

STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

#### Notice of Decision

Decision Date: February 09, 2018

NY State of Health Account ID:

Appeal Identification Number: AP00000028344



On February 9, 2018, you appeared by telephone at a hearing on your appeal of NY State of Health's February 3, 2018 eligibility determination notice and February 3, 2018 enrollment confirmation notice.

The enclosed Decision, rendered after that hearing, is issued by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health.

If you have questions about your Decision, you can contact us by:

- Calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- Sending Mail to:

NY State of Health Appeals P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

Sending a Fax to 1-855-900-5557

When contacting NY State of Health about your appeal and/or the Decision, please refer to the Appeal Identification number and the Account ID at the top of this notice.

## **Legal Authority**

We are sending you this notice in accordance with 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 155.545.



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

#### Decision

Decision Date: February 09, 2018

NY State of Health Account ID:

Appeal Identification Number: AP000000028344



#### Issue

The issue presented for review by the Appeals Unit of NY State of Health is:

Did NY State of Health properly determine that your children's eligibility for and enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan was effective March 1, 2018, and that your and your spouse's eligibility for and enrollment in the Essential Plan was effective March 1, 2018?

## **Procedural History**

On December 3, 2016, NY State of Health (NYSOH) issued a renewal notice stating that you and your spouse were eligible for the Essential Plan, effective February 1, 2017, and that your children were eligible for Medicaid, effective February 1, 2017.

On December 17, 2016, NYSOH issued a notice of enrollment confirmation stating that you and your spouse were enrolled in an Essential Plan with a plan enrollment start date of February 1, 2017, and that your children were enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care plan with a plan enrollment start date of February 1, 2017.

On December 2, 2017, NYSOH issued a renewal notice, stating that it was time to renew your household's health insurance for the upcoming coverage year. That notice stated that, based on information from federal and state sources, NYSOH could not make a decision about whether you, your spouse, and your children would qualify for financial help paying for your health coverage, and that you needed to update your account by January 18, 2018 or you, your spouse,

and your children might lose your health insurance coverage, and if applicable, any financial assistance.

No updates were made to your account by January 18, 2018.

On January 20, 2018, NYSOH issued an eligibility determination notice stating that you and your spouse were newly eligible to purchase a qualified health plan at full cost through NYSOH, effective February 1, 2018. The notice stated that you and your spouse were not eligible for financial assistance because you did not respond to the renewal notice.

Also on January 20, 2018, NYSOH issued an eligibility determination notice stating that your children were not eligible for Medicaid, Child Health Plus or the Essential Plan, or to receive tax credits or cost-sharing reductions to help pay for the cost of insurance. Your children also could not enroll in a qualified health plan at full cost. This was because you had not responded to the renewal notice and had not completed your household's renewal within the required time frame. Your children's eligibility ended effective February 1, 2018.

Additionally, on January 20, 2018, NYSOH issued a disenrollment notice stating that you and your spouse's coverage in your Essential Plan would end on January 31, 2018 and your children's coverage in their Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care plan would end on January 31, 2018.

On February 2, 2018, NYSOH received your household's updated application for health insurance. That day, a preliminary eligibility determination was prepared stating that you and your spouse were eligible for the Essential Plan and that your children were eligible for Child Health Plus. You selected a plan for yourself and your spouse as well as your children for enrollment that day.

Also on February 2, 2018, you spoke to NYSOH's Account Review Unit and appealed the eligibility determination insofar as your household was without coverage for the month of February 2018.

Additionally, on February 2, 2018, NYSOH received via fax documentation for your youngest child's doctor requesting an expedited appeal because of his urgent medical issues.

On February 3, 2018, NYSOH issued an eligibility redetermination notice stating that you and your spouse were eligible for the Essential Plan, effective March 1, 2018, and that your children were eligible for Child Health Plus, effective March 1, 2018.

Also on February 3, 2018, an enrollment confirmation notice was issued that stated that you and your spouse were enrolled in an Essential Plan with a plan

enrollment start date of March 1, 2018, and that your children were enrolled in a Child Health Plus with a plan enrollment start date of March 1, 2018.

On February 5, 2018, your request for an expedited hearing was approved.

On February 9, 2018, you had a telephone hearing with a Hearing Officer from NYSOH's Appeals Unit. Your spouse was present and provided sworn testimony. The record was developed during the hearing and closed at the end of the hearing.

