



# MassHealth Updates

Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum  
January 2021

# Agenda

- MassHealth's Response to COVID-19 Operations Update
- Extension of Coronavirus Relief Funds
- End of Year Tax Filing
- Notice of Birth (NOB) Updates
- 2021 Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)
- One Care Program Update
- Recertification of Certified Application Counselors (CACs)
- MassHealth Customer Service Center: Menu Changes
- Resources: COVID-19 Resource

# MassHealth Operations Update: Response to COVID-19

# Response to COVID-19 Health Emergency

**The Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, extended the COVID-19 national public health emergency declaration, effective January 21, 2020. This extension is for 90 days.**

- In response to COVID-19, and to support the health and safety of our members and staff:
  - All MassHealth Enrollment Centers (MECs) will be closed for walk-in visitors until the federal emergency is lifted
  - The MassHealth Customer Service Center has maintained regular business hours

# Response to COVID-19 Health Emergency

- MassHealth will maintain coverage for individuals who have:
  - MassHealth (Medicaid/CHIP) coverage, Children’s Medical Security Plan (CMSP), or Health Safety Net (HSN) as of March 18, 2020
  - been newly approved during the COVID-19 public health national emergency, and through the end of the month in which such national emergency period ends
- Individuals will not lose coverage or have a decrease in benefits during the public health national emergency. Coverage will end only if an individual:
  - requests termination of eligibility
  - is no longer a resident of Massachusetts
  - is deceased
- [MassHealth Eligibility Flexibilities for COVID-19](#)

# Extension of Coronavirus Relief Funds

# Extension of Coronavirus Relief Funds

Since early 2020, many applicants and members have experienced sudden changes of income due to COVID-19

- On December 27, 2020 a new federal law was signed that will soon extend coronavirus relief funds to qualifying individuals and families
- In addition to an extension in unemployment benefits, federal funds will be distributed to help support people during this time
- These dollars will go to eligible taxpayers
- Certain households can expect to receive a payment of up to \$600 (single filers and heads of household) or \$1,200 (joint filers), with an additional payment of \$600 per qualifying child
- Similar to the funds received in 2020, MassHealth or Health Connector applicants or members who receive this money should not enter it as income in their application
- For more information, visit the Health Connector website:  
<https://www.mahealthconnector.org/covid-19>

# How Income is Counted

The chart below is a summary of how MassHealth and the Health Connector count these sources of income to make an eligibility determination for a consumer.

Type of Income	Include in Current Income?	Include in Projected Annual Income?
Unemployment extension benefits (the new COVID-19 relief package extends certain unemployment benefit programs for 11 weeks)	<b>Yes</b> , regular unemployment should be reported as long as it is received	<b>Yes</b> , the member or applicant should make their best prediction about their yearly income accounting for how long they expect to receive unemployment
<b>EXTENSION</b> to the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, \$300 unemployment “bump” beginning in January 2021	<b>No</b> , do not include this amount in the unemployment benefits you report for the member	<b>Yes!</b> Do add the \$300 per week in when reporting expected yearly income. The \$300 is available for a maximum of 11 weeks (up to a maximum of \$3,300) ending in March
<b>NEW</b> “payment” of \$600 per adult and \$600 per qualifying child	<b>No</b> , do not include this income.	<b>No</b> , do not include this income



# Entering Unemployment Income

MassHealth and the Health Connector count the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation \$300 unemployment “bump” differently in order to make a program determination.

- **Tips for entering Current and Yearly income:**
  - Applicants/members should enter their **current income** (as it is right now) without the \$300 in additional UI income
  - When entering **yearly income**, consider how much has been earned so far this year, add any unemployment, including the extra \$300 per week (up to a maximum of \$3,300), and include what might be earned if and when they return to work later this year
  - If the income changes later, update the income information again so it is as correct as possible
  - Members who receive APTCs can always adjust the amount they take by using the slide on the Eligibility Page
  - For more information about DUA benefits: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/update-dua-issues-information-on-the-continued-assistance-for-unemployed-workers-act>

# End of Year Tax Filing Process

# Health Coverage and Taxes

## Federal Tax Filing

- Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), health insurers (including MassHealth) who provide Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) to individuals during the tax year are required to provide proof of health insurance to those individuals
- Implemented in 2019, the tax law repealed the federal individual mandate for individuals
  - The repeal of the federal individual mandate means that:
    - Consumers will only be penalized for not having health insurance coverage on their state tax return
  - ACA regulations require MassHealth to provide members with proof of insurance for Tax Year 2020 upon request
    - MassHealth will make the 1095-B Form available electronically or hard copies can be requested from MassHealth

