navigators, staff, and community members have witnessed numerous challenges throughout the Redetermination process. This is highly concerning given the state of Illinois closed enrollment for these unique programs for immigrants. If these beneficiaries are removed from the HBIA and HBIS programs, they can experience a disruption in health care coverage, at minimum and/or lose complete access to their only health insurance, which could lead to dire consequences for themselves, their families and communities.

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We have included testimonials from some of our safety net clinics, doctors, and community health workers who can provide first-hand accounts of the challenges beneficiaries are encountering:

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Kara Murphy, President, Dupage Health Coalition

*"We appreciate and applaud every opportunity to increase the support (and time) provided to clients navigating this challenging process. Anecdotally, we hear that some of our clients haven't received all the intended correspondence, or were told in error that they weren't eligible for ongoing healthcare assistance. Recognizing that consequences of loss of coverage will be devastating to neighbors without alternative paths to coverage, it is incumbent on all of us to work collaboratively to maximize successful redetermination."*

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Simbo Ige MD, MS, MPH, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Public Health

*"Extending the due date is essential; it will provide more flexibility for health departments and community organizations to assist individuals with the Health Benefits of Immigrant Adults (HBIA) and Health Benefits for Immigrant Seniors (HBIS). It is crucial for these communities to maintain their healthcare coverage to ensure their overall well-being and improve their quality of life."*

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Luz Ramirez, DuPage Health Coalition

*"[...]we do call the state to try and do the redeterminations by phone, but it depends on the caseworker if they are willing to do it not. Sometimes they just tell us that they will resend the client the renewal documents by mail. Also, I have run into issues where after the renewal has been processed clients are being denied and the reason is status or that the HBIA/HBIS program has reach their limits. At this point I would contact DHS or file an appeal to get this solved. We are trying our best to help as many clients as possible out with the redeterminations and also making sure they know this does not have to do with a public charge."*

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Melissa Simon, MD, Physician and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Northwestern Medicine, Member of Illinois Unidos

*"It is important to expand the redetermination deadline for the health and well-being of those who have had to work numerous jobs, care for family members and loved ones and etc, and have not had the time to file the paperwork for redetermination of eligibility for public aid, especially Medicaid. Healthcare coverage should be available and accessible to everyone in the United States. Without healthcare coverage, symptoms, chronic conditions, and other potential illnesses are neglected and can worsen which ultimately creates harder conditions to treat- and thus creating more burden and cost to families and to our healthcare system."*

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The pandemic has disproportionately impacted immigrants and people of color, and many have yet to fully recover in terms of health, socioeconomic status, and quality of life. This situation is devastating. Immigrants and people of color were disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, and many have yet to fully recover in terms of health, socio-economic status, and quality of life. Losing health insurance coverage at this critical time would only exacerbate these disparities.

We appreciate the extension of the Medicaid Redetermination deadline for HBIA and HBIS beneficiaries to ensure they have sufficient time and support to successfully complete their applications. In addition, we would like to set up Redetermination applications and Appeal events co-sponsored by Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and Illinois Unidos nonprofit partners throughout the next few weeks to ensure there are no barriers to proper submission and eligibility questions. It is crucial that we protect the health and well-being of these vulnerable communities, particularly as they continue to recover from the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your prompt action to safeguard the health coverage of Illinois' immigrant adults and seniors.

Sincerely,

Alejandra L. Ibañez, Executive Director  
Illinois Unidos

Alma E. Anaya



Cook County Commissioner, 7th District

Anthony Quezada  
Cook County Commissioner, 8th District

Edgar Gonzalez Jr  
Illinois State Representative, 23rd District

Betty Alzamora, Board Member  
Indivisible Chicago Alliance

Susan Avila, RN (Trauma Nurse Coordinator)  
John H. Stroger Jr., Hospital of Cook County  
IU Board of Director Secretary

Marien Casillas Pabellos, Executive Director  
PASO-West Suburban Action Project

Yvette D. Castañeda Phd, Professor & Community Engagement Core Lead  
Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research  
Rosalind Franklin University

Marta Cerda, CEO/President  
ASI Home/Health Care Corporation  
IU Board of Directors Vice-Chair

Elizabeth Cervantes, Co-founder  
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Marcos Cenicerros, Executive Director  
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C.J. Hawking, Executive Director  
ARISE Chicago

Dalia Galvan Morales, Associate Director of Strategy & Government Relations  
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Christopher Ramos, Community Organizer  
Access Living

Sasha Reyes, Advocacy and Intake Specialist  
Farmworker Landscaper Advocacy Project

Maggie Rivera, Executive Director  
Illinois Migrant Council

Rick Rosales, Director of Social & Community Projects  
The Resurrection Project

Melissa Simon, MD, Physician and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Northwestern Medicine  
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