

# MassHealth Updates

Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum

October 2019

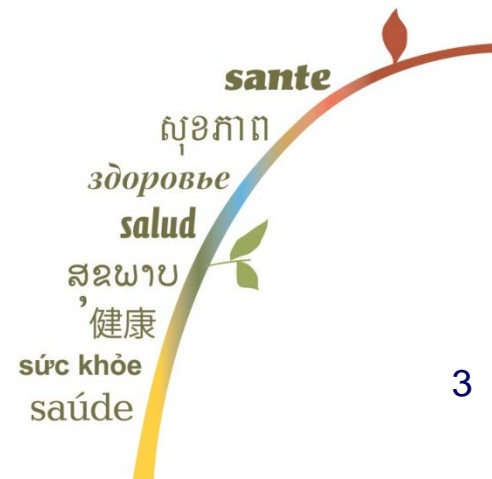
(Updated 11/13/19)



# Agenda

- Public Charge
- Race, Ethnicity and Language (REaL)
- Online System Updates - System Release 18
- MSP/Buy-In Programs Eligibility Expansion
- Tobacco Cessation

# Public Charge



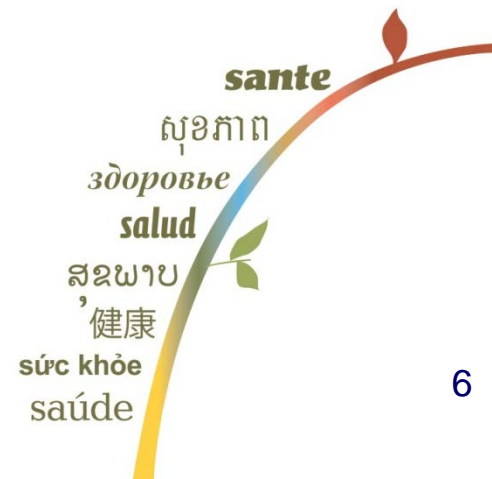
# Public Charge – Important Information

On Friday, October 11, a federal judge in New York placed a hold on the public charge rule, delaying the implementation of the rule. The hold is nationwide, which means Massachusetts residents are not currently subject to the new provisions of the public charge rule. Updates will follow as the legal process develops.

# For More Information

- For more information about the public charge rule and for a list of immigration services in the community, visit <https://www.hcfama.org/immigrant-health>. Information is also available in Spanish and Portuguese on the site.
- For questions about your health coverage as it relates to public charge, contact Health Care For All's Helpline at: 800-272-4232
- For questions about your MassHealth coverage, contact MassHealth Customer Service at: 800-841-2900 (TTY: 800-497-4648).
- For questions about your Health Connector coverage, contact Health Connector Customer Service at: 877-623-6765 (TTY: 877- 623-7773).

# Race, Ethnicity and Language (REaL)

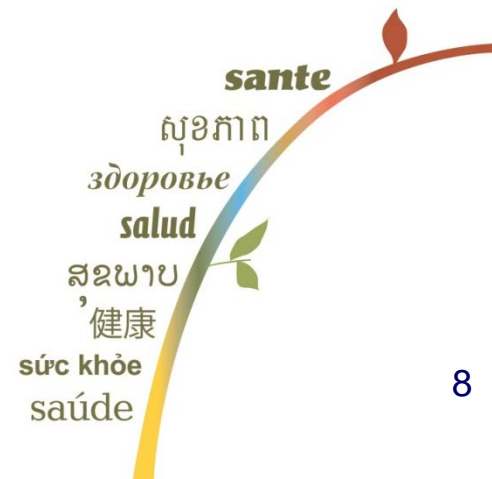


# Race, Ethnicity and Language (REaL)

- MassHealth is researching ways to improve data collection including demographic data.
- Data collection helps increase awareness and implementation of best practices and guidelines for standardized collection of race, ethnicity and language data.

# Online System Updates

## System Release 18





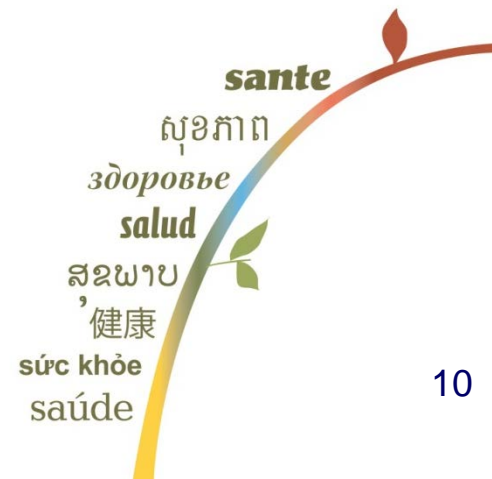
# New Document Upload Feature

With Release 18, individuals and Assisters will be able to upload documents directly to a member's online application. There will be a new tab at the top of the page called "My Documents," where individuals and Assisters can upload documents to satisfy Requests for Information (RFIs), and submit other required forms directly to MassHealth and the Health Connector.

- This feature provides an additional option for submitting required documents.
- Members can still submit their documents via mail or fax.

**Important Note:** Do not send a document multiple ways (e.g., **never** fax and upload the same RFI document).

# MSP/Buy-In Programs Eligibility Expansion



# Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)

Medicare Savings Programs (also known as the "MassHealth Buy-in" Programs) help older residents and people living with disabilities save money on their Medicare coverage.