# Health Coverage and Taxes

## State Tax Filing

- The Massachusetts Individual Mandate is still in effect
  - Massachusetts requires most adults 18 and over to purchase health insurance if it is affordable to them and meets Minimum Creditable Coverage (MCC) standards
  - Individuals will have to provide proof of their enrollment in health coverage on their state taxes
  - Failure to have health insurance for the entire year may result in a tax penalty
  - Individuals may be able to get an exemption if Minimum Creditable Coverage (MCC) is not affordable for them or for other special circumstances or hardships

# Overview of Tax Forms

## 1099 – HC

- Form 1099-HC is a Massachusetts state tax document which is sent to members by their health insurance carriers. The 1099-HC form shows:
  - Which months during the calendar year members were enrolled in a health plan that meets the state’s MCC requirements for at least 15 days
  - Individual member had income greater than 150% FPL at any point in the 2020 calendar year
  - The individual was at least 18 years old as of 12/31/2020

## 1095 – B

- Form 1095-B is a federal tax document.
- Form 1095-B will be available for certain MassHealth members electronically and upon request
- The Form shows which months during the calendar year members were enrolled in a health plan that meets the federal MEC requirements for at least 1 day

Note: Each covered individual (not household) will have access to the Form 1095-B from MassHealth electronically

# 1095-B and 1099-HC for MassHealth Members



MassHealth members enrolled in certain MassHealth coverage types must:

- File taxes showing proof of coverage for each month in which they were enrolled in MCC during the calendar year

Program	1095-B* Info	1099- HC Info
MassHealth Standard	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth CarePlus	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth CommonHealth	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth Family Assistance (Direct Coverage)	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
Health Safety Net	No form – Not MEC	No form – Not MCC
MassHealth Limited	No form – Not MEC	No form – Not MCC

\* **Note:** Upon request, MassHealth will provide the Form 1095-B to members.

# Getting 1095-B and 1099-HC Forms for MassHealth Members



- MassHealth will mail the Form 1099-HC to members starting 1/31/21
- **NEW:** For the 2020 tax year, members can **go online or upon request** to MassHealth receive their **Form 1095-B**
  - Members can access their Form 1095-B at [Masshealthtaxform.com](https://www.masshealthtaxform.com), after January 31, 2021, to view and print the Form or
  - Call MassHealth at 1-866-682-6745 (TTY: (800) 497-4648 ) to request a hard copy
- Members with questions about why they received the Form MA 1099-HC, how to get their Form 1095- B from MassHealth, or if they need a duplicate copy, should contact MassHealth at (866) 682-6745, TTY: (800) 497-4648 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled



# Members with Overlapping Health Connector and MassHealth Coverage



- There are situations when a member can get tax credits even though they have other coverage. They will receive two 1095 forms showing the overlapping coverage for those months
  - For example, people who transitioned between MassHealth and Health Connector programs or those who received retroactive MassHealth eligibility
- In general, if a member thinks their overlapping coverage was valid, they can report Health Connector coverage only for that month when filing their taxes
  - They do not need a corrected form from MassHealth, even if they do not report the MassHealth coverage on their taxes
  - MassHealth must tell a member if they had MassHealth coverage for at least one day in a month, but the member must decide if that coverage means they must repay tax credits



# Members with Overlapping Health Connector and MassHealth Coverage



- IRS regulations say that if there is overlapping coverage with Medicaid (MassHealth) and a subsidized plan with APTCs/ConnectorCare through the Health Connector, the consumer will not have to pay back subsidies for that first overlapping month of coverage following an eligibility change. *However*, they may have to repay the APTCs starting the second month after the eligibility determination.

# Members with Overlapping Health Connector and MassHealth Coverage



## Member Example:

Wendy has been enrolled in a Health Connector plan since the beginning of the calendar year and she receives APTCs.

