



## Providing Phone Assistance with MI Bridges

With the Stay Home, Stay Safe Order in place, MDHHS understands that many of our MI Bridges Navigation Partners have moved away from providing in-person assistance with MI Bridges and are wondering how they can provide assistance to clients over the phone. In an effort to better support our MI Bridges Community Partners who still are providing services via the phone, we have developed the below guidance on how to provide this assistance with MI Bridges account creation and online applications for benefits. **This is a temporary measure that is only in place until April 30<sup>th</sup> and is subject to change.** MDHHS will provide updates as processes/policies are changed.

### Helping clients over the phone who have internet and computer/mobile device but have low tech skills

1. Community partner staff may create a MI Bridges account in the client's name over the phone and assist the client with the Identity Proofing step (if they'd like)
2. Once the account is created, community partner staff must provide the client with the account information they created (username and password)
3. Client logs in to the account and fills out an application for benefits while the staff provides guidance/walkthrough over the phone
4. Ultimately, the client is the one who submits the application in MI Bridges

### Helping clients over the phone who have no internet and/or computer/mobile device access

Scenario 1: Receive written consent first (should be done whenever possible):

1. Obtain written consent from the client to provide over the phone assistance for submitting an application for benefits.
2. Maintain record of written consent and provide to MDHHS when requested.
3. Complete account creation, if applicable. Provide username and password to client.
4. Assist with the application. At the end of the application, before submission, indicate in the comment box the following information:
  - a. The application is being submitted by a navigator over the phone
  - b. The name of the navigator, organization, and contact information
  - c. That written consent was obtained and the date it was obtained

Scenario 2: If written consent cannot be obtained first, receive verbal consent:

1. Obtain verbal consent over the phone and indicate written consent will need to be provided after assistance.
2. Maintain internal record of verbal consent including date and time, to be provided to MDHHS when requested.
3. Complete account creation, if applicable. Provide username and password to client.
4. Assist with the application. At the end of the application, before submission, indicate in the comment box the following information:

- a. The application is being submitted by a navigator over the phone
  - b. The name of the navigator, organization, and contact information
  - c. That verbal consent was obtained and the date and time it was obtained  
*Language to use is as follows: I, \_\_\_\_\_, a MI Bridges Navigator with \_\_\_\_\_ received permission of \_\_\_\_\_ granted by telephone on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time). I will follow up with a letter indicating what was done and have the client send back authorization to submit the application.*
  - d. That written consent has been requested
5. Follow up with the client to receive written consent.
  6. Maintain record of written consent to provide to MDHHS when requested.

Scenario 3: Other forms of over the phone assistance for Medicaid and Food Assistance:

1. Medicaid: Direct the client to call the Beneficiary Helpline to apply by phone at 1-800-642-3195.
2. Food Assistance Program (FAP): Direct the client to call the Food Bank Council of Michigan, a SNAP Outreach partner, to apply by phone at 1-888-544-8773.