

**Quarterly Texas Integrated  
Eligibility Redesign System  
and Eligibility Supporting  
Technologies Project  
Report**

**Fiscal Year 2021, Quarter 2**

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**As Required by**

**2020-21 General Appropriations  
Act, House Bill 1, 86th  
Legislature, Regular Session,  
2019 (Article II, Health and  
Human Services Commission,  
Rider 165)**

**Health and Human Services**

**Commission**

**March 2021**



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

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## 1. Overview

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is submitting this report regarding the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) to the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor, as required by the 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, House Bill (HB) 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, HHSC, Rider 165).

### **Rider 165. Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS)**

Included in the amounts appropriated by the Legislature in Strategy I.3.2, TIERS Capital Projects, is \$54,028,655 in All Funds (\$19,893,263 in General Revenue) in fiscal year 2020 and \$54,094,304 in All Funds (\$20,475,003 in General Revenue) in fiscal year 2021 for capital enhancements and maintenance of TIERS. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) shall submit quarterly reports to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor reflecting actual expenditures, cost savings, and accomplishments implementing the TIERS project. The report shall include a detailed plan for the project, a proposed schedule of expenditures, and the status of capital enhancement and maintenance activities for the TIERS project. Additionally, the report shall include detailed strategies developed and implemented by HHSC to restrict the TIERS project to those items presented and approved by the Eighty-sixth Legislature, 2019.

Notwithstanding transfer authority in Article IX, §14.03, Transfers - Capital Budget, HHSC may not expend funds in excess of the amounts identified in this section on the TIERS capital project without written approval from the Legislative Budget Board and Governor. A request to exceed the amounts identified in this section shall be considered approved unless the Legislative Budget Board issues a written disapproval within 30 business days after the date the Legislative Budget Board staff concludes its review of the proposal to expend the funds and forward its review to the Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, Speaker of the House, and Lieutenant Governor. Any request for additional information from the Legislative Budget Board shall interrupt the counting of the 30 business days.

## 2. Accomplishments

*HHSC shall submit quarterly reports reflecting accomplishments implementing the TIERS project.*

### 2.1 Releases

#### Cycle Set 109

- Cycle 1 – Release 108.1 was deployed on December 12, 2020.
- Cycle 2 – Sprint activities were completed December 23, 2020. Release 108.2 was deployed January 9, 2021.
- Cycle 3 – Sprint activities were completed January 29, 2021. Release 108.3 will be deployed February 6, 2021.
- Cycle 4 – Sprint activities for Cycle Set 109 began February 5, 2021 and are scheduled to be completed March 5, 2021.

#### Cycle Set 110

- Cycle 1 – Discovery activities are scheduled to begin February 11, 2021, and Planning activities are scheduled to begin March 8, 2021.

### 2.2 Release 108.1, 108.2, and 108.3 Activity Major Accomplishments

#### **Fraud and Fair Hearing (FFH) TIERS Correspondence**

Previously, FFH staff were required to manually send TIERS decisions. After deployment, electronically signed TIERS-generated decisions are now automatically sent to all parties of the hearing. In addition, FFH administrative assistants can now electronically sign TIERS Generated Decisions on behalf of their assigned Hearing Officer when processing Appeals.

#### **Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) updates for tax year 2020**

The following updates were deployed to comply with IRS MEC specifications for tax year 2020:

- Tax years 2015 and 2016 records were purged so that Social Security Number, Date of Birth, and coverage changes for tax years 2015 and 2016 are not sent to clients or to IRS.
- TIERS processes IRS MEC Client Corrections, IRS Error Corrections, and IRS Replacements per IRS tax year 2020 schema.
- TIERS communicates IRS MEC Client Corrections, IRS Error Corrections, and IRS Replacements, and original MEC transmissions per tax year 2020 schema.
- TIERS reference tables are updated with newly added business rules and error codes per the tax year 2020 IRS publication.

### **Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Auto-Enrollments into STAR Health**

After the first year of enrollment in the STAR Health Program, FFCC members between the ages of 18-21 are now auto-enrolled every subsequent year through the month of their 21st birthday. Previously, these members were required to reapply every subsequent year to avoid denial of continual coverage through the month of their 21st birthday.

### **CHIP Perinatal (CHIP-P) Updates**

Case actions and application processing are now updated to enforce policy rules for CHIP-P when adding newborns and processing applications. These actions previously only occurred in TIERS Intake mode. They now also occur in TIERS Change Action, Complete Action, or Reopen case modes.

