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Frequently asked questions: annual reviews and the public health emergency

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Frequently Asked Questions

Annual Reviews and the Public Health Emergency

What is the public health emergency (PHE) and how does it affect members?

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government declared a public health emergency (PHE). During this time, state Medicaid programs were required to keep Medicaid coverage for all members, even if their eligibility changed. This means all Healthy Connections Medicaid members kept their health coverage during the PHE. The federal government directed state Medicaid agencies to restart the standard annual review process. South Carolina's restarted April 1, 2023.

When will Healthy Connections Medicaid resume annual reviews?

SCDHHS restarted its standard annual eligibility review process April 1, 2023.

What will happen when Medicaid resumes the standard annual review process?

We will first try to renew your Medicaid with info already available, such as electronic data about your current pay or other eligibility requirements. If we can confirm eligibility, you will simply receive a "continuation of benefits" notice. This means your Medicaid will extend another year. If we cannot verify your eligibility, we will send you a form to complete and return.

If we need to send you a review form, we will notify you via mail and text message (if a mobile phone number is on file) so you can prepare. Once you receive your form, you will need to complete and return it. The date it is due will be included in the mail we send you. If the due date has passed, return the form anyway. You may still be covered. If you do not return the form, you may lose your Medicaid coverage.

You can return the form in one of the ways listed below.

- Complete the form online at apply.scdhhs.gov.
- Visit apply.scdhhs.gov and use the [document upload tool](#).
- Mail the annual review form to SCDHHS Central Mail, P.O. Box 100101, Columbia, SC 29202.
- Email it to 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov.
- Fax it to (888) 820-1204.
- Drop it off at your [local eligibility office](#).

Once we receive your form, your coverage will continue while your case is reviewed. When we finish, you will receive a notice with a decision.

How will I know when it is time to complete an annual review form?

SCDHHS will notify its members when their form is going to be mailed. The first group of members were mailed a review form April 1. We will review groups of cases each month for the next 12 months. When we are ready to process your annual review form, we will first try to renew your Medicaid with info already available, such as electronic data about your current pay, or other eligibility requirements. If we can confirm eligibility, you will simply receive a "continuation of benefits" notice. This means your Medicaid will extend another year. You will not receive an annual review form.

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If we cannot verify your eligibility, we will send you a form to complete and return. You can also complete the form online at apply.scdhhs.gov.

If the agency has your cell phone number, we will send you a series of texts to remind you to complete your annual review form. If you would like to ensure the agency has your cell phone number, you can go to apply.scdhhs.gov and select the "[Change of Address tool](#)," you can contact the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday or you can visit your local eligibility office.

Do I need to report any household changes?

Yes, you must report any changes in your household, including income, if someone becomes pregnant, if there is a new household member and any changes to your address or other contact information. You can change your address and phone number online at apply.scdhhs.gov. You can report any changes in your household by contacting the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday or you can visit your [local eligibility office](#).

What should I do to make sure I receive information from Healthy Connections Medicaid?

To ensure you don't miss important information about your Medicaid coverage, contact us to update your address and contact information. You can change your address online at apply.scdhhs.gov. You can also update your address and other contact information by calling (888) 549-0820 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. or visiting your [local eligibility office](#).

Also, follow our social media channels (@SCMedicaid on Facebook and Twitter) and visit www.scdhhs.gov/annualreviews for announcements and resources.

I usually complete my annual review form the same time each year but I have not received one for a long time. Should I be concerned?

No, there is no need for concern. Reviews have been on hold since the PHE began in March 2020. Starting April 1, we began the process of reviewing the eligibility of Medicaid members. In the meantime, you can help us by making sure we have your current mailing address, cell phone number and email address on file. You can update your contact info at apply.scdhhs.gov. You can also call (888) 549-0820 to update your info over the phone or visit your [local eligibility office](#).

Will I receive an annual review form for every person in my household?

Usually, a household receives just one annual review form. However, there are some situations that require each beneficiary to have their own review form. If you have received additional review forms for certain members of your household, please complete and return each review form.



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How will I receive my annual review form?

All members will receive either a "Continuation of Benefits" form or an annual review form by mail. It will be sent to the address we have on file for you.

I received a message about my annual review form and/or Medicaid coverage. How do I know it is legitimate?

All members will only receive the notice their benefits will renew or an annual review form by mail. It will be sent to the address we have on file for you. You will not get these official documents by phone, email, text or telephone.

You may receive reminders to update your contact info or to let you know the annual eligibility review process is restarting. These messages may be sent by phone, text message, email or mail. Texts will come from (803) 879-4184. Only members who have a valid cell phone number on file will receive texts.