- Wendy comes to see you on July 16<sup>th</sup> and due to life changes she becomes eligible for MassHealth
- Wendy receives her MassHealth approval notice on July 24<sup>th</sup> which shows a MassHealth coverage (retro) start date of July 6<sup>th</sup>
- She's concerned that she has overlapping coverage and may have to pay back the APTCs she received during the overlap
- Take a moment and think about how you would respond to Wendy's concerns

# Overlapping Health Connector and MassHealth Coverage



**According to the rule regarding overlapping coverage Wendy is treated as not being enrolled in MEC until the first day of the second month following the eligibility change and does not have to pay back the APTC for the first month.**

- Wendy received her notification on July 24<sup>th</sup> so she gets a month to react to that notification
- Wendy would not be penalized or have to repay any tax credits claimed before September 1<sup>st</sup>

# Important Dates in 2021

Dates	Action
<b>Mid-Late January</b>	1095-A forms sent to all Health Connector members enrolled in a QHP (including ConnectorCare members)
<b>Late January</b>	<b>NEW:</b> MassHealth members can now access their 1095-B Form by going to <a href="https://masshealthtaxform.com">Masshealthtaxform.com</a> * or request a hard copy by calling MassHealth
<b>March 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Individuals are asked to report any corrections to 1095 or 1099-HC forms to the Health Connector and/or MassHealth and new forms to be sent out prior to the tax filing deadline
<b>April 15<sup>th</sup></b>	State and Federal Tax filing deadline

# Free Tax Assistance

- **VITA**: The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$57,000 or less, persons with disabilities and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.
- **TCE**: The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older, specializing in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. The IRS-certified volunteers who provide tax counseling are often retired individuals associated with non-profit organizations that receive grants from the IRS.
- **AARP Foundation Tax-Aide**: offers free tax help to anyone especially for those age 50 and older who can't afford a tax preparation service. IRS-certified volunteers understand that retirement or other life changes may make tax filing a little more complicated. AARP membership is not required.

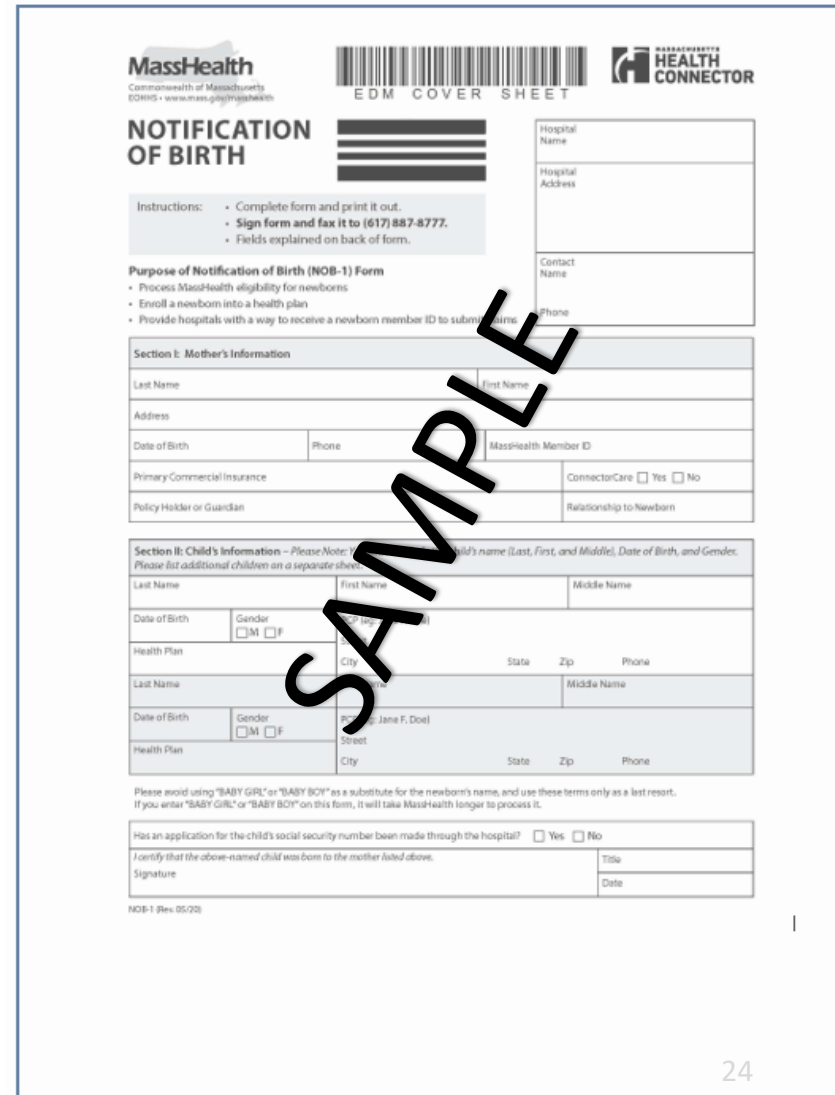
# Helpful Tax Resources

- Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers  
<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-you-by-volunteers>
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) Tax Provisions  
<http://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act>
- Individual Shared Responsibility Provision  
<https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Individual-Shared-Responsibility-Provision>
- Health Connector tax resources  
<https://www.mahealthconnector.org/taxes>

# Notice of Birth Update

# Notice of Birth Update

- **Effective January 1, 2021**, MassHealth will require acute inpatient hospitals to use an updated paper (NOB-1) or electronic (eNOB) Notification of Birth
  - Contact Sam Evans at [samuel.evans@mass.gov](mailto:samuel.evans@mass.gov) to learn more about how acute inpatient hospitals can submit eNOBs
- The NOB form is the primary method to determine eligibility for MassHealth
- Complete and submit the NOB as soon as possible and no later than 10 days after birth



**MassHealth**  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
EDMS - www.mass.gov/igghelms

**EDM COVER SHEET**

**MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH CONNECTOR**

## NOTIFICATION OF BIRTH

**Instructions:**

- Complete form and print it out.
- **Sign form and fax it to (617) 887-8777.**
- Fields explained on back of form.

**Purpose of Notification of Birth (NOB-1) Form**

- Process MassHealth eligibility for newborns
- Enroll a newborn into a health plan
- Provide hospitals with a way to receive a newborn member ID to submit claims

**Section I: Mother's Information**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ MassHealth Member ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary Commercial Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_ ConnectorCare  Yes  No  
 Policy Holder or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Newborn: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section II: Child's Information - Please Note: Child's name (Last, First, and Middle), Date of Birth, and Gender.**  
 Please list additional children on a separate sheet.

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  M  F  
 Health Plan: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  M  F  
 Health Plan: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please avoid using "BABY GIRL" or "BABY BOY" as a substitute for the newborn's name, and use these terms only as a last resort. If you enter "BABY GIRL" or "BABY BOY" on this form, it will take MassHealth longer to process it.

Has an application for the child's social security number been made through the hospital?  Yes  No

I certify that the above-named child was born to the mother listed above.

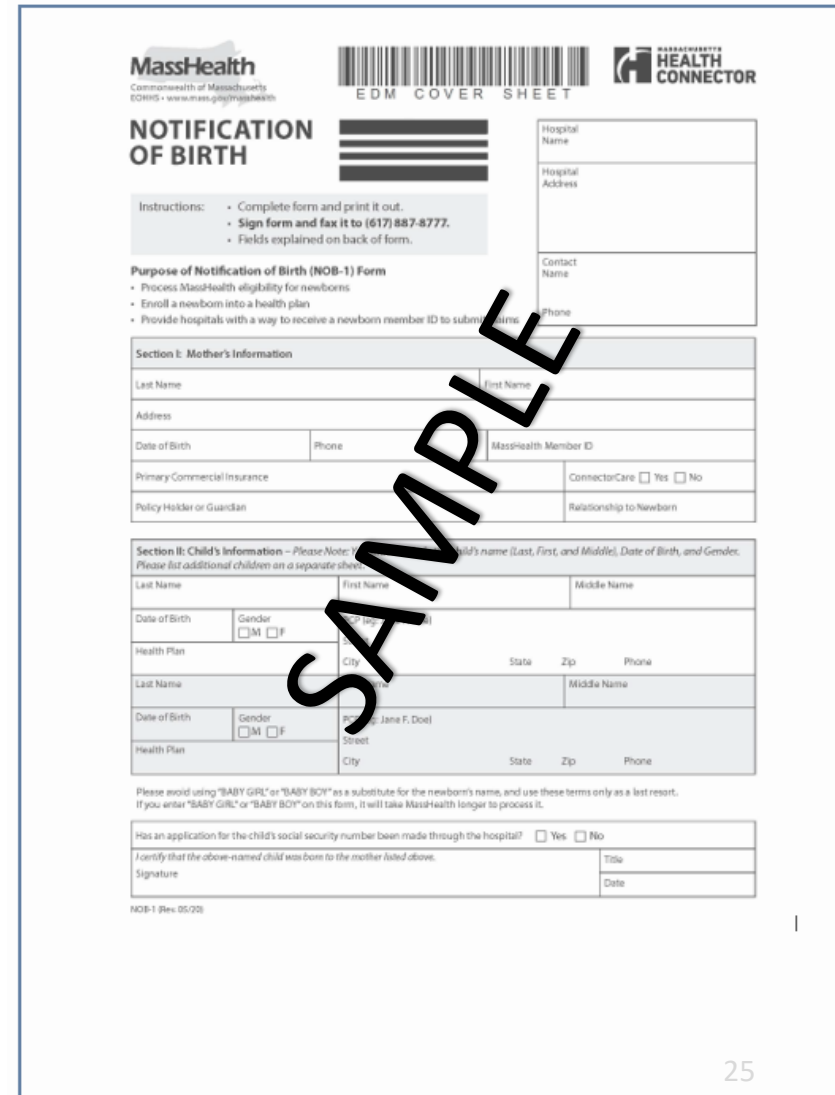
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NOB-1 (Rev. 05/20)