## Findings of Fact

A review of the record supports the following findings of fact:

- You testified that you did not know that you needed to update your account until You explained that earlier that day, your youngest child underwent home from contacted your spouse and advised her that your youngest child's coverage had lapsed.
- You went on to testify that on February 2, 2018, you contacted your children's Medicaid Managed Care plan, and were advised that they were not sure why your children's coverage had lapsed, and they transferred you to NYSOH.
- 3) You testified that on February 2, 2018, you updated your household's application for financial assistance and selected an Essential Plan for yourself and your spouse for enrollment and a Child Health Plus plan for your children for enrollment.
- 4) You testified that while updating your account on February 2, 2018, you were advised that your account was set for electronic alerts.

  During that phone call, you requested that this preference be changed to receive notices via regular mail.
- 5) You testified that you never requested that you receive notices via electronic mail from NYSOH. You explained that you do not have a personal e-mail account. You believe that the certified application counselor who set-up your account must have selected the electronic alert option.
- 6) You testified that you did not receive any electronic alerts regarding any notice in your NYSOH account telling you that you needed to update your application in order to renew your household's eligibility. You also did not receive any renewal notice by regular mail.

- 7) On January 4, 2016, your NYSOH account was created by a certified application counselor.
- 8) The e-mail address on your account consists of your followed by the count.

  You testified that this is not your e-mail account, you did not set-up this e-mail account, and you were never given information about this e-mail account.
- 9) You testified that you spoke with an NYSOH Account Review Unit representative who advised you that the notices in your NYSOH account inbox were unread.
- NYSOH uploaded an evidence packet to your NYSOH account. Contained within that evidence packet under the heading of "electronic notice requirement" is a three-page memorandum dated August 21, 2017. The memorandum sets forth the federal requirements regarding use of electronic communications and asserts that NYSOH is in compliance with federal regulation and guidance on the use of electronic notices. The memorandum asserts that "the electronic notification rules do not require that exchanges track and monitor consumers actual receipt of electronic notices".
- 11) NYSOH has submitted no evidence that an electronic alert was sent to you regarding the December 2, 2017 renewal notice.
- 12) You testified that you are seeking for your children's enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan to begin as of February 1, 2018 and for your and your spouse's enrollment in your Essential Plan to begin as of February 1, 2018.

Conflicting evidence, if any, was considered and found to be less credible than the evidence noted above.

## **Applicable Law and Regulations**

#### Medicaid Renewal

In general, NYSOH must review Medicaid eligibility once every 12 months or "whenever it receives information about a change in a beneficiary's circumstances that may affect eligibility" (42 CFR § 435.916(a)(1), (d)). NYSOH must make its "redetermination of eligibility without requiring information from the individual if able to do so based on reliable information contained in the individual's account or other more current information available to the agency,

including but not limited to information accessed through any data bases accessed by the agency" (42 CFR § 435.916(a)(2)).

NYSOH must provide an individual with the annual redetermination notice, including the projected eligibility for coverage and financial assistance, and must require the qualified individual to report any changes within 30 days (45 CFR § 155.335(c), (e)). Once the 30-day period has lapsed, NYSOH must issue a redetermination as provided by the notice, with consideration given to any updates that may have been provided by the individual (45 CFR §155.335(h)).

#### **Child Health Plus**

The "period of eligibility" for Child Health Plus is "that period commencing on the first day of the month during which a child is an eligible child and enrolled or recertified for enrollment on an annual basis based on all required information and documentation and ending on the last day of the twelfth month following such date," unless the CHP premiums are not timely paid, or the child no longer resides in New York State, gains access to or obtains other health insurance coverage, or becomes eligible for Medicaid (NY Public Health Law § 2510(6)).

"A State must specify a method for determining the effective date of eligibility for [Child Health Plus], which can be determined based on the date of application or through any other reasonable method that ensures coordinated transition of children between [Child Health Plus] and other insurance affordability programs as family circumstances change and avoids gaps or overlaps in coverage" (42 CFR § 457.340(f)).

The State of New York has provided that a child's period of eligibility for Child Health Plus begins on the first day of the month during which a child is eligible. A child will become eligible on the first day of the next month, if the application is received by the 15th of the month; applications received after the 15th day of the month will be processed for the first day of the second following month (see State Plan Amendment (SPA) NY-14-0005, approved February 3, 2015 and effective January 1, 2014).

