



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ROBERT GORDON
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Dec. 9, 2019

CONTACT: Bob Wheaton
517-241-2112
Wheatonb@michigan.gov

MDHHS prepares Healthy Michigan Plan beneficiaries for work requirements with new letters outlining steps for compliance

Enrollees can report work activities online or via toll-free number

More than 238,000 people enrolled in the Healthy Michigan Plan will begin receiving letters this week explaining what is needed to comply with the program's new work requirements under a state law approved prior to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer taking office. The notices are the latest effort by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to preserve health insurance coverage for as many people as possible.

Anyone who receives this letter must tell MDHHS monthly about their work or other activities, such as job training approved by MDHHS or searching for a job.

They must work or participate in other qualifying activities for at least 80 hours each month or else they could lose Healthy Michigan Plan coverage. Healthy Michigan Plan beneficiaries who are subject to the work requirements must report work or other activities to MDHHS from Jan. 25 to Feb. 29 by going to www.Michigan.gov/MiBridges or calling 833-895-4355. They will need to continue to do that every month.

Whitmer and MDHHS Director Robert Gordon have made clear their concerns about the work requirements. If Michigan's experience is similar to what happened in other states that added work requirements, the law will strip away health insurance from more than 100,000 Michiganders.

Michigan's work requirements are in jeopardy as a result of a lawsuit filed last month. In Arkansas, Kentucky and New Hampshire, after similar lawsuits were filed, a federal court issued an injunction halting application by vacating approval of each states' work requirements. This is an action Michigan could face as well.

Facing similar litigation, Republican governors in Indiana and Arizona, and New Hampshire (prior to the court vacating the requirements) voluntarily put their states' work requirements implementation on hold. Michigan legislative leaders, however, refused to take the same course of action, notwithstanding requests from both Whitmer and Gordon to delay implementation to avoid the risk of wasting millions of taxpayer dollars and confusing Healthy Michigan Plan beneficiaries.

-MORE-

If the court blocks the requirements, MDHHS will need to spend additional money to inform Healthy Michigan Plan beneficiaries of the update.

Michigan is the only state moving ahead with expanded Medicaid work requirements in January despite legal action.

“Implementing work requirements under a dark legal cloud is not a good use of taxpayer dollars, as conservatives in Indiana, Arizona and New Hampshire have recognized,” Gordon said. “Unfortunately, that’s now MDHHS’s job, and we will do everything in our power to implement the law effectively. I am proud of the excellent work of the MDHHS team in designing notices that tell individuals in the clearest possible terms what they must do to comply with the law. I urge individuals to review these notices carefully.”

Michigan enacted its highly successful Healthy Michigan Plan effective April 1, 2014, after bipartisan approval of legislation that expanded Medicaid to residents with incomes at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level. More than 640,000 people have Healthy Michigan Plan coverage today. According to research from the University of Michigan, the Healthy Michigan Plan has more than doubled primary care usage, reduced enrollees’ reliance on the emergency room by 58 percent, cut uncompensated care by nearly 50 percent, and added \$2.3 billion to the state’s economy. The work requirements threaten the initiative’s success.

Learn more about the Healthy Michigan Plan at HealthyMichiganPlan.org and about the work requirements and other changes on the [Changes Coming in 2020 tab](#). Beneficiaries with questions can call 800-642-3195.

#