



MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 20-11

Date: June 4, 2020

To: Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff
Program Managers
Regional Directors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
State Office 2115

Subject: **1. Adult Certified for the Healthy Texas Women Program Leaves the Household**
2. Alignment of Medicaid Certification Periods for all Children Living in the Same Household
3. Revised - New SNAP Benefits Distribution Schedule

The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

1. Adult Certified for the Healthy Texas Women Program Leaves the Household

Background

Women certified for Healthy Texas Women (HTW) receive 12 months of continuous eligibility. A woman who is certified for HTW and other benefits (i.e., SNAP, TANF) may not always be listed as the Head of Household on her case. When an adult woman receiving HTW coverage is not listed as the Head of Household, HTW benefits are often incorrectly denied when it is reported that the woman has left the household.

Current Policy

[Healthy Texas Women](#)

Healthy Texas Women recipients are certified for 12-months of continuous eligibility. (Texas Works Handbook (TWH), W-910, General Policy)

During the certification period, recipients must report address changes. The only address change that will impact HTW eligibility during the 12-month certification period is if the woman moves out of Texas. (TWH A-740, Moves Out of Texas; TWH W-2110, How to Report a Change)

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) can only act on changes reported by the HTW recipient, or by the parent or guardian if the recipient is a minor between the ages of 15 through 17. (TWH W-2400, Confidentiality)

When a non-Head of Household, adult woman certified for HTW and other benefits (SNAP, TANF or both) is removed from the household, the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) incorrectly terminates HTW without retaining the required 12-month certification period.

New Policy

[Healthy Texas Women](#)

When the Head of Household reports that a woman certified for HTW along with other benefits has left the household, remove the woman from the other benefits (i.e., SNAP, TANF, or both), deny the associated HTW EDG, and create a new HTW case with the woman listed as the Head of Household. The certification period for the new case will be the months remaining in the original HTW certification period. TIERS has been modified to automatically process these changes and retain the required 12-month certification period in accordance with policy when the Head of Household reports that the woman has left the household.

If TIERS cannot automatically terminate the HTW EDG on the existing case and create the new case, Alert 899 - *HTW EDG Review Needed for Approval*, is generated and staff must manually create the new HTW case.

If the woman is already the Head of Household on another case:

- the HTW EDG on the case where she is not the Head of Household will be terminated;
- a new EDG will be created on the existing case where she is the Head of Household; and
- she will receive the months remaining on her HTW certification period on the new case.

Note: There are no automation changes for HTW recipients who are minors (age 15-17). If a minor leaves the household, or if the parent or guardian associated with the minor's HTW EDG leaves the household, the minor's HTW eligibility will be denied. The parent or guardian in her new household will need to reapply on her behalf.

Automation

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 106.3 on May 2, 2020.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Handbook updates are not required.

Training

Training was made available in the web-based training (WBT) titled *R106.3 General Information Web-Based Training* on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

Effective Date

Automation changes will be effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 106.3 currently scheduled for May 2, 2020.

2. Alignment of Medicaid Certification Periods for all Children Living in the Same Household

Background

Requiring a separate Medicaid application for a non-sibling child who lives in the same household as a child currently receiving Children's Medicaid does not allow the family to provide the new child's information in the most efficient way possible and can cause the Medicaid certification periods for children on the same case to be unaligned. Unaligned Medicaid certification periods for children living in the same household:

- require families to complete the renewal process for each child on the case, instead of completing the renewal process just once for all children in the household; and
- increase mailing costs and staff workload.

Children in the same household who are eligible for the same health care program are anticipated to have the same certification period with the following exceptions:

- Newborns certified for MA-Newborn Children (TP 45); and
 - The TP 45 certification period begins on the newborn's date of birth and ends the month of their first birthday.
- Children living in the same household when one child is certified for Medicaid and the other is certified for CHIP.
 - The Medicaid certification period usually begins the first day of the application month.
 - CHIP eligibility is prospective and will not begin until a managed care plan is selected. The eligibility start date begins the first day of the month after the household has selected a plan and paid the enrollment fee, if applicable.

Current policy for adding non-siblings to a household and existing TIERS functionality has resulted in cases where children living in the same household have unaligned Medicaid certification periods for MA – Children under 1 (TP 43), MA – Children 6-18 (TP 44), or MA – Children 1-5 (TP 48) types of assistance.