## Senior Buy-In

- MassHealth pays for Medicare Part B premium
- MassHealth pays for Medicare Part A premium (if member has a Part A premium)
- MassHealth pays for Medicare Part A and B cost sharing (co-insurance and deductibles)
- Automatic eligibility for the Medicare Part D Extra Help

## Buy-In

- MassHealth pays for Medicare Part B premium
- Automatic eligibility for the Medicare Part D Extra Help

# MSP/Buy-In Programs Eligibility Expansion

- The State Fiscal Year 2020 budget included language expanding eligibility for the MSP/Buy-In programs.
- The expansion criteria increases the income and asset/resource limits for these programs.
- It is estimated that about 25,000 Massachusetts residents with Medicare will be newly eligible for these programs under the expansion.
- Approximately 15,000 Buy-In members would become eligible for Senior Buy-In under the expansion.

# MSP/Buy-In Programs Expansion Details

## Senior Buy-In Expansion Details

### Current Eligibility

- **Income up to or equal to 100% FPL**
  - \$1,061/month for an individual
  - \$1,430/month for married couples who live together
  
- **Asset/resource limits**
  - \$7,730 individual
  - \$11,600 married couples who live together



### Expansion Eligibility

- **Income up to or equal to 130% FPL**
  - \$1,374/month for an individual
  - \$1,852/month for married couples who live together
  
- **Asset/resource limits**
  - \$15,460 individual
  - \$23,200 married couples who live together

**Note:** The income amounts may change on 3/1/20, and the asset/resource amounts may change on 1/1/20.

# MSP/Buy-In Programs Expansion Details

## Buy-In Expansion Details

### Current Eligibility

- **Income up to or equal to 135% FPL**
  - \$1,426/month for an individual
  - \$1,923/month for married couples who live together
  
- **Asset/resource limits**
  - \$7,730 individual
  - \$11,600 married couples who live together



### Expansion Eligibility

- **Income up to or equal to 165% FPL**
  - \$1,738/month for an individual
  - \$2,346/month for married couples who live together
  
- **Asset/resource limits**
  - \$15,460 individual
  - \$23,200 married couples who live together



**Note:** The income amounts may change on 3/1/20, and the asset/resource amounts may change on 1/1/20.

## MSP/Buy-In Programs Effective Dates (under SSA rules)

- **MassHealth Senior Buy-In goes into effect:**
  - first day of the calendar month following the date of the MassHealth eligibility determination
  
- **MassHealth Buy-In goes into effect:**
  - up to three calendar months before the month of application

# MSP/Buy-In Programs Application Process

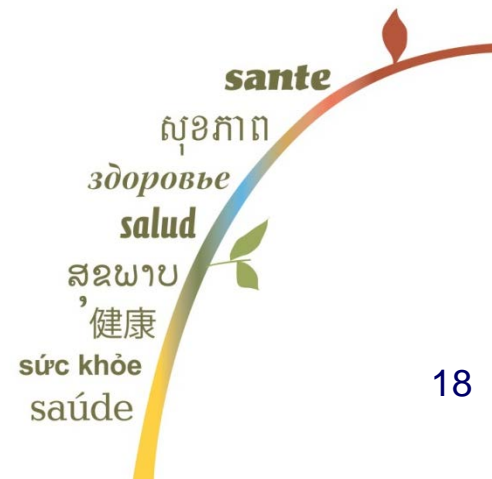
- Applications submitted before January 1, 2020, will use the current income and asset/resource limits.
- MassHealth is working on a process to re-determine all members currently on Buy-In, using the new income limits (to see if they would become eligible for Senior Buy-In).
- Until this process is in place, beginning January 1, 2020, Buy-In members can contact MassHealth Customer Service at: (800) 841-2900 (TTY: (800) 497-4648), to check if their benefits can be redetermined using the new rules.



# MSP/Buy-In Programs Application Process

- Starting January 1, 2020, individuals seeking **Senior Buy-In only** (and not in addition to full MassHealth) can use the Buy-In Programs Application (previously, Senior Buy-In could only be determined using the SACA “Traditional” application).
- MassHealth is expanding the Buy-In Programs in two phases:
  - Phase 1 expands income and asset limits for individuals who have or are seeking **Buy-In/Senior Buy-In only**. This phase will be in place as of January 1, 2020.
  - Phase 2 expands income and asset limits for the Buy-In/Senior Buy-In portion of their benefits for individuals who have or are seeking Buy-In/Senior Buy-In, **plus** full MassHealth. We do not yet have a target implementation date for this phase.

# Tobacco Cessation Updates



# Important Changes to MassHealth Member Co-Pays for Products and Medications that Help People Quit Smoking and Vaping

- MassHealth has eliminated co-payments on products that help people quit smoking, including nicotine replacement therapies (NRT), like gum, patches, and lozenges.
- Effective September 25, 2019, this regulation extends to all MassHealth members.

# What Should Members Know?

- MassHealth members do not need to pay anything out of pocket for products to help them quit smoking, including prescription medications and over the counter products like gum, patches, and lozenges.
- Some medications, like Chantix, are only available with a prescription from a health care provider. MassHealth members do not have to pay anything out of pocket for them.
- MassHealth members under the age of 18 need a prescription from their health care provider to get nicotine replacement therapy, including over the counter products.
- Pharmacists should assist MassHealth members in accessing appropriate products at no cost to the members.

## For More Information

If members have any questions regarding their pharmacy copayments, they can contact MassHealth Customer Service at: 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648).

For information about quitting smoking or vaping go to [Mass.gov/QuitVaping](https://www.mass.gov/QuitVaping) or visit the Helpline at [MakeSmokingHistory.org](https://www.MakeSmokingHistory.org)

# Questions?

