

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services

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Dept. of Human Services to Launch Online Review and Renewal System for Public Assistance Programs

Bismarck, N.D. - The N.D. Department of Human Services is launching a secure online review and renewal system for qualifying low-income people who participate in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The new online review and renewal process grew out of an effort to make it easier for parents to re-enroll their children in Medicaid and CHIP health programs and to simplify the process. Beginning Sept. 1, families will be able to login and have secure 24-hour access to complete, update, submit, and attach any required information such as proof of income or household size that is needed to determine continued eligibility for programs.

"This new website feature allows us to meet clients' needs more effectively and efficiently," explained Carol K. Olson, executive director of the N.D. Department of Human Services.

Prior to this system, Olson said, people had to stop at a county social service office or the state Children's Health Insurance Program office during business hours or they had to fax, e-mail, or mail required information for their review and renewal. If qualifying people miss the deadline for submitting information, their cases close, and they can no longer receive Medicaid, CHIP, TANF, or SNAP assistance, unless they reapply. To prevent this from occurring, program participants will be able to sign up for e-mail and text message reminders that alert them to upcoming renewal and reporting deadlines.

"Many individuals and families who participate in our programs are working. Our goal was to simplify the review and renewal process and make it easier for parents to ensure that children do not have an interruption in their health care coverage," said Maggie Anderson, the department's Medical Services Division director.

"Not only will this simplify information reporting, it also reduces administrative paperwork for our county partners," said Carol Cartledge, director of the Economic Assistance Policy Division.

To apply for programs online or to complete a review when it is due, individuals may use a personal computer to login at <https://apply.dhs.nd.gov>. For help with the online review and renewal or application process, individuals can e-mail the N.D. Department of Human Services' Medical Services Division at dhsmed@nd.gov or the Economic Assistance Division at dhseap@nd.gov, or call the department toll free at 800-472-2622, 701-328-2310, or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888 and select option one if applying for Medicaid and CHIP or option five for TANF or SNAP.

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In 2011, the department and its county social service office partners handled about 78,000 total reviews and renewals for the Medicaid, CHIP, TANF, and SNAP programs.

Funding for the technology changes required to create the new web-based review and renewal process was made possible in part by a \$1.69 million Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act outreach and enrollment grant the department received in 2011 from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The TANF and SNAP programs also contributed funds to the project.

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