



# Public Health Emergency Unwinding:

Restoring Routine Eligibility and Enrollment Operations  
in Maryland After the PHE Ends

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Debbie Ruppert, Executive Director  
Lisa Oelfke, Health Policy Analyst - Advanced  
Office of Eligibility Services

# Overview

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- Since the Public Health Emergency (PHE) began in January 2020, Medicaid enrollment grew significantly, as states maintained continuous enrollment of Medicaid beneficiaries in accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- In Maryland, total Maryland Medicaid enrollment increased from 1.4 million to 1.7 million.

# CMS Guidance

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- CMS issued guidance to states to “unwind” from PHE policies in order to resume normal Medicaid eligibility and enrollment operations once the PHE ends (State Health Official letter #22-001).
- The unwinding period refers to the timeframe after the PHE ends for which states must begin to:
  - Address outstanding eligibility and enrollment actions in an efficient manner that reduces erroneous loss of coverage for enrollees;
  - Enable a sustainable distribution of renewals in future years; and
  - Ensure timely processing of new applications and eligibility actions within specified timelines.

# 12 Month Unwinding Timeline

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- The 12-month unwinding period may begin no later than the first day of the month following the month in which the PHE ends.
- The PHE end date has not yet been confirmed by CMS. MDH is extending cases to Sept 30, 2022.
- CMS will provide 60 days notice to states prior to end of PHE.
- CMS announced that it would provide states up to **12 months** after the end of the PHE to initiate post-enrollment verifications, redeterminations based on changes in circumstances, and renewals.

# Maryland's Unwinding Plan

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During the first six months of the PHE unwinding, MDH will prioritize renewals for selected groups, which includes those who did a change report but would have lost coverage if not for the extension, including:

- Aged out
- Overscale income limits for Medicaid/MCHP
- Transitional Medical Assistance
- Enrollees not enrolled in MCO plans who have up to 90 days of temporary coverage
- Medicare (FFS)
- Family Planning (FFS)
- MDH is compiling the data on these groups and once we have the specific numbers we will distribute them over the first 6 months, while processing regularly scheduled monthly renewals.
- There continues to be an average 50% auto-renewal rate.

# Communications/Outreach Plan

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- MDH is working with MHBE and DHS on coordinated messaging for renewals, which will include website, Facebook, and other public facing communications.
- MHC will include a color flyer with all manual renewal notices (paper and electronic) that informs consumers about renewing coverage.
- MDH will continue to send renewal files to MCOs.