# Notice of Birth Update

- [MassHealth’s Notice of Birth \(NOB\) form](#) **now** include fields for:
  - MassHealth health plan and PCP voluntary selection
  - A field to indicate whether the mother is eligible for or enrolled in ConnectorCare
- Forms with “BABY BOY” or “BABY GIRL” in the place of the child’s name will not be processed effective January 1, 2021.



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**EDM COVER SHEET**

**MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH CONNECTOR**

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**Purpose of Notification of Birth (NOB-1) Form**

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- Provide hospitals with a way to receive a newborn member ID to submit claims

Hospital Name  
Hospital Address  
Contact Name  
Phone

**Section I: Mother's Information**

Last Name First Name  
Address  
Date of Birth Phone MassHealth Member ID  
Primary Commercial Insurance ConnectorCare  Yes  No  
Policy Holder or Guardian Relationship to Newborn

**Section II: Child's Information – Please Note:** *Please list additional children on a separate sheet.* Child's name (Last, First, and Middle), Date of Birth, and Gender.

Last Name First Name Middle Name  
Date of Birth Gender  M  F  
Health Plan City State Zip Phone  
Last Name First Name Middle Name  
Date of Birth Gender  M  F  
Health Plan City State Zip Phone

Please avoid using “BABY GIRL” or “BABY BOY” as a substitute for the newborn’s name, and use these terms only as a last resort. If you enter “BABY GIRL” or “BABY BOY” on this form, it will take MassHealth longer to process it.

Has an application for the child's social security number been made through the hospital?  Yes  No

I certify that the above-named child was born to the mother listed above.  
Signature Title  
Date

NOB-1 (Rev. 05/20)

# Notice of Birth Update

**Assignment of all newborns to Fee for Service (FFS) when a voluntary managed care plan selection is not made on the NOB.**

In cases where the family has not made a health plan selection on the NOB form:

- The newborn will be placed into FFS coverage for 14-days once MassHealth eligibility has been established
- The family can voluntarily enroll the newborn in a plan sooner than 14-days by visiting [MassHealthchoices.com](https://www.masshealthchoices.com) or calling MassHealth Customer Service



# Notice of Birth Update

**Assignment of all newborns to Fee for Service (FFS) when a voluntary managed care plan selection is not made on the NOB.**

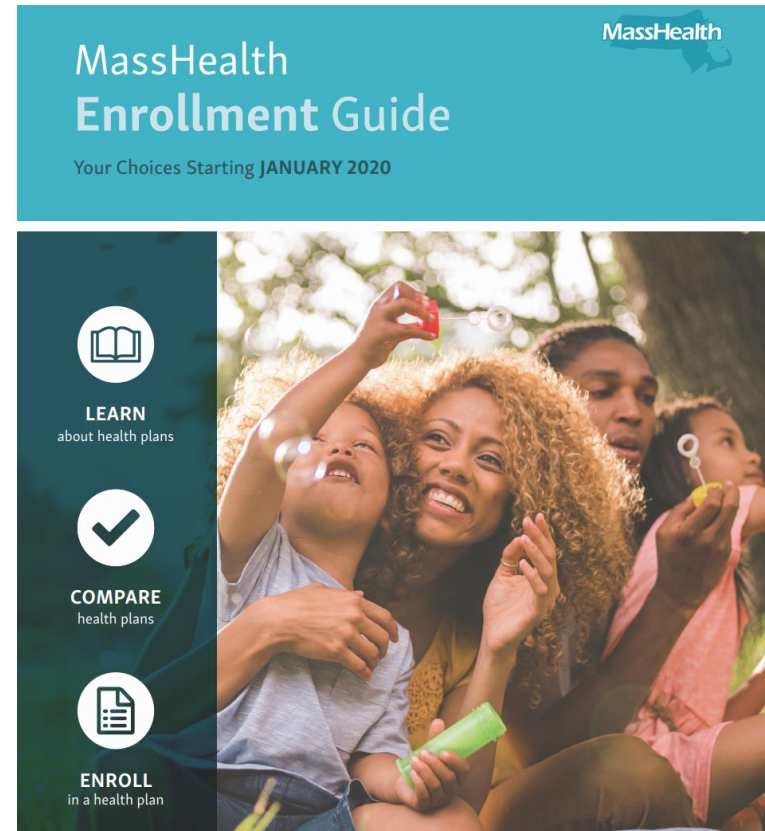
In cases where the family has not made a health plan selection on the NOB form:

