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TO: Local District Commissioners, Medicaid Directors

FROM: Kathryn Kuhmerker, Deputy Commissioner
Office of Medicaid Management

SUBJECT: Interim Implementation of the Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities (MBI-WPD)

Effective Date: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Local District Support Unit
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The purpose of this GIS message is to inform local districts of the Department's plan to implement the Medicaid Buy-In for Working People with Disabilities (MBI-WPD) effective July 1, 2003.

The Health Workforce Recruitment and Retention Act created a Medicaid Buy-In program to extend Medicaid coverage to working applicants/recipients with disabilities who have net available income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and non-exempt resources at or below \$10,000. Applicants/Recipients with net available income between 150%-250% of FPL will be required to pay a premium. However, due to unavoidable delays, the automated premium collection and tracking system for the MBI-WPD program will not be completed until April 2004. Therefore, the Department will have a moratorium on premiums until such time as the system support is available.

Recognizing that staffing shortages and workload issues would make it impossible for most districts to implement this program without appropriate systems support in such a short time frame, the Department has decided that an interagency State team will implement much of the program centrally. This is an interim solution. Once the automated premium payment and tracking system is available, the MBI-WPD program will be transitioned back to LDSS to be administered like any other Medicaid program.

While we have not yet finalized all the policy and procedures, the current plan requires local districts to accept applications for the MBI-WPD effective July 1, 2003. The LDSS will be required to review the application for completeness and assure that required documentation is attached, including information necessary to initiate the disability review process. The LDSS will send completed application packages overnight to the Bureau of Medicaid Eligibility Operations and Family Health Plus, of this Department, for the eligibility determination and case processing. State staff on the interagency team will complete the eligibility determination, conduct the disability review, if needed, enter the case into the WMS system in the actual district of fiscal responsibility and send out appropriate notices.

The Federal