

July 2023

Quarter 2 2023 report required by 305 ILCS 5/11-5.1(h). (Public Act 101-0209)

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) continue to collaborate on our multi-pronged plan to maintain low eligibility backlogs which includes maintaining staffing levels for eligibility workers, providing better training, deploying best practices across both agencies, and rolling out simplified policies and procedures. Addressing the backlog and improving the Integrated Eligibility System (IES) is a primary focus of HFS and IDHS every day.

In addition to our focus on backlog of applications and redeterminations the agencies continue work to address the COVID Public Health Emergency.

Application Backlog

At the end of March 2023, pending Medicaid applications over 45 days were 6,709, down from 147,000 at the end of January 2019 by 98%.

Hiring Personnel – Caseworker Onboarding & Training

We continue to make progress in hiring caseworkers and maintaining staffing levels. Since February 2019, we have added 328 net new caseworkers in local IDHS offices around the state and the HFS Bureau of All Kids. This is a 12% increase. The onboarding of caseworkers is vital to processing backlogs, applications, and renewals. New caseworkers can take several months to learn the complex system of eligibility. Caseworkers often assist with flagging IES issues, suggesting more efficient processes, and testing new enhancements before full implementation.

Long Term Care (LTC) – Continued Efforts

On April 30, 2019, there were 6,342 pending LTC applications with 4,898 over 45 days old and 15,173 pending admits with 10,196 over 45 days old. These backlogs have been eliminated. As of April 1, 2023, there were 119 LTC applications pending with 2 over 45 days and 437 admits pending with only 2 over 45 days. This progress is due, in part to COVID policies, but also to the re-alignment of processes and workflows at the three existing LTC hubs, the LTC Statewide Processing Center, and the new fourth LTC office in Anna; new trainings for caseworkers, and several initiatives which occurred in 2020. This included creation of a new LTC statewide processing center at Granite City, which became operational in January 2021, the ongoing creation of the Medical Field Operations Anna Office, which opened January 16, 2021, and allowing facilities the ability to upload documents to IES through the ABE Provider Portal. Further, the Central Scanning Unit for Long Term Care work opened in April 2021. The State continues to evaluate the workload and processes to make continual improvements to the system to maintain the progress made on timely application decisions.

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Call Center – Continued Efforts

The Alton Call Center became fully operational on September 16, 2020. The Alton Call Center currently has 66 staff on board with 16 vacancies. The ABE Call Center currently has 101 staff on board with 19 vacancies. 12 of the vacancies are HSC staff. The Alton Rede Center has been established to focus on the telephonic SNAP Rede's. There are currently 27 HSC's, 2 HSCM's, and an LOA on board. The only remaining vacancy is 2 PAEA's. All FCRC lines ring through the IVR and local office staff take calls through Finesse. IVR 2.0 is currently in design phase. This will add a chat option.

System Improvements – In Progress

We continue to work on IES system performance initiatives, implementing legislative mandated policy changes, COVID-related changes and issuances, known documented defects and refreshing IES hardware and software. An external vendor was hired to advise HFS and IDHS on the most impactful system improvements since February 2022.

COVID Strategies

Beginning in March 2020, HFS implemented a variety of eligibility and enrollment flexibilities to apply during the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE) with the goal of streamlining application requirements, starting coverage faster, and assuring continued coverage throughout the PHE. These flexibilities included changes to: simplify documentation requirements at application, delay renewals and actions that would change or end coverage, disregard assets in determining eligibility, waive premiums and co-payments for children in All Kids and individuals in the Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities program, cover COVID-19 testing for the uninsured, and provide presumptive eligibility to certain adults.

Challenges Exist

Despite our significant efforts, challenges remain. HFS, IDHS and DoIT continue to face challenges with finding candidates and onboarding new staff to address IES performance and the backlog of applications and renewals. Strategies to address IES system performance issues are underway, but some are slower than anticipated.

See following page for Reporting of Medical Application and Renewal Processing Data for Quarter 4 2023.

For the purposes of part B of the chart below, please note:

The term "ex parte renewal" refers to a process by which the state systematically uses approved electronic sources during the annual renewal process to automatically verify an individual's eligibility status and continue medical coverage. Using the ex parte process provides efficiency for both clients and state caseworkers through automation. The state sends Form A to clients found eligible for ex parte renewal. Note, beginning in March 2020, HFS suspended Form B mailings due to COVID.

Quarterly Reporting - Eligibility (required by 305 ILCS 5/11-5.1(h))				
A. Medical Applications (End of month)		Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
Total applications on hand by number of days on hand		16,184	20,449	25,689
0-7 Days		3,935	4,905	6,356
8-45		6,571	9,005	11,268
46-90		1,649	2,009	2,878
91-180		2,234	2,157	2,238
181+		1,795	2,373	2,949
Total applications on hand by basis for determining		16,184	20,449	25,689
Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)		1,196	1,269	1,296
Non-MAGI - Long Term Care		188	365	594
Non-MAGI - Excluding Long Term Care		846	983	1,325
Unknown		13,954	17,832	22,474
Applications over 45 days		5,678	6,539	8,065
Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI)		222	221	245
Non-MAGI - Long Term Care		60	72	95
Non-MAGI - Excluding Long Term Care		163	213	283
Unknown		5,233	6,033	7,442
B. Medical Renewal (by month in which ex parte decision is made)				
Total number of cases up for renewal in two months		113,606	203,926	198,686
Form A Mailed (ex parte)		58,323	93,930	101,042
		51%	46%	51%
Form B (not mailed: not ex parte)		55,283	109,996	97,644
		49%	54%	49%
Reasons Form B (not mailed)		55,283	109,996	99,555
Aged, Blind and Disabled		6,617	14,345	15,483
		12%	13%	16%
Unverifiable Income		11,085	18,708	17,457
		20%	17%	18%
Zero (\$0) Income		0	0	0
		0%	0%	0%
No SSN		6,851	12,722	12,246
		12%	12%	12%
Income Exceeds Eligibility Criteria		14,767	33,014	27,253
		27%	30%	27%
Self-Employment Income		5,389	10,812	9,604
		10%	10%	10%
Other Reasons		10,574	20,395	17,512
		19%	19%	18%

