MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 20-20

Date: August 31, 2020

To: Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff
    Program Managers
    Regional Directors
    Regional Attorneys
    Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
      State Office 2115

Subject: COVID-19 Policy Updates #14

The information in this bulletin provides temporary guidance regarding policies and procedures for processing case actions during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Staff will be notified when the COVID-19 policy and clarifications should no longer be used for processing case actions and determining eligibility. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

COVID-19 Policy Updates #14

Background
On March 13, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. On the same date, President Donald J. Trump declared a national emergency. Guidance from state and federal leaders emphasize the need for social distancing and limiting contact with others during this time. In light of this guidance, HHSC is providing the following policy clarifications and temporary changes to eligibility policies to accommodate processing of case actions during this emergency period.

Interviews

Current COVID-19 Policy
SNAP, TANF and TP 08
An interview is not required at initial application or redetermination (MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin #20-05, COVID-19 Policy Updates #2 (Item #2), released on March 27, 2020).

New COVID-19 Policy
SNAP
An interview is required at initial application for SNAP. Staff must resume normal interview procedures for initial applications as described in TWA A-130, Interview Procedures with applications processed on or after September 1, 2020.

An interview is not required at redetermination for active SNAP households. Continue to follow the instructions in MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin #20-05, COVID-19 Policy Updates #2 (Item #2) to verify identity and bypass the interview requirement in TIERS.

TANF and TP 08
An interview is not required at initial application or redetermination for TANF or TP 08 (Parent and Caretaker Relatives Medicaid). Continue to follow the instructions in MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin #20-05, COVID-19 Updates #2 (Item #2) to verify identity and bypass the interview requirement in TIERS.

Automation
Automation changes are not required.

Correspondence
Correspondence changes are not required.
Handbook
Handbook updates are not required.

Training
Training is not required.

Effective Date
This policy is effective September 1, 2020. Staff will be notified when the COVID-19 policy and clarifications no longer apply.