Reminders also may come from your managed care plan or from an agency partner, such as SC Thrive. These messages do not require immediate action. These messages are intended to let you know where to find more info about the annual review process and ways you can help us reach you.

Healthy Connections Medicaid will never ask for money or gift cards to renew or keep your health coverage.

I am receiving text messages about my annual review form. Is it valid?

South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid is sending texts to remind members to update their contact info and to complete their annual review form. The texts will come from (803) 879-4184. If we have not received your annual review form, you will continue to receive follow up texts to remind you to complete your annual review form leading up to the date it is due. Only members who have a valid cell phone number on file will receive texts. You can reach out to the Healthy Connections Medicaid Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 to verify information you receive and the sender. You can call Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

What do I do if I received a message from a scammer or believe I have been scammed?

If you receive an email or text asking you to pay money or provide gift cards to keep or renew your Medicaid coverage, please report it right away. You can call the Medicaid fraud hotline at (888) 364-3224 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can also email FraudRes@scdhhs.gov.



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I have not received an annual review form yet, when will I get mine?

The annual review form process started April 1, 2023. This does not mean all cases were up for review on April 1. We will review groups of cases each month over the next 12 months. We will let you know when it is time for your review. This gives you time to get any needed documents. While we cannot tell you when your form will arrive in the mail, you can check your annual review status online at apply.scdhhs.gov or call the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

How do I check the status of my annual review form?

You can check your annual review status online at apply.scdhhs.gov or call the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

I could not check the status of my annual review form online, why?

Some Medicaid cases are not searchable with this tool. Please call the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday to check your review date.

I, or someone in my household, did not get an annual review form or lost our form. How can I get a new copy of my annual review form?

You can get a new copy of your review form by calling the Healthy Connections Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. or by visiting your [local eligibility office](#).

I received an annual review form in the mail. Am I required to complete and return it?

Yes, it is important for all Medicaid members to complete and return annual review forms in a timely manner. You have approximately 30 days to complete the form from the date it was mailed. The due date will be listed on the form. You can also complete your annual review form online at apply.scdhhs.gov. You should also be sure to respond to all information requests from South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid to help you maintain your Medicaid coverage, if eligible.

What will happen if I do not return my completed and signed review form by the due date on the form?

If we do not receive a completed and signed review form by the due date on the form, we will send a closure notice letting you know when your benefits will end. You will still have time to send your completed/signed review form if you receive a closure notice. For example, if the due date on your review form is April 27 and we have not received your review form by that date, you will receive a closure notice letting you know your benefits will end June 1 if we do not receive your review form before June 1.



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What should I do if I have received a notice telling me my benefits are going to end because I have not returned my review form? Do I still have time to send it in?

Yes, you still have time to send in your completed/signed review form. The notice you received has a date your benefits will end if you do not return your review form by that date. To prevent your benefits from ending, send your review form to make sure we receive it by that date.

You can complete your review online at apply.scdhhs.gov. If you prefer to return the paper form, you can provide it in a number of ways:

- Upload – Use our document upload tool at apply.scdhhs.gov
- Fax – (888) 820-1204
- Email – 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov
- Mail – SCDHHS Central Mail, PO Box 100101, Columbia, SC 29202
- In Person – Visit <http://www.scdhhs.gov> for a list of local eligibility offices

Is there a grace period for late review forms?

Yes. If you have received a notice telling you your benefits are going to end because you have not returned your review form, you have until the date your benefits are scheduled to end for us to receive your form. If we receive it by that date, you will keep your benefits while we process your review. In addition, there is a 90-day grace period if your benefits have already ended because you have not returned your review form. If we receive your form within 90-days of your closure date, your benefits will be re-opened and will remain open until we are able to process your review.

You can complete your review online at apply.scdhhs.gov. If you prefer to return the paper form, you can provide it in a number of ways:

- Upload – Use our document upload tool at apply.scdhhs.gov
- Fax – (888) 820-1204
- Email – 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov
- Mail – SCDHHS Central Mail, PO Box 100101, Columbia, SC 29202
- In Person – Visit <http://www.scdhhs.gov> for a list of local eligibility offices

How will I know if I keep my coverage?

You will receive a notice in the mail stating your Medicaid benefits will continue.

What if I no longer qualify for South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid? How can I get health care coverage?

If you or a family member receive a notification that you no longer qualify for Medicaid, you may be able to buy a health plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace and get help with the cost. Visit HealthCare.gov or call the Marketplace Call Center at (800) 318-2596 to find out more about Marketplace plans.