

SB1133 AHCCCS; DES; new hires directory

Background:

Individuals must meet certain income eligibility criteria in order to be eligible to receive AHCCCS services. AHCCCS members are required to report any changes in income that may affect their eligibility, like a change in employment status. However, relying solely on member self-reporting can create delays in the receipt of information. For this reason, the AHCCCS Administration may not be aware of a member's new employment and potential ineligibility to receive services. Under current federal law, AHCCCS does not have the authority to recoup benefits paid from individual members if it is determined that an enrolled member is no longer eligible.

How is employment information gathered now?

Employment information is gathered through member self-reporting. The AHCCCS Administration also accesses the Work Number system, which includes information gathered from Arizona employers on a voluntary basis. Unfortunately, the information available via this resource is limited to large employers. Thus, AHCCCS currently is unable to obtain the most up-to-date employment information from all businesses across the State of Arizona.

What is the New Hire Directory?

Under current law, employers are required to report new employees to the State of Arizona. This information is stored in the New Hire Directory as part of the Division of Child Support within the Department of Economic Security. Federal law permits Medicaid agencies to access this information for the purpose of determining continued eligibility for beneficiaries.

How would information in the New Hire Directory be utilized?

Under the auspices of this legislation, AHCCCS would utilize the information in the Directory to determine which of its members have obtained new employment. From this point, AHCCCS eligibility workers would contact those newly employed members to determine whether, based on their increased income, they are still eligible to receive services.

Will the New Hire Directory be utilized to determine the continued eligibility of all enrolled populations?

Under current federal law, information in the Directory may only be utilized for determining the continued eligibility of members enrolled in Title XIX populations- Acute Care and Arizona Long-Term Care. AHCCCS is not permitted to utilize this information to verify the eligibility of enrolled KidsCare members.

What is the fiscal impact of this legislation?

AHCCCS anticipates that this legislation will result in a cost savings to the State of Arizona. AHCCCS eligibility workers will be able to identify ineligible members earlier, thus saving resources that otherwise cannot be recouped. This legislation empowers the Agency to achieve greater efficiency and better target resources to those members who are eligible to receive services.