Current Policy

Texas Works Medicaid (TP 43, TP 44 and TP 48)

When a household requests Medicaid for a sibling of a child currently receiving Children's Medicaid coverage, the household does not need to complete a new application. (TWH A-121, Receipt of Application and TWH B-641, Additions to the Household)

When a household requests Medicaid for a new child that is not a sibling (i.e., niece, nephew, cousin, etc.), a new application is required. (TWH A-121, Receipt of Application and TWH B-641, Additions to the Household)

New children (both siblings and non-siblings) certified for Medicaid coverage have a separate EDG with a certification period that is aligned with the existing child's Medicaid certification period.

New Policy

Texas Works Medicaid (TP 43, TP 44 and TP 48)

When a household requests Medicaid for a child (sibling or non-sibling) who lives with a child currently receiving TP 43, TP 44, or TP 48 Medicaid coverage, the household does not need to complete a new application.

Follow policy in TWH A-240, Medical Programs, to determine the new child's household composition and TWH A-1300, Income, to determine if the new child has any countable income.

If the household does not provide all the information needed to make an eligibility determination when requesting Medicaid for the new child, follow current policy and processes to request the additional information by issuing the Form H1020, Request for Information or Action. (TWH B-631, Actions on Changes)

If all requested information is provided, the new child's certification period will be aligned with the existing child's Medicaid certification period.

Automation

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 106.3 on May 2, 2020.

TIERS will complete a one-time data migration to align the certification periods for the TP 43, TP 44, and TP 48 EDGs on the same case that have not had ELDS requested. The TP 43, TP 44, and TP 48 EDGs that are not aligned with the one-time data migration will be aligned to the other CMA EDGs on the case at the next renewal.

Exceptions:

The one-time data migration will not be applied to:

- EDGs in "review initiated" mode that have ELDS requested.
 - The certification periods for these EDGs will be aligned at the next renewal.

- Children certified for TP 44 who will age out of Children's Medicaid before the end of their certification period.
- Newborns certified for TP 45.
 - The newborn's certification period will be aligned to the certification period of the existing Children's Medicaid EDG(s) on the case when the newborn's coverage is renewed.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook is currently scheduled to be updated in the October 2020 revision.

Updates to the MEPD Handbook are not required.

Training

Training was made available in the web-based training (WBT) titled *R106.3 General Information Web-Based Training* on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 106.3 currently scheduled for May 2, 2020.

3. New SNAP Benefits Distribution Schedule

Background

The implementation of House Bill (H.B.) 1218, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 expands the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits distribution schedule over a 28-day period. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will apply the new distribution schedule to all new SNAP households certified on or after **June 1, 2020**.

Current Policy

SNAP

SNAP monthly benefits are available on a staggered basis over the first 15 days of the month, based on the last digit of the eligibility determination group (EDG) number (TWH B-251, Monthly Benefit Issuance Schedule):

Last digit of the SNAP EDG number	Day
0	1
1	3
2	5
3	6
4	7
5	9
6	11
7	12
8	13
9	15

New Policy

SNAP

For new SNAP households certified on or after **June 1, 2020**, SNAP monthly benefits are available on a staggered basis **between the 16th and the 28th day of the month**, based on the last two digits of the EDG number:

Last two digits of the SNAP EDG number	Day
00-03	16
04-06	17
07-10	18
11-13	19
14-17	20
18-20	21

Last two digits of the SNAP EDG number	Day
21-24	22
25-27	23
28-31	24
32-34	25
35-38	26
39-41	27
42-45	28
46-49	27
50-53	28
54-57	16
58-60	17
61-64	18
65-67	19
68-71	20
72-74	21
75-78	22
79-81	23
82-85	24
86-88	25
89-92	26
93-95	27
96-99	28

For SNAP households who were certified before **June 1, 2020**, there will be no changes to their current benefit issuance schedule.

Note: SNAP households will retain their existing schedule based on the date initially certified, even if there is a break in benefits and the household reapplies after **June 1, 2020**.

Automation

Changes to TIERS **were implemented on May 31, 2020**.

Correspondence

Changes to Form H1184, Benefits Issuance Schedule, and Form TF0001, Notice of Case Action, to include information about the various distribution schedules will be implemented by September 1, 2020.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook is currently scheduled to be updated in the October 2020 revision.

Updates to the MEPD Handbook are not required.

Training

Training is available in PALMS, titled "R106.3 General Information", released on April 24, 2020. A training broadcast was sent with further details.

Effective Date

This policy is effective for new applications disposed on or after June 1, 2020.