### **Federal Poverty Income Limit (FPIL) Updates**

TIERS and YourTexasBenefits.com now use the 2020 FPIL to determine eligibility for certain Texas Works Medicaid and Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities (MEPD) types of assistance.

### **House Bill 72 Additional Requirements**

TIERS updates were deployed to allow additional managed care populations to be given a choice between STAR Health and STAR Kids plans, and to generally ensure continuity of care for managed care populations.

### **Managed Care Modernization**

Updates to the Managed Care Rules Engine were implemented to ensure that information pertaining to date of death, juvenile placement, and county jail confinement is processed appropriately.

### **Annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)**

TIERS updates now reflect the 2021 adjustments to Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Railroad Retirement, and Medicare Part B premiums. Monthly income limits for MEPD program types of assistance impacted by the SSI standard are also updated. YourTexasBenefits also reflects the 2021 SSI value to determine potential eligibility for MEPD programs that use the SSI standard.

**COVID-19 Activities**

- The Periodic Income Check (PIC) automated process excluded Eligibility Determination Groups that were granted a six-month extension due to the Continuous Medicaid switch that is in effect during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, as required by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- Effective January 2021 and ending June 30, 2021, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) maximum allotment amounts are temporarily raised to 115 percent of the previous maximum allotment amounts.
- The December 2020, January and February 2021 SNAP supplements were issued to eligible individuals.
- Extended Medicaid certifications for households with certifications ending in December 2020, January and February 2021.
- Extended Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and CHIP-P certifications for households with certifications ending in December 2020, January and February 2021.

## 3. Project Status

### 3.1 Release 109 Cycle Set

**Table 1 Release 109**

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
<b>Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates</b>	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020
<b>Last Reported Project Start and Finish Dates</b>	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020
<b>Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates</b>	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020

#### Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates:

N/A

#### Estimated Percentage of Project Complete:

Release 109 – 94 percent

#### Description of Method Used to Track Progress:

Micro Focus Project and Portfolio Management Centre; Microsoft Office Project

### 3.2 Release 110 Cycle Set

**Table 1 Release 110**

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
<b>Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates</b>	02/11/2021 – 07/31/2021	02/11/2021
<b>Last Reported Project</b>	02/11/2021 – 07/31/2021	02/11/2021

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Report to Date</b>	<b>Baseline Date</b>
<b>Start and Finish Dates</b>		
<b>Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates</b>	02/11/2021 – 07/31/2021	02/11/2021

### **Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates**

N/A

### **Estimated Percentage of Project Complete**

Release 110 – 5 percent

### **Description of Method Used to Track Progress**

Micro Focus Project and Portfolio Management Centre; Microsoft Office Project



## 4. Project Plan

Task	Start Date	Target Finish	Actual Finish	% Complete
<b>Eligibility Systems Modernization</b>	<b>Fri 6/15/12</b>	<b>Fri 11/5/21</b>		<b>98%</b>
<b>Development &amp; Testing</b>	<b>Thu 5/7/20</b>	<b>Fri 11/5/21</b>		<b>47%</b>
<b>Release 109 Cycle Set</b>	<b>Thu 9/24/20</b>	<b>Fri 3/5/21</b>		<b>94%</b>
<b>R108.1.1</b>	<b>Thu 10/29/20</b>	<b>Fri 12/18/20</b>	<b>Fri 12/18/20</b>	<b>100%</b>
Discovery	Thu 10/29/20	Wed 11/11/20	Wed 11/11/20	100%
Team 12 - C19 - CMS Guidelines	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/18/20	Fri 12/18/20	100%
Release Readiness	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/18/20	Fri 12/18/20	100%
<b>Cycle 2 - R108.2</b>	<b>Thu 10/29/20</b>	<b>Fri 12/25/20</b>	<b>Fri 12/25/20</b>	<b>100%</b>
Discovery	Thu 10/29/20	Wed 11/11/20	Wed 11/11/20	100%
Team 1 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Modification to application and renewal forms (YTB and HTW websites)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 2 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Modification to application and renewal forms (YTB and HTW websites), HTW (Flexible), C19 - Modified Processes for PIC (AES)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 3 - RR + C19 - PELDS Continued and other Ad Hoc runs	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 4 - RR + Phase III - Reverting Continuous Medicaid + HTW (Flexible)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 5 - MCS - HB72 Additional Requirements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 6 - C19 - CMS Guidelines	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 7 - C19 - CMS Guidelines	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 8 - C19 - CMS Guidelines	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 9 - MCS - Managed Care Modernization, MCS - Managed Care Modernization (RR)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 10 - C19 - CMS Guidelines, C19 - Re-enable Continuous Medicaid	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 11 - C19 - Re-enable Continuous Medicaid	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 18 - DataMart Maintenance	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%

