
April 15, 2020

Ms. Shannon McCracken
Vice President for Government
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
1101 King Street, Suite 380
Alexandria, VA 22314-2944

Dear Ms. McCracken:

Thank you for your letters regarding the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) First Set of COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for State Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Agencies issued on March 12, 2020, and your request for flexibilities in determining Medicaid eligibility when disabled individuals' assets exceed existing limits. I deeply appreciate hearing from you on these critical issues. I also value the work you and your members provide to ensure care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CMS is working hard to examine our policies and issue guidance to make sure we help the people who are responding to the pandemic and working on the front lines to care for patients during this pandemic. We have taken numerous steps to address the pandemic, such as issuing a sweeping array of new rules and waivers of federal requirements to ensure that local hospitals and health systems have the capacity to absorb and effectively manage potential surges of COVID-19 patients. In addition, CMS has issued guidance on nursing home health and safety standards, essential surgeries and procedures, as well as preservation of personal protective equipment, beds, and ventilators. We also issued guidance and provided waivers or flexibilities to states and health care providers to ensure that they can focus on delivering the necessary items and services during this pandemic. You can find more information about our ongoing efforts on CMS's Current Emergencies website, which is linked on the CMS.gov home page.¹

In furtherance of our partnership with states, CMS has dedicated its resources to ensuring that Medicaid agencies have the necessary tools to prepare and respond to this emergency on behalf of the nation's 71 million Medicaid beneficiaries. To that end, CMS has also created a dedicated [website](#) for Medicaid-related COVID-19 information, which includes our Medicaid & CHIP Disaster Response Toolkit and links to other relevant information regarding COVID-19. We are also releasing updated guidance on a rolling basis in the form of frequently asked questions (FAQs) so that we can provide states with the most current and useful information during this evolving situation, including information on the implementation of recent congressional actions.

¹<https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>

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We have also developed standardized Medicaid waiver and state plan amendment checklists to provide states with a comprehensive suite of flexibilities and streamline their ability to request and implement the necessary program adjustments in light of COVID-19. In addition, CMS has and continues to hold direct technical assistance sessions with impacted states, as well as regular all-state calls, to answer questions and better understand state needs. Recordings and transcripts of our all-state calls are also made available online, and our website will continue to be updated with additional information as it becomes available.

We will continue to work to identify other priority areas where special rules and policies are needed during this critical time in our nation's history. Thank you for taking the time to share your recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Calder Lynch", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Calder Lynch
Deputy Administrator and Director