- If the family does not voluntarily enroll the newborn in a plan after 14-days, MassHealth will automatically assign the newborn into a managed care plan as their oldest sibling, if present **OR** a health plan in their geographic area
- For additional information, review the MassHealth All Provider Bulletin 305: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/all-provider-bulletin-305-policies-and-procedure-for-newborn-members-eligibility-enrollment-0/download>



# Outreach to New Parents/Guardians

- Letter to new parents or guardians
  - Let new parents or guardians know their newborn is MassHealth eligible
  - Learn, Compare, Enroll
    - Online at [www.MassHealthChoices.com](http://www.MassHealthChoices.com)
    - Call MassHealth customer service at 800-841-2900; TTY at 800-497-4648
    - Complete the [MassHealth Health Plan Enrollment Form](#) and mail to the address on the form



- MassHealth will pick a new health plan for the newborn if a health plan selection was not made after 14 days of the letter

# Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) 2021

# Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) 2021

- The Social Security announced on October 13, 2020 that beneficiaries would be receiving a 1.3% COLA increase for 2021
- Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits increased by 1.3% for approximately 70 million recipients in 2021
- More than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries received the 1.3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase in January 2021
- The increase payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries began on December 31, 2020
- MassHealth Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Income Guidelines are expected to increase by 1.3% on March 1, 2021

# Medicare Part B Premium

- Most people who get Social Security benefits will pay the \$148.50 for Part B premium amount because of the cost-of living (COLA) increase for the 2021 Social Security benefits
- Medicare Part B premium payment assistance is available under the MassHealth Buy-In coverage for certain eligible members
- MassHealth Buy-In coverage types include:
  - MassHealth Senior Buy-In (QMB)
  - MassHealth Buy-In for Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiaries (SLMB)
  - MassHealth Buy-In for Qualifying Individuals (QI-1)
- Income and asset limits apply in order to be eligible for Medicare Part B premium assistance Buy-In coverage

# Income & Asset Standards for MassHealth Coverage 65 & Over Living in the Community



- Buy-In program **asset limits effective January 2021**

For INDIVIDUALS	
If the countable assets are less than or equal to \$15,940	
AND the monthly income before taxes and deductibles is less than or equal to	THEN you will be eligible for...
\$1,383	Senior Buy-In
\$1,755	Buy-In

For MARRIED COUPLE who live together	
If the countable assets are less than or equal to \$23,920	
AND the monthly income before taxes and deductibles is less than or equal to	THEN you will be eligible for...
\$1,868	Senior Buy-In
\$2,371	Buy-In

*\*The **income limit** amounts may change March 1, 2021.*



# One Care Update

# One Care Update

One Care is a comprehensive health program that fully integrates MassHealth and Medicare benefits for dually eligible members who are between the ages of 21-64 at the time of enrollment.

- On **January 1, 2021**, Commonwealth Care Alliance expanded its service area to cover Berkshire County and Plymouth County
- One Care will now be available in all counties except for Dukes and Nantucket
- Learn more about the One Care Program at <https://www.mass.gov/one-care>

## One Care

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MassHealth+Medicare

Bringing your care together



# CAC Recertification

# CAC Recertification

- Annual recertification is federally mandated
- Current CAC Certification is valid until April 30, 2021
- Recertification period: March 15, 2021 – April 30, 2021
- Current CACs will take a Recertification Assessment
- Certificate valid from Assessment completion to April 30, 2022
- Reminder: Print your 2021 CAC Certificate after completing recertification
- Reminder: **Current certification valid until April 30, 2021**

