Supporting Illinois Families: COVID-19 Related Public Benefit Changes

May 2020
INTRODUCTION

EverThrive Illinois works to improve the health of women, children, and families over the lifespan.

Legal Council for Health Justice uses the power of the law to secure dignity, opportunity, and well-being for people facing barriers due to illness or disability.

Agenda

1. Applying for Medicaid or SNAP
2. Medicaid Eligibility
3. Manage My Case
4. SNAP Changes
5. WIC Changes
6. TANF Changes
7. Q & A
To connect advocates and community-based providers who serve families with updated information related to public benefit programs in Illinois.

To highlight COVID-19 related changes to four common public benefit programs:

- Medicaid
- SNAP
- WIC
- TANF
Medicaid Eligibility

**Adults**
- Must live in Illinois and be U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents in the country for a minimum of 5 years;
- Age 19-64;
- Individuals with income up to 138% of the federal poverty level (monthly income of $1,366/individual, $1,845/couple)

**All Kids**
- Children must live in Illinois and are eligible regardless of citizenship or immigration status;
- Children aged birth-19;
- All Kids *Assist* (up to 18 y/o): Not over 147% FPL
- All Kids *Share*: over 147%, not over 157% FPL
- All Kids *Premium Level 1*: Over 157%, not over 209% FPL
- All Kids *Premium Level 2*: Over 209%, not over 318% FPL

**Moms & Babies**
- Pregnant women and their babies up to one year of age;
- Covered up to 60 days postpartum, regardless of status
- Income at or below 213% FPL
# Medicaid – COVID-19 Changes

Applications can still be submitted online through ABE or if necessary, by phone, fax, mail. *ABE.illinois.gov is always preferable!*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Termination of Coverage</th>
<th>Self-Attestation</th>
<th>Presumptive Eligibility (PE)</th>
<th>Premium Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • For duration of the State of Emergency, enrollees will NOT be dropped from Medicaid coverage unless they opt out or move to a different state.  
• Moms & Babies coverage will automatically extend past 60 days postpartum during the emergency, but will revert to the 60 day period limit after the emergency has ended. | • HFS is currently accepting self-attestation for information that is not able to be electronically verified in the application (including income and residency).  
• Individuals should still answer ALL questions to the best of their ability. | • All new MAGI applications will be evaluated to see if they meet the criteria to be presumptively found eligible (PE) and if the criteria is met (which should be the majority of applications), the applicant will be full Medicaid coverage while their application is processed!  
• PE criteria = Medicaid-eligible immigration status and income. | • During the COVID-19 State of Emergency, premium payments are suspended!  
• Premiums missed during this time will not have to be repaid, but any backdated premiums must be paid after the emergency is over. |

## Application Assistance:

Applicants can give verbal consent by phone to DHS or to a **certified** enrollment assister/Navigator/CAC to sign and submit an application on their behalf if they cannot access a computer.
Manage My Case

- Clients are highly encouraged to create a Manage My Case (MMC) account through ABE.illinois.gov

- There is no current change to the MMC ID proofing system, but HFS continues to explore ways to make it easier for recipients to set up MMC accounts.

- Recipients can still mail in manual ID proofing forms. The State is making it a priority to approve ID Proofing for MMC.

- If a manual ID proofing form has been submitted, an MMC account may have been approved (and the recipient not yet notified by mail) so recipients should check ABE frequently for MMC approval.
What is SNAP?

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly referred to as SNAP, LINK, or "food stamps" provides money for eligible individuals and families to purchase food items at retailers.

What are the income guidelines for participating in SNAP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Monthly Income Limit (165% FPL)</td>
<td>$1,718</td>
<td>$2,326</td>
<td>$2,933</td>
<td>$3,541</td>
<td>$4,149</td>
<td>$4,757</td>
<td>$5,364</td>
<td>$5,972</td>
<td>$6,580</td>
<td>$7,188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For household with more than 10 persons, add $608 for each additional person. (Updated 10/1/2019)

- Age 60 & Over or Disabled Households Maximum Monthly Income Allowable is up to 200% FPL
SNAP

COVID-19 Related Changes to SNAP:

• Certification periods ending in March, April, or May have been automatically extended by six months. SNAP households should have received notification of this change by mail.

• Additional funds for families who were not receiving the maximum amount of benefits prior to the emergency.

• Pandemic EBT, "P-EBT"

DHS SNAP Certification Period Memo
SNAP Cont.

Pandemic EBT Benefits

- Pandemic EBT, or "P-EBT" is a temporary emergency benefit for children who attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program.
- Children 3-17 old and/or 18-22 years old and enrolled in high school.
- Families under 185% FPL qualify even if their child doesn't attend a school with a NSLP.

If you currently receive SNAP, you **do not need to apply for P-EBT**, benefits will be loaded to your LINK card if you are an eligible household. **P-EBT is different from SNAP, and does not consider immigration status for participation.**

If you don't participate in SNAP but have children who attend a school that participate in NSLP or otherwise qualify, apply for P-EBT at:

- ABE.illinois.gov
- Email a paper application to **DHS.FCS.PEBT@illinois.gov**
- Or mail a paper application to the Central Scan Unit, P.O. Box 19138 Springfield, IL 62763-9138
SNAP Cont.

Need Assistance with SNAP benefits?
• Legal Council for Health Justice, Kszafranski@legalcouncil.org

• HelpHub, HelpHub.Povertylaw.org

How to Contact DHS:
• Toll-free line at 1-800-843-6154 (Voice), Nextalk 1-800-324-5553, 711 TTY Relay, if you have questions or need help with the application
• During this time, establishing an MMC account on abe.illinois.gov is highly recommended
What is WIC? The Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a health program that provides breastfeeding support, nutrition support, food, and formula to pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children living in Illinois. **WIC does not require proof of citizenship or immigration status but does require proof of residency.**

### Income Eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Yearly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$445</td>
<td>$1,926</td>
<td>$23,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$602</td>
<td>$2,607</td>
<td>$31,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$759</td>
<td>$3,289</td>
<td>$39,461</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$917</td>
<td>$3,970</td>
<td>$47,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$1,074</td>
<td>$4,652</td>
<td>$55,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$1,231</td>
<td>$5,333</td>
<td>$63,992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each additional family member add:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>$158</td>
<td>$682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>$8,177</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
COVID-19 related changes:

• WIC Clinics are offering coupon delivery by mail or curbside pickup

• Participants can substitute milk for any available fat content regardless of the fat content listed on their coupon if the milk listed on their coupon is not available

• WIC participants can purchase the quantity of items on their WIC checks as long as stock is available, regardless of the store’s quantity limit

• IL DHS applied for flexibilities related to whole wheat/whole grain bread, however, it was determined that implementation of bread flexibility was not needed. Please call your WIC office if you are having trouble locating the right size of bread.

Link to Illinois WIC Vendors Information Page
What is TANF? The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program provides cash assistance, loaded on a LINK card. The program is for families with children and pregnant women who need temporary cash assistance.

To qualify for TANF, a person must:

• Be pregnant or have a child under age 19 who lives with them. A child who is 18 must be a full-time high school student. A pregnant woman (and her husband, if he lives with her) may qualify for help, even if they don't have any other children.
• Live in Illinois. You can be homeless and still qualify.
• Be a U.S. citizen or meet certain immigration requirements.
• Develop a plan for becoming self-sufficient and follow it. (Work & Training requirements)

Do you know someone who would like to apply for TANF?

• Applying on the ABE.Illinois.gov portal is highly recommended
• Call your local DHS office to start an application by phone:
COVID-19 related changes:

Work & Training requirements

• TANF customers the ability to claim Good Cause if they are unable to comply with Work & Training requirements due to the COVID-19 crisis.

• TANF customers that currently have a sanction for activity non-compliance will remain sanctioned until they show Good Cause or contact the FCRC and agree to cooperate.
  – People who were sanctioned before this memo will remain sanctioned unless they contact the FCRC and agree to cooperate.

• TANF customers who have the ability to participate in Work & Training but fail to comply could face reconciliation and sanction.

DHS TANF Good Cause Memo
Helpful Links

- Application for Benefits Eligibility (ABE) - apply for Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF
  [https://abe.illinois.gov/](https://abe.illinois.gov/)
- DHS Local WIC Offices
- DHS Application Assistance Form
  [https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalProviders/notices/Pages/prn200423a.aspx](https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalProviders/notices/Pages/prn200423a.aspx)
- My Case Manual ID Proofing Form (English and Spanish)
  [https://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-3610.pdf](https://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-3610.pdf); [https://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-3610S.pdf](https://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-3610S.pdf)
- Legal Council For Health Justice Coronavirus Resource Page
  [https://legalcouncil.org/resources/coronavirus/](https://legalcouncil.org/resources/coronavirus/)
- EverThrive Illinois Coronavirus Resource Page
  [http://everthriveil.org/content/protecting-caring-your-family-during-coronavirus-outbreak](http://everthriveil.org/content/protecting-caring-your-family-during-coronavirus-outbreak)
HelpHub is an online community where enrollment assisters in Illinois can share their experiences, ask questions and troubleshoot problems they are having helping consumers enroll into affordable, comprehensive health care options. We also answer questions on immigrant eligibility for public benefits and on the intersection of public benefits and public charge.

Please complete this short form to sign up for HelpHub.

Sign up at: http://helphub.povertylaw.org
Questions?

- Submit your questions in the chat box
Thank you!

Contact information:

• Kelsie Landers, Policy and Advocacy Director at EverThrive Illinois
  – Klanders@everthriveil.org

• Kirbi Range, Maternal and Child Health Manager, EverThrive Illinois
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