



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration
ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #10-13

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**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF
DIVISION OF ELIGIBILITY WAIVER SERVICES
LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT MCHP SUPERVISORS**

**FROM: JILL SPECTOR, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DHMH/OES
KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA**

**RE: FOSTER CARE COVERAGE ACT—MEDICAID FOR ALL INDEPENDENT
FOSTER CARE ADOLESCENTS UP TO AGE 21**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

ORIGINATING OFFICES: OFFICE OF ELIGIBILITY SERVICES

SUMMARY

House Bill 580 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid or MA) to provide coverage for “independent foster care adolescents” who are not otherwise eligible for Medicaid benefits and who have annual household incomes up to 300% of federal poverty guidelines (FPG). (Resources are not considered for this population.) Independent foster care adolescents (IFCA) are individuals younger than age 21 who, on their 18th birthday, were in State foster care.

Youth in State foster care receive medical care through Medicaid. However, this coverage generally has terminated when the youth turns 18 and leaves the foster care system. Now, under the authority of House Bill 580, youth continue to qualify for Medicaid up to their 21st birthdays without working with a Foster Care social worker or complying with vocational or educational requirements.

Foster care social workers, known as permanency workers, will include this new Medicaid coverage option when assisting youth with continuing their Medicaid benefits during transition planning. However, qualifying youth who exited foster care prior to implementation of this expanded eligibility will often be unaware of the change. Therefore, a case manager (CM) must check for E-track history for a young MA applicant (18 to 21) to determine whether IFCA E02 coverage is available.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

To make sure that former foster care recipients have access to expanded IFCA E02 coverage,

When an applicant at least 18 and under 21 applies for MA coverage:

- Screen in MMIS to verify previous E-track coverage;
- If applicant requests MA only, determine eligibility in IFCA E02 (no asset test, income up to 300% FPG);
- As long as redeterminations are received with all necessary verification, and all eligibility requirements are met, MA coverage under IFCA E02 continues until child's 21st birthday.

When child ages out of E02:

- Adjust the certification period to cause CARES to initiate an unscheduled redetermination 90 days before IFCA E02 recipient's 21st birthday.
- If recertification is received, redetermine eligibility for the appropriate adult category (e.g., FAC, ABD).

The Medicaid procedures for foster care youth discharged by permanency workers remain the same. A future Action Transmittal will set forth the procedures for opening and closing cases used by FIA CMs who are foster care specialists.

INQUIRIES

For policy questions, contact the DHMH Division of Eligibility Policy at 410-767-1463 or 1-800-492-5231 (select option 2 and request extension 1463).

cc: Stacy Rodgers
FIA Management Staff
Office of Child Welfare Practice & Policy
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk