

Issue Alert
14-02- 01

Program Area: All Department of Human Services-administered programs

Issue Summary: Individuals and families must now apply for Medicaid and MICHild on a separate application from other programs, which will also serve as an application for health insurance subsidies for people who are over the income limits for Medicaid and MICHild

Persons Affected: Michigan residents seeking Medicaid

Date: February 4, 2014

For More Information:	Center for Civil Justice 436 S. Saginaw St. Suite 400 Flint, MI 48502 (810) 244-8044, (800)724-7441 Fax: (810) 244-5550 E-mail: info@ccj-mi.org	Michigan Poverty Law Program 611 Church Street, Suite 4A Ann Arbor, MI 48104-3000 (734) 998-6100 Fax: (734) 998-9125
------------------------------	--	--

BACKGROUND

For many years, Michigan has used a single application for medical, food, child care, cash, and emergency assistance. This Assistance Application is known as the DHS-1171. More recently, Michigan began offering a short application form that could be used to apply for the MICHild program and Healthy Kids Medicaid categories that cover children and pregnant women, known as the DCH-0373, which could also be filled out and submitted electronically. In the past few years, Michigan has also had an online application at the MIBridges website that could be used to access all assistance programs.

Under the Affordable Care Act, states are required to use a simplified application that can be used to access Medicaid, CHIP (known as MICHild in Michigan), and the subsidies available for the purchase of private health insurance through the Marketplace.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

New DHS Application for all programs except Medical Assistance

Effective January 27, 2014, the Michigan Department of Human Services issued a new version of the Assistance Application, the DHS-1171 paper form, which can only be used to apply for food, child care, cash, and emergency assistance. It cannot be used to apply for medical assistance.

The new DHS 1171 is available on the DHS website, <http://Michigan.gov/dhs> (click on Doing Business with DHS> Forms and Applications).

New paper Application for Medical Assistance

Effective January 27, 2014, to comply with the Affordable Care Act, a new Application for Health Coverage and Help Paying Costs, a paper DCH-1426 form, will be used to apply for only Medicaid, MIChild, and health insurance subsidies. Anyone submitting the old (pre-1/27/14) version of the paper DHS-1171 or the DCH-0373 forms also will have to complete the paper DCH-1426 to apply for medical assistance. The paper DCH-1426 application form can be downloaded from the Michigan Department of Community Health website ([michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch)) at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,4612,7-132-2943-320219--,00.html>. The paper DCH-1426 application should be mailed to:

Health Insurance Affordability Program
P.O. Box 30273
Lansing, MI 48909

Treatment of applications submitted on pre-1/27/14 version of the DHS-1171

The old version of the DHS 1171 can continue to be used to apply for all non-medical assistance programs.

Before 2/1/14, if a person applies for medical assistance (Medicaid) using the old version of the DHS 1171, DHS will accept the form but will also give the applicant a new, DCH 1426 form, which must be completed and submitted to DHS in order for the person to be determined eligible for medical assistance. DHS will treat the date the DHS 1171 was received as the filing date for the Medicaid application (the date that is used to measure the standard of promptness for DHS to complete processing of the application and to determine for which months Medicaid coverage can be approved).

On or after 2/1/14, the old version of the DHS 1171 cannot be used to establish the filing date for medical assistance (or to apply for medical assistance). The standard of promptness and months of Medicaid coverage will be determined based on the date the DCH 1426 is received.

Applying for Medical Assistance online

The online version of the DCH-1426, which can only be used to apply for medical assistance (not for other benefits such as food, cash, child care, or emergency assistance), is available at <https://healthcare4mi.com/>.

It also is available through the mibridges website at <https://www.mibridges.michigan.gov/access/>.

In addition, the DCH-1426 application can be submitted online through the Marketplace at www.healthcare.gov.

When an Application for Health Coverage and Help Paying Costs is received by either the Marketplace or the Department of Community Health (DCH), it is reviewed to determine whether the applicant qualifies for Medicaid or CHIP. DCH makes the final decision that a person will receive Medicaid or CHIP. If they are not eligible for MICHild or CHIP, the Marketplace will determine whether they are eligible for premium tax credits to pay for private insurance through the Marketplace. Individuals do NOT have to apply separately for Medicaid/MICHild and the premium tax credit subsidies. DCH and the Marketplace will transfer the applications as necessary.

Online Application for Medical Assistance and other DHS-administered programs

On the MIBridges website, <https://www.mibridges.michigan.gov/access/>, individuals can choose to either fill out an online application for medical assistance alone (a shorter form), or fill out a longer form to apply for any and all DHS-administered programs, including food, cash, medical, child care, and emergency assistance.

WHAT SHOULD ADVOCATES DO?

1. Make sure clients are aware of the new applications and how to find them.
2. Assist clients in identifying the application form that is best for them.
3. Assist clients in printing paper applications if they need or prefer that format.
4. Encourage clients to apply online if possible, to speed up processing and avoid lost paperwork.
5. Help clients find application assistance in their community. A list is available at <http://enrollmichigan.com/>.
6. Help clients appeal and find legal help if their applications are denied or not processed.

WHAT SHOULD CLIENTS DO?

1. Apply online if possible.
2. If you need a paper application, print one from the websites listed above, or call the Application helpline toll-free at 1 (855) 276-4627 or the beneficiary helpline at 1 (800) 642-3195. (For Spanish, call 1 (855) 275-4627.) Call these helplines for assistance in choosing an application method or filling out the application.
3. Get legal help if your application is denied or not processed.

FINDING HELP

Most legal aid and legal services offices handle these types of cases, and they do not charge a fee. You can locate the “free” legal services or legal aid office that serves your county on the Michigan Legal Help Web Site <http://www.michiganlegalhelp.org/>, or look in the yellow pages under “attorneys,” or call the toll-free lawyer referral number, 1 (800) 968-0738.