

# The End of the Continuous Coverage Requirement and Impacts to Medical Assistance (MA) Coverage

The COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) continuous coverage requirement ended on April 1, 2023.

Because of this, Medical Assistance (MA) health care coverage may expire for certain MA recipients if they are no longer eligible following their annual renewal. **MA recipients must complete a renewal to determine and maintain eligibility**, and renewal documents will be sent throughout the year. Please encourage your patients who are MA recipients that receive a renewal to take action and to complete it immediately. This will help to ensure there are no interruptions to their health care coverage. MA recipients must complete and submit the renewal by mail, at their local County Assistance Office (CAO), by phone with a representative OR renew via COMPASS.

If MA recipients do not submit their information, it will cause a stop in their health insurance coverage.

Please find answers to some questions your patients may have below.



## How can your patients renew their MA?

**Option 1:** Complete the forms received in their renewal packet.

- Your patients who are up for renewal will receive a packet in the mail from the County Assistance Office (CAO) with renewal forms.
- Once the forms are completed, they can be sent back using the stamped envelope included in the packet or they can be dropped off at the CAO.

**Option 2:** Complete the renewal on the COMPASS website.

- Your patients can visit [dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS) to renew online.
- Instructions for using COMPASS can be found in the recipient's renewal packet.

**Option 3:** Renew by phone.

- Your patients can complete their renewal by phone by calling 1-866-550-4355.



### What is the deadline for your patients to renew their MA?

- The MA renewal deadline will be found in the mail packet, by accessing their My COMPASS Account at [dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS), or on the myCOMPASS PA mobile app. Recipients are encouraged to act as soon as possible to avoid a lapse in coverage.



### What if your patient is no longer eligible for MA after their renewal is processed?

- If your patient is no longer eligible for MA and does not qualify for CHIP (if age 19 and under), their account will be transferred to Pennie®, Pennsylvania's official health and dental insurance marketplace, where they can select a qualified health plan. There, Highmark has low-cost plans to choose from, and Pennie can help connect your patient with the financial savings to reduce the cost of coverage and care.
  - Both our Individual and Family Plans (ACA) and Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) offer affordable coverage and great benefits and can be found at [Highmark.com](https://Highmark.com).
  - ACA can also be reached by phone at 855-574-1685, Pennie can be reached at 1-844-844-8040 or online at [pennie.com](https://pennie.com), and CHIP can be reached at 800-543-7105 or [chipcoverspakids.com](https://chipcoverspakids.com).



### What can your patients do in the meantime as they await their renewal packet?

- MA recipients should ensure their contact information is up to date so that they can receive timely updates on benefits.
  - This can be done through the COMPASS website ([dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS)), using the free myCOMPASS PA mobile app, or calling the Customer Service Center (CSC) at 1-877-395-8930 or 215-560-7226 in Philadelphia.
- Recipients can complete their renewal online or by phone as early as 60 days ahead of their renewal date by using the COMPASS website ([dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS)) or by calling 1-866-550-4355.
  - They will need their renewal date and case record number, which are on the mailed renewal forms or can be obtained from their CAO or the CSC.
- MA recipients can also sign up for email and text notifications by managing their preferences in their My COMPASS Account at [dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS) to make sure they are receiving any needed information. They can visit [dhs.pa.gov/text](https://dhs.pa.gov/text) for more information.



## Where can patients go with questions about renewing their MA?

- If MA recipients have questions about their renewal or eligibility for MA, they can call the Statewide Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 or 215-560-7226 in Philadelphia. They can also call the Customer Service Center to ask questions about their benefits or report changes to their contact information, income, and more.
- MA members can go to the COMPASS website ([dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](https://dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS)) or the myCOMPASS PA mobile app at any time to learn more about their MA eligibility.



## If my patient is starting on Medicare soon, do they still need to renew their Medicaid benefits?

- Yes, patients still need to renew annually to continue receiving MA.
- There are benefits to patients that are dually eligible for both Medicare and MA. Some MA recipients are entitled to have their Medicare Part B premium paid for by MA and some may continue to qualify for MA. They have to renew their MA to determine if they continue to be eligible for these benefits.

Your partner in health,

**Highmark Wholecare**

This information is issued on behalf of Highmark Wholecare, coverage by Gateway Health Plan, which is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Highmark Wholecare serves a Medicaid plan to Blue Shield members in 13 counties in central Pennsylvania, as well as, to Blue Cross Blue Shield members in 14 counties in western Pennsylvania. Highmark Wholecare serves Medicare Dual Special Needs plans (D-SNP) to Blue Shield members in 14 counties in northeastern Pennsylvania, 12 counties in central Pennsylvania, 5 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania, and to Blue Cross Blue Shield members in 27 counties in western Pennsylvania.