



Greg Gianforte, Governor  
Charles T. Brereton, Director

December 30, 2022

Judith Cash  
**Director of the State Demonstrations Group**  
Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)  
7500 Security Boulevard  
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

Dear Ms. Cash:

On October 13, 2022, CMS requested that the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) describe the State's approach for closing the Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Program Section 1115 Waiver.

On August 30, 2019, the Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) submitted a waiver extension and amendment to CMS. On September 29, 2020, CMS informed DPHHS that in light of the impending expiration of the current 1115 waiver, litigation challenging the legality of work requirements, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic consuming CMS attention and resources, the agency was unable to complete negotiations for Montana's five-year waiver extension and amendment. Instead, CMS approved a one-year temporary extension of Montana's current waiver, to allow for additional time to negotiate the approval of an amended waiver. On December 21, 2021, CMS provided Montana with a one-year [temporary extension](#). In the cover letter, CMS informed the State it would not renew the authority to charge premiums to the adult group after this extension period, terminating premiums effective December 31, 2022.

During the public health emergency (PHE), the state has continued to collect monthly premiums but coverage was not terminated for individuals who failed to pay premiums due to the federal Medicaid continuous coverage requirements. Individuals who are charged premiums receive monthly invoices. DPHHS intends to include notice language in the November and December invoices informing individuals of the phasing out of premiums effective December 31, 2022. The notification language is as follows: "Effective December 31, 2022, the Department of Public Health and Human Services will no longer invoice the HELP premium payments; the December invoice will be the last premium payments you owe." This information is already posted at the online portal where members can pay their premiums. We also intend to post this information on the State's Medicaid website.

The DPHHS eligibility and enrollment IT systems will be ready to implement the change by December 31, 2022. Call Center and eligibility and enrollment workers will be informed of the change and be trained and prepared to answer any questions from enrollees. Starting on January 1st, 2023, no individuals will be charged monthly premiums and no invoices will be sent to any enrollees. DPHHS will also follow the sub-regulatory guidance related to premiums outlined in the recently released "[COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Unwinding Frequently Asked Questions for State Medicaid and CHIP Agencies](#)."

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions on this phase-out approach.

Sincerely,

Mike Randol  
Montana Medicaid and Health Services Executive Director/State Medicaid Director