**Recertification requirements will be announced in the coming weeks.**



# MassHealth Customer Service Center: Menu Changes

# MassHealth Customer Service Center Menu Changes



## What

- MassHealth is changing the member call menu options for 1-800-841-2900
- Callers will be asked to enter their MassHealth ID or last 4 numbers of their SSN and Date of Birth (DOB)
- Customized and streamlined menu option will be offered based on caller verification
- Option 3 (to report changes such as income, family size, assets, or employment) **and** Option 4 (questions about nursing homes and Long-Term Care) from the member menu will route callers directly to the MECs
- Expand self-service options, such as requests for MassHealth card replacements, address and phone number verification
- Provide Voice Recognition technology – allows for a more member-friendly interaction

## Why

- Create a more member-focused menu and improved customer service
- Streamline menu options and improve ease of use

## When

- **New** Member Customer Service Menu to go-live **March 2021**

# Sample Member Customer Service Center Menu



The following demonstrates how a caller would access the new member menus:

1. Call 1-800-841-2900
2. Enter 1 for Member
3. Enter 1 for English or 2 for Spanish
4. Complete caller verification by entering MassHealth ID or Last 4 number of members SSN and Date of Birth
5. Customized call menu presented to caller based on call verification

## Sample Menu

<p><b><u>Option 1</u></b></p> <p>Self-service to confirm MH status/health plan, phone #, address</p>	<p><b><u>Option 2</u></b></p> <p>Renew/update MH and for self-service MH card replacements</p>	<p><b><u>Option 3</u></b></p> <p>Report changes to case (income, family size, assets, or employment change)</p>	<p><b><u>Option 4</u></b></p> <p>Nursing Homes and Long-Term Care</p>	<p><b><u>Option 5</u></b></p> <p>Self-service for changing health plan/PCP and for covered services</p>	<p><b><u>Option 6</u></b></p> <p>Premium Billing, Transportation self-service, and Dental</p>
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# Important Information

1. Once the new member call menus are implemented, it will be important to listen closely to the new menu options.
2. Keep in mind that calls will now be sent to the appropriate call menus that will service their current Category of Assistance (COA).
3. There will be a default menu for new MassHealth applicants and callers who cannot be verified by entering their MassHealth ID or last 4 numbers of SSN and DOB.
4. Expected implementation will occur end of March 2021.



# Resources: COVID-19 Resource

# MassHealth and COVID-19: Resource for Applicants and Members



- [COVID-19 and MassHealth](#)
  - Find resources and information related to the coronavirus for MassHealth applicants, members, and providers.
- [MassHealth: COVID-19 – Applicants and Members](#)
  - Information for members on:
    - Coverage for testing and treatment for all coverage types and health plans
    - Coverage for telehealth services
    - Information about pharmacy
    - Frequently Asked Questions

# Stop the Spread

## Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like the flu and COVID-19:



**Wash your hands often** with soap and warm water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



**Avoid touching** your eyes, nose and mouth.



**Clean things that are frequently touched** (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning spray or wipes.



**Cover your mouth** when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.



**Stay home if you are sick** and avoid close contact with others.



**Think ahead** about how to take care of yourself and your loved ones. Visit [mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare](https://www.mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare) for preparedness tips.

The Commonwealth launched a strategic testing program in communities across Massachusetts that have continued to see a higher number of residents testing positive for COVID-19.

The Stop the Spread program is intended to provide low barrier, free, and easy to access testing to all Massachusetts residents.

- Open to all Massachusetts residents
- Testing is not restricted to residents of the cities where sites are located
- You don't need to have any symptom(s)
- No cost to you
- Out-of-state residents are not eligible for free testing under the Stop the Spread program

# Stop the Spread Initiative

## Stop the Spread of COVID-19

### Wear a mask or face covering

Always wear a mask or face covering when you can't stay 6 feet away from others. You could have COVID-19, have no symptoms, and still infect other people. Masks can help prevent the spread of the virus. Masks protect other people.



Wash your hands before putting your mask on and after taking it off. Don't touch the front of the mask. Handle it only by the ear loops or ties.



Cover your nose and mouth with the mask. Pull the bottom down under your chin. Adjust it until it fits snugly against the sides of your face. Your mask should not restrict breathing.



Remember, your mask must cover your nose and mouth at all times.

