NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Montana Section 1115 Healing and Ending Addiction through Recovery and Treatment (HEART) Demonstration Renewal Request
Abbreviated Public Notice – October 27, 2026

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) is providing public notice of its intent to submit a Section 1115 Demonstration renewal request to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to continue and amend the Montana Healing and Ending Addiction through Recovery and Treatment (HEART) Demonstration. DPHHS is seeking renewal of the HEART Demonstration for an additional five-year period from July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2032. DPHHS intends to submit the renewal request to CMS on or before Dec. 1, 2026. All proposed requests are subject to CMS approval.

The HEART Demonstration was initially approved by the CMS on July 1, 2022, with a subsequent amendment approved on Feb. 26, 2024. Since approval, the Demonstration has served as a critical vehicle for advancing Montana's behavioral health priorities, expanding access to evidence-based services, and supporting broader Medicaid program innovations aimed at addressing substance use disorder (SUD), serious mental illness (SMI), and other behavioral health needs. Montana's overarching goal for the HEART Demonstration renewal is to continue to improve the health and well-being of Medicaid members by strengthening access to high-quality behavioral health services and support. The renewal will enable Montana to sustain key Demonstration initiatives, evaluate their long-term impact, and advance additional strategies that improve access, quality, and continuity of care.

DPHHS is requesting renewal of the Montana Section 1115 HEART Demonstration to continue and strengthen access to behavioral health services and supports for individuals with SUD, SMI, and other behavioral health needs. Through this renewal request, Montana seeks to continue existing Demonstration authorities for SUD treatment in institutions for mental diseases (IMDs), contingency management, pre-tenancy and tenancy sustaining support services, and pre-release services for justice-involved individuals.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Montana is seeking through this Demonstration to continue and, where applicable, amend existing Demonstration features, including the continuation of:

- SUD IMD expenditure authority;
- Contingency management for stimulant use disorder, with a proposed eligibility criteria refinement to remove the requirement that stimulant use disorder be the primary diagnosis;
- Pre-tenancy and tenancy sustaining support services; and
- Pre-release services for justice-involved individuals, including lowering the minimum eligibility age to 18 years and older, extending the service delivery timeframe from 30 days to 60 days prior to release, and adding peer support services to the targeted set of Medicaid services provided prior to release.

The State is not proposing changes to the Medicaid eligibility criteria or the Medicaid delivery system as part of this application. Montana currently does not apply cost sharing to any Medicaid members. Montana will implement cost sharing as required under H.R. 1, and beneficiaries who are subject to cost sharing under H.R. 1 will be subject to cost sharing, as applicable, under this Demonstration.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND COMMENT PROCESS

The State is extending the public comment period through Nov. 27, 2026, to align with the federal requirement to post the Interim Evaluation Report for the HEART Demonstration with the renewal application for public comment. The State is required to post this report for 30 days prior to the HEART renewal submission; this report is preliminary and has not yet been approved by CMS. The public comment period for the HEART Demonstration Renewal Application began on Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2026, and will now close on Nov. 27, 2026. All comments must be received by 11:59 p.m. (Mountain Time) on Nov. 27, 2026.

DPHHS will hold two public meetings on the Demonstration renewal application. The public hearing on Oct. 2, 2026, will be a hybrid meeting and the public may attend in-person or virtually. The public hearing on Oct. 7, 2026, will be held as part of a Montana Health Coalition meeting and will be accessible to the public virtually only due to building security restrictions. Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations should contact DPHHS at 406-444-2584.

1. Oct. 2, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. MT (in-person and virtual)

   Cogswell Building, Conference Rooms C205, C207, and C209 (combined)
   1400 E. Broadway St.
   Broadway Entrance, south side of building
   Helena, MT

   Register in advance for this Zoom webinar:
   https://mt-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5tyTfGSsRzanZ7squpimhg [mt-gov.zoom.us]

2. Oct. 7, 2026, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. MT (virtual only for non-Montana Health Coalition members)

   Montana Health Coalition/Medicaid Advisory Committee Meeting
   111 North Sanders Street.
   Room 306
   Helena, MT

   Register in advance for this Zoom webinar: https://mt-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hXeOYH2pSg6NbZjtfA7peg [mt-gov.zoom.us]

The complete version of the Demonstration public notice and application is available for public review at: http://dphhs.mt.gov/heartwaiver. Paper copies are available to be picked up at the DPHHS office located at 111 North Sanders Street, Room 301, Helena, Montana 59604.

Public comments may be submitted until 11:59 p.m. (Mountain Time) on Nov. 27, 2026. Questions or public comments may be addressed care of Medicaid HEART Waiver, Department of Public Health and Human Services, Director's Office, PO Box 4210, Helena, MT 59620, or by telephone to 406-444-2584, or by electronic mail to dphhscomments@mt.gov. Comments received after Nov. 27, 2026 will continue to be accepted, but DPHHS may not be able to consider those comments prior to initial submission of the renewal application to CMS.

After reviewing comments submitted during the state public comment period, Montana will submit a revised application to CMS. Interested parties will also have an opportunity to comment during the federal public comment period. The submitted application will be available for comment on the CMS website at: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/section-1115-demo/demonstration-and-waiver-list.