

Anticipated Questions Regarding Maine's State Plan Amendment Request

What happens if the Federal Government denies this request?

Based on the Supreme Court decision, DHHS is confident that the State Plan Amendment will be approved.

The Governor, Maine Attorney General, and DHHS Commissioner have made it clear that if the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services does not approve the amendment the State will be forced to go to court and seek appropriate relief.

The State has requested that the Federal Government respond to this request within 30 days.

If HHS approves the amendment how quickly do these changes take effect?

Based on state statute, the changes would go into effect October 1.

How much in savings do these Legislatively-approved changes generate?

\$19.93 million.

Who is affected by these changes to the State Medicaid Plan?

- Coverage will be eliminated for 19 and 20-year-olds, saving approximately \$4 million and affecting 6,848 current recipients.
- Eligibility requirements will be reduced by 10 percent in the Medicare Savings Program. These individuals who are eligible for Medicare and are also eligible for limited Maine Medicaid benefits. This saves more than \$2.9 million. 1,825 people will no longer be eligible for MSP benefits.
- Coverage for Parents will be reduced from 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level to 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. This saves more than \$12.7 million and affects 27,135 members.

When will members be notified of changes to their benefits?

Members have already been made aware of the October 1 implementation date once the State Plan Amendment is approved. We are committed to continued communication with those who will lose their benefits or see a benefit reduction.

If CMS has 90 days to take action, why are you requesting a decision in 30 days?

An expedited decision is needed to allow Maine to implement its changes on October 1.

Won't there be a lengthy delay if this must be decided in court?

It is our hope to avoid a court action and our belief that a decision can be made in 30 days.

We have offered an alternative to the federal government of covering Maine's portion of the cost to care for those impacted by the cuts from October 1 forward until CMS makes a decision on our request. If their position does not align with ours, we would pay back the federal government through a reduction of the matching rate once the issue is settled.

Will Maine create its own health care exchange?

There are too many unanswered questions to conclude whether Maine will create an exchange or request the Federal Government to do so. We have yet to make that decision.

Will Maine expand Medicaid?

Maine currently offers some of the most generous welfare benefits in the Nation. However, before Maine can make a final decision on expansion, the Obama Administration must clarify how the expansion would be paid for and how 'newly eligible' is defined, because that will have a significant impact on those who are eligible for the full federal match.

There are a lot of uncertainties that must be clarified before Maine can make a final decision.