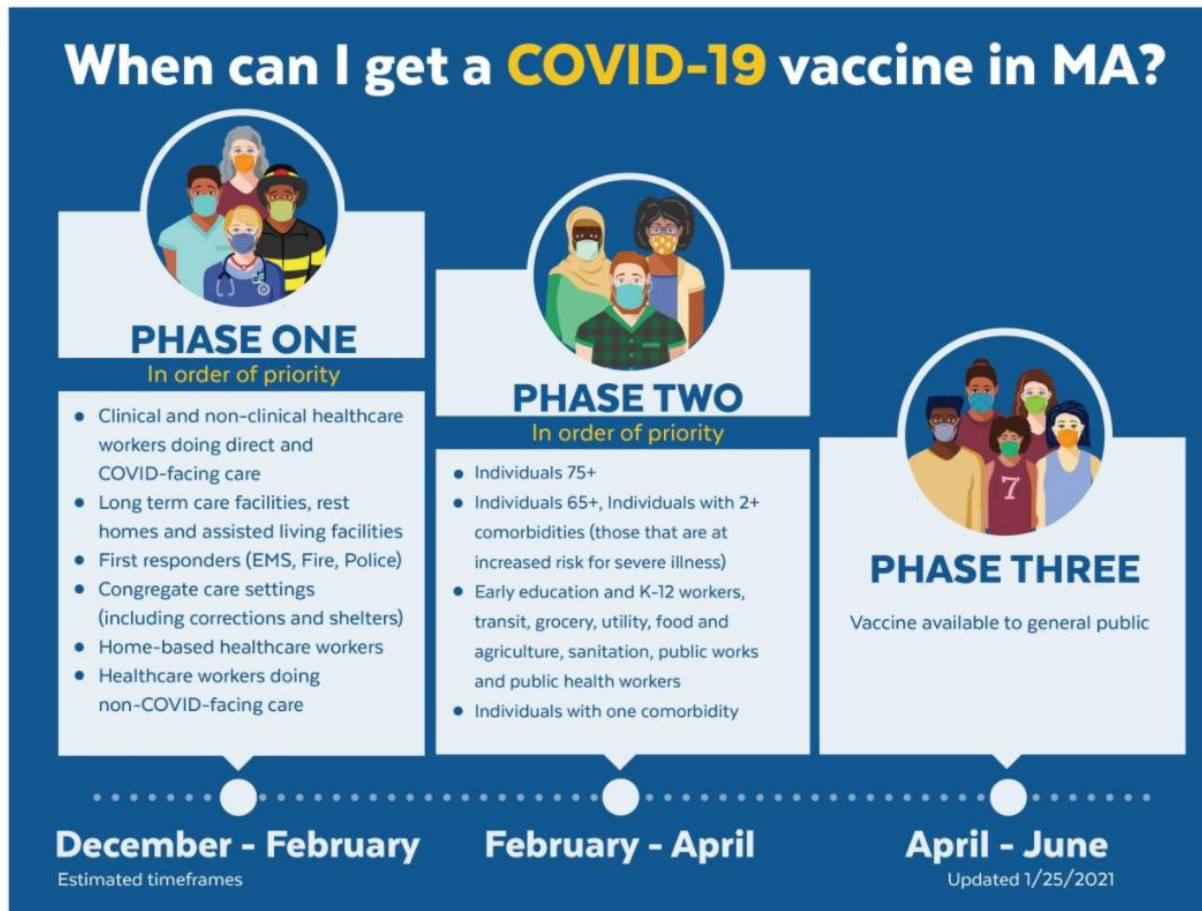
The Baker-Polito Administration “**Stop the Spread**” initiative extended free COVID-19 testing


- Testing is available in high priority communities across the Commonwealth. For more information and to find testing locations go to: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/stop-the-spread>

# COVID-19 Vaccine in Massachusetts

- Vaccine distribution in MA will occur in a phased approach
- To learn more, go to [When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?](#)

## When can I get a COVID-19 vaccine in MA?






### PHASE ONE

*In order of priority*

- Clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers doing direct and COVID-facing care
- Long term care facilities, rest homes and assisted living facilities
- First responders (EMS, Fire, Police)
- Congregate care settings (including corrections and shelters)
- Home-based healthcare workers
- Healthcare workers doing non-COVID-facing care

**December - February**  
Estimated timeframes




### PHASE TWO

*In order of priority*

- Individuals 75+
- Individuals 65+, Individuals with 2+ comorbidities (those that are at increased risk for severe illness)
- Early education and K-12 workers, transit, grocery, utility, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works and public health workers
- Individuals with one comorbidity

**February - April**



### PHASE THREE

Vaccine available to general public

**April - June**  
Updated 1/25/2021