#### Essential Plan Renewal

In general, NYSOH will review Essential Plan eligibility no more frequently than once every 12 months from the effective date of eligibility as long as enrollees are under age 65, not enrolled in minimum essential coverage elsewhere, remain state residents, and do not have any changes in circumstances. An individual enrolled in the Essential Plan shall have his or her coverage continued until the end of the 12-month period, provided he or she does not lose eligibility by reason of citizenship status, lack of state residence, failure to provide a valid social security number, providing inaccurate information that would affect eligibility when requesting or renewing health coverage, failure to make the applicable

premium payment, or changes in circumstances (42 CFR § 600.340(a); 42 CFR § 600.320(d); NY Social Services Law § 369-gg(3) and (4)(d)); New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, pp. 8 and 16, as approved January 2016; see https://www.medicaid.gov/basic-health-program/downloads/ny-blueprint.pdf).

NYSOH must provide an individual with the annual redetermination notice, including the projected eligibility for coverage and financial assistance, and must require the qualified individual to report any changes within 30 days (42 CFR § 600.340(e). Once the 30-day period has lapsed, NYSOH must issue a redetermination as provided by the notice, with consideration given to any updates that may have been provided by the individual (42 CFR §600.345; (NY Social Services Law § 369-gg(4)(c); 45 CFR § 155.335(g); New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, p. 17, as approved January 2016; see https://www.medicaid.gov/basic-health-program/downloads/ny-blueprint.pdf).

For individuals seeking enrollment in an Essential Plan, New York State has elected to follow the same rules that NYSOH uses in determining effective dates for individuals seeking enrollment in qualified health plans (NY Social Services Law § 369-gg(4)(c); New York's Basic Health Plan Blueprint, p. 16, as approved January 2016; see https://www.medicaid.gov/basic-health-program/downloads/ny-blueprint.pdf).

The effective date of coverage by an Essential Plan is determined by the date on which an applicant selects a plan for enrollment. For individuals who are eligible for enrollment, NYSOH must generally ensure that coverage is effective the first day of the following month for selections received by NYSOH from the first to the fifteenth of any month (45 CFR §§ 155.410(f)(2), 155.420(b)(1)(i); see also 42 CFR § 600.320). For selections received by NYSOH from the sixteenth to the last day of any month, NYSOH must ensure coverage is effective the first day of the second following month (45 CFR §§ 155.410(f)(2), 155.420(b)(1)(ii)).

#### Electronic Notices

Applicants may choose to receive notices and information from NYSOH either by electronic alerts or by regular mail. If the applicant elects to receive electronic notices, NYSOH must send an email or other electronic communication alerting the individual that a notice has been posted to the applicant's account (45 CFR § 155.230(d); 42 CFR §435.918(b)(4)).

Additionally, if an electronic alert regarding a notice in an individual's NYSOH account fails, NYSOH must send out the notice by regular mail within three days of the failed alert (42 CFR § 435.918(b)(5)).

## Legal Analysis

The issue under review is whether NYSOH properly determined that your children's eligibility for and enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan was effective March 1, 2018, and that your and your spouse's eligibility for and enrollment in the Essential Plan was effective March 1, 2018.

You children were found eligible for Medicaid effective February 1, 2017. They were subsequently enrolled into a Medicaid Managed Care plan.

You and your spouse were found eligible for the Essential Plan effective February 1, 2017. You and your spouse were subsequently enrolled into an Essential Plan.

Generally, NYSOH must redetermine a qualified individual's eligibility for Medicaid and the Essential Plan once every 12 months without requiring information from the individual if able to do so based on reliable information contained in the individual's account or other more current information available to the agency. NYSOH's December 2, 2017 renewal notice stated that there was not enough information to determine whether your household was eligible to continue their financial assistance for health insurance, and that you needed to supply additional information by January 18, 2018, or your financial assistance might end.

Because there was no timely response to this notice, you and your spouse were terminated from your Essential Plan coverage effective January 31, 2018, and your children were terminated from their Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care plan effective January 31, 2018.

However, you credibly testified that your account was previously set for you to receive alerts regarding notices from NYSOH electronically. Although NYSOH contends that it complied with federal mandates regarding electronic notices, there is no evidence in the file that NYSOH sent you an electronic alert notifying you of a new notice available in your account on December 2, 2017. You credibly testified that you did not receive an electronic alert regarding the renewal notice, which directed you to update your household's account because there was not enough information to renew your household's coverage for the upcoming year. There is also no evidence in your account documenting that any email alert was sent to you regarding the notice, that any such electronic alert failed, or that the notice was later sent to you by regular mail.

NYSOH is required to send applicants proper notice in order for applicants to take appropriate action. Since there is no evidence that NYSOH sent you an email alert, and you testified that you did not receive one, there is insufficient evidence in the record that NYSOH provided you with proper notice by electronic means that you needed to update your NYSOH account in order for your

household to continue to receive financial assistance and health insurance through NYSOH.