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Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 24 - IDD-BH - CRCG Data System-Update	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 25 - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 26 - IT-State Portal – LEAP Migration	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 31 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver – Application/Renewal Processing and Administrative Renewals for DataMart	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
Release Readiness	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20	Fri 12/25/20	100%
<b>Cycle 3 - R108.3</b>	<b>Thu 12/3/20</b>	<b>Fri 1/29/21</b>	<b>Fri 1/29/21</b>	<b>100%</b>
Discovery	Thu 12/3/20	Wed 12/16/20	Wed 12/16/20	100%
Team 1 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Allow women to access HTW notices electronically	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	<b>100%</b>
Team 2 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Allow women to access HTW notices electronically	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 4 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Reasonable Opportunity	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 5 - MCS - CHIP Webservice Reference Table Validations, MCS - TJJD Enrollment Updates	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 6 - MCS - Dental "R" Candidate Flag – EB Testing Only, RR Support	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 7 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Application/Renewal processing and Administrative renewals	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 8 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Application/Renewal processing and Administrative renewals	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 9 - AES - LTSS ADRC Additions and Updates, RR Support	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 10 - IT - State Portal LEAP Migration, IT - PCG Report URL Length Issue Fix	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 11 - IT - PCG Report URL Length Issue Fix	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 18 - DataMart Maintenance	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%

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Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 25 - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 26 - IT-State Portal – LEAP Migration	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 30 - IT- Disaster Recovery Efforts	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
Release Readiness	Mon 1/4/21	Fri 1/29/21	Fri 1/29/21	100%
<b>Cycle 4 - R109.0</b>	<b>Thu 1/7/21</b>	<b>Fri 3/5/21</b>		<b>76%</b>
Discovery	Thu 1/7/21	Wed 1/20/21	Wed 1/20/21	100%
Team 1 - C19 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 2 - C19 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 3 - C19 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 4 - C19 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 5 - MCS - Report Merges & Separates to TMSIS	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 6 - MCS - Report Merges & Separates to TMSIS	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 7 - RR Support, AES – HTW 1115 Waiver (Backlog)	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 8 - RR Support	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 9 - AES-SNAP Schedule Distribution Modification- Related to HB1218, C19 - P-EBT, MCS-MAXeb Self Service Portal AWS Migration	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 10 - C19 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 11 - IT - Batch File Validations	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 12 - P-EBT	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 18 - DataMart Maintenance	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 21 - IT - Agency Email Domain Change Jira and Jama impact	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 25 - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 26 - IT-State Portal – LEAP Migration	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
Release Readiness	Mon 2/8/21	Fri 3/5/21		75%
<b>Release 110 Cycle Set</b>	<b>Thu 2/11/21</b>	<b>Fri 7/23/21</b>		<b>5%</b>
<b>Cycle 1 - R109.1</b>	<b>Thu 2/11/21</b>	<b>Fri 4/9/21</b>		<b>5%</b>

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Discovery	Thu 2/11/21	Wed 2/24/21		66%
<b>Release Deployment</b>	<b>Sat 9/19/20</b>	Sat 9/4/21		
R108.0.1	Sat 12/5/20	Sat 12/5/20	Sat 12/5/20	100%
R108.1	Fri 12/11/20	Sat 12/12/20	Sat 12/12/20	100%
R108.1.1	Sat 12/19/20	Sat 12/19/20	Sat 12/19/20	100%
R108.2	Sat 1/9/21	Sat 1/9/21	Sat 1/9/21	100%
R108.3	Sat 2/6/21	Sat 2/6/21	Sat 2/6/21	100%

## 5. Schedule of Expenditures

*The report shall include a proposed schedule of expenditures for the TIERS project.*

<b>Type of Expenditure</b>	<b>Fiscal Year 2021 Schedule of Expenditures</b>
Contracted Services	\$6,417,026
Hardware	\$14,627,370
Software	\$32,015,155
Total	\$53,059,551

## 6. Actual Expenditures

*HHSC shall submit quarterly reports reflecting actual expenditures implementing the TIERS project.*

### 6.1 New Development Expenditures

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Expenditures through 02/28/2021</b>
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$3,681,546
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$167,086,585

### 6.2 Operational Expenditures

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Expenditures through 02/28/2021</b>
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$32,938,811
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$379,020,052

## 7. Cost Savings

*HHSC shall submit quarterly reports on cost savings for the TIERS project.*

### 7.1 Strategies

In alignment with the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources Management published by the Department of Information Resources, HHSC is committed to maturing our information technology-resource management principles and implementing strategies to maximize business value while reducing costs. HHSC has already fully implemented Agile development methodologies which reduce the time to deployment and the need for expensive rework while improving quality and value delivered.

The agency’s TIERS project team is actively recruiting talent by offering prospective employees the opportunity to work with new technologies while contributing to health and human services. Additionally, TIERS project leadership aggressively negotiates new contracts for information technology services and leverage shared services, cooperative contracts, and bulk purchasing.

### 7.2 Estimated Savings

<b>Cost Savings/Avoidance Effort</b>	<b>Q2 2021 Savings</b>
Elimination of Staff Augmentation Contract Positions	\$210,553
Reduction in Rates Negotiated on New Contract	\$44,579
Reduction in Rates Negotiated on New Kofax Services Contract	\$9,152
Reduction in Scope of Application Support	\$475,584
Reduction in Rates Negotiated On New Contract	\$233,768
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$973,636</b>

## 8. Governance

*Additionally, the report shall include detailed strategies developed and implemented by HHSC to restrict the TIERS project to those items presented and approved by the Eighty-fifth Legislature, 2017.*

The Social Services Applications group within HHSC's Information Technology division manages changes to TIERS and its supporting technologies, including YourTexasBenefits.com, State Portal, and Task List Manager. The TIERS Information Technology governance process manages changes to all applications supported by Social Services Applications.

Since the transition to Agile software development <sup>1</sup>in 2016, software releases typically occur monthly.

To develop the release charter, business areas within HHSC as well as external trading partners, submit their strategic business roadmaps for system changes in both the fiscal year and the next release cycle. Areas prioritize these roadmaps, which then are combined and reprioritized based on capacity within each release cycle and the number of Agile sprints required.

Initiatives are prioritized based on the Agile "MoSCoW" method of must, should, could, and won't; meaning the initiative is a must have, good to have, nice to have, or will not be done. The TIERS governance workgroup approves the final release charter.

Before they are submitted to the governance workgroup, changes to the charter are vetted by teams that would be impacted. The workgroup meets monthly to update the roadmap and adjust the content or sprint schedule of the release in progress.

Additions to the release charter must:

- Be mandated by the federal government, state leadership, or the Executive Commissioner;

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<sup>1</sup> Agile software development refers to a group of software development methodologies based on iterative development.



- Result in clients not receiving accurate/timely benefits if they are not implemented;
- Result in financial penalties to the state or HHSC if they not implemented; or
- Meet other criteria approved by the TIERS governance workgroup.

## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
<b>AES</b>	Access and Eligibility Services
<b>ATI</b>	Automated Testing Initiative
<b>AWS</b>	Amazon Web Service (cloud computing)
<b>BLSSE</b>	Blood Lead Surveillance System Efficiency
<b>CALMS</b>	Collaboration, Automation, Lean, Measurement and Sharing
<b>CHIP</b>	Children’s Health Insurance Program
<b>CHIP-P</b>	Children’s Health Insurance Program-Perinatal
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>DLT</b>	Deloitte
<b>EBT</b>	Electronic Benefits Transfer
<b>EST</b>	Eligibility Support Technologies
<b>FFH</b>	Fraud and Fair Hearing
<b>FFCC</b>	Former Foster Care Children
<b>FPIL</b>	Federal Poverty Income Limit
<b>HB</b>	House Bill
<b>HHSC</b>	Health and Human Services Commission
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology

**LEAP** Lightweight Extensible Authentication Protocol

**MCS** Medicaid & CHIP Services

**MEC** Minimum Essential Coverage

**MEPD** Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities

**PIC** Periodic Income Check

**RR** Release Readiness

**RSDI** Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance

**SNAP** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

**SSI** Social Security Income

**TIERS** Texas Integrated Eligibility and Redesign System

**TMHP** Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership

**TMSIS** Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System