You first renewed your household's eligibility for financial assistance through NYSOH for the new coverage year on February 2, 2018, and therefore we must assume that this is the information that would have been used had you been timely informed of the need to update your account, as stated in the renewal notice.

Therefore, the February 3, 2018 eligibility determination notice and the February 3, 2018 enrollment confirmation notice are MODIFIED to state that your children's eligibility for and enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan was effective February 1, 2018, and that your and your spouse's eligibility for and enrollment in your Essential Plan was effective February 1, 2018.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH enroll your children into their Child Health Plus plan as of February 1, 2018 and to enroll you and your spouse into your Essential Plan as of February 1, 2018.

#### Decision

The February 3, 2018 eligibility determination notice is MODIFIED to state that your children's eligibility for Child Health Plus was effective February 1, 2018, and that you and your spouse's eligibility for the Essential Plan was effective February 1, 2018.

The February 3, 2018 enrollment confirmation notice is MODIFIED to state that your children's enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan was effective February 1, 2018, and that you and your spouse's enrollment in your Essential Plan was effective February 1, 2018.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH enroll your children into their Child Health Plus plan as of February 1, 2018 and to enroll you and your spouse into your Essential Plan as of February 1, 2018.

Effective Date of this Decision: February 09, 2018

## **How this Decision Affects Your Eligibility**

Your children's eligibility for and enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan should have been effective as of February 1, 2018.

Your and your spouse's eligibility for and enrollment in your Essential Plan should have been effective as of February 1, 2018.

Your case is being sent back to NYSOH to begin your children's Child Health Plus plan coverage as of February 1, 2018 and to begin your and your spouse's Essential Plan coverage as of February 1, 2018.

## If You Disagree with this Decision (Appeal Rights)

This Decision is final unless you submit an appeal request to the Federal Marketplace or bring a lawsuit under New York Civil Practice Law and Rules, Article 78.

You may bring a lawsuit on any Appeals Unit decision in New York State court in accordance with Article 78 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules. This must be done within four months of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision.

Additionally, Appeals Unit decisions on issues involving eligibility for qualified health plans, advance premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions may be appealed to the Federal Marketplace. This must be done within 30 days of the Decision Date, which appears on the first page of this Decision (45 CFR § 155.520(c)).

If you have questions about appealing to the Federal Marketplace, you can contact them in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-800-318-2596
- By mail at:

Health Insurance Marketplace Attn: Appeals 465 Industrial Blvd. London, KY 40750-0061

• By fax: 1-877-369-0129

If you wish to be represented by an attorney in bringing an outside appeal and do not know how to go about getting one, you may contact legal resources available to you. You may, for example, contact the local County Bar Association, Legal Aid, or Legal Services.

# If You Have Questions about this Decision (Customer Service Resources):

You can contact us in any of the following ways:

- By calling the Customer Service Center at 1-855-355-5777
- By mail at:

NY State of Health Appeals P.O. Box 11729 Albany, NY 12211

• By fax: 1-855-900-5557

## Summary

The February 3, 2018 eligibility determination notice is MODIFIED to state that your children's eligibility for Child Health Plus was effective February 1, 2018, and that your and your spouse's eligibility for the Essential Plan was effective February 1, 2018.

The February 3, 2018 enrollment confirmation notice is MODIFIED to state that your children's enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan was effective February 1, 2018, and that you and your spouse's enrollment in your Essential Plan was effective February 1, 2018.

Your children's eligibility for and enrollment in their Child Health Plus plan should have been effective as of February 1, 2018.

You and your spouse's eligibility for and enrollment in your Essential Plan should have been effective as of February 1, 2018.

Your case is being sent back to NYSOH to begin your children's Child Health Plus plan coverage as of February 1, 2018 and to begin your and your spouse's Essential Plan coverage as of February 1, 2018.

Your case is RETURNED to NYSOH enroll your children into their Child Health Plus plan as of February 1, 2018 and to enroll you and your spouse into your Essential Plan as of February 1, 2018.

## **Legal Authority**

We are issuing this determination in accordance with 45 CFR § 155.545.

## A Copy of this Decision Has Been Provided To:



## Getting Help in a Language Other than English

This is an important document. If you need help to understand it, please call 1-855-355-5777. We can give you an interpreter for free in the language you speak.

#### **Español (Spanish)**

Este es un documento importante. Si necesita ayuda para entenderlo, llame al 1-855-355-5777. Le proporcionaremos un intérprete sin ningún costo.

#### <u>中文 (Traditional Chinese)</u>

這是重要的文件。 如果您需要獲得關於瞭解文件內容方面的協助,請致電 1-855-355-5777。我們可以為您免費提供您所使用語言的翻譯人員。

#### Kreyòl Ayisyen (Haitian Creole)

Sa a se yon dokiman ki enpòtan. Si ou bezwen èd pou konprann li, tanpri rele nimewo 1-855-355-5777. Nou kapab ba ou yon entèprèt gratis nan lang ou pale a.

#### 中文 (Simplified Chinese)

这是一份重要的文件。如果您需要帮助理解此文件,请打电话至 1-855-355-5777。我们可以为您免费提供相应语种的口译服务。

#### Italiano (Italian)

Questo è un documento importante. Per qualsiasi chiarimento può chiamare il numero 1-855-355-5777. Possiamo metterle a disposizione un interprete nella sua lingua.

### <u>한국어 (Korean)</u>

중요한 서류입니다. 이해하는 데 도움이 필요하시면 1-855-355-5777 번으로 연락해 주십시오. 귀하의 언어에 대한 무료 통역 서비스가 제공됩니다.

#### Русский (Russian)

Это важный документ. Если Вам нужна помощь для понимания этого документа, позвоните по телефону 1-855-355-5777. Мы можем бесплатно предоставить Вам переводчика Вашего языка.

#### (Arabic)العربية

هذه وثيقة مهمة. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم محتواها، يُرجى الاتصال بالرقم 5777-355-855-1. يُمكننا توفير مترجم فوري لك باللغة التي تتحدثها مجانًا.

#### বাংলা (Bengali)

এটি এক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ নিখি। এটি বুঝতে আপনার যদি সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে, অনুগ্রহ করে 1-855-355-5777 নম্বরে কল করুন। আপনি যে ভাষায় কথা বলেন বিনামূল্যে আমরা আপনাকে একজন দোভাষী দিতে পারি।

#### Français (French)

Ceci est un document important. Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour en comprendre le contenu, appelez le 1-855-355-5777. Nous pouvons mettre gratuitement à votre disposition un interprète dans votre langue.

#### हिंदी (Hindi)

यह एक महत्वपूर्ण दस्तावेज़ है। अगर आपको इसे समझने में सहायता चाहिए, तो कृपया 1-855-355-5777 पर कॉल करें। हम आपकी भाषा बोलने वाला एक दुभाषिया निःशुल्क उपलब्ध करवा सकते हैं।

#### <u>日本語 (Japanese)</u>

これは重要な書類です。理解するために支援が必要な場合は、1-855-355-5777 にお電話ください。通訳を無料で提供いたします。

#### नेपाली (Nepali)

यो एउटा महत्त्वपूर्ण कागजात हो। यसलाई बुझ्न तपाईंलाई मद्दत चाहिन्छ भने, कृपया 1-855-355-5777 मा फोन गर्नुहोस्। हामीले तपाईंले बोल्ने भाषामा तपाईंलाई नि:शूल्क दोभाषे उपलब्ध गराउन सक्छों।

#### Polski (Polish)

To jest ważny dokument. W przypadku konieczności skorzystania z pomocy w celu zrozumienia jego treści należy zadzwonić pod numer 1-855-355-5777. Istnieje możliwość uzyskania bezpłatnej usługi tłumacza języka, którym się posługujesz.

#### Twi (Twi)

Krataa yi ye tow krataa a ho hia. Se wo hia eho nkyerekyeremu a, ye sre wo, fre 1-855-355-5777. yebetumi ama wo obi a okyere kasa a woka no ase ama wo kwa a wontua hwee.

#### اردو(Urdu)

یہ ایک اہم دستاویز ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اسے سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم5777-355-485-1 پر کال کریں۔ ہم آپ کو آپ کی مادری زبان میں ایک مفت مترجم فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

#### Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

Đây là tài liệu quan trọng. Nếu quý vị cần trợ giúp để hiểu tài liệu này, vui lòng gọi 1-855-355-5777. Chúng tôi có thể cung cấp thông dịch viên miễn phí nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị.

#### אידיש (Yiddish)

דאס איז א וויכטיגער דאקומענט. אויב איר דארפט הילף עס צו פארשטיין, ביטע רופט 1-855-355-5777. מיר קענען אייך געבן א דאלמעטשער פריי פון אפצאל אין די שפראך וואס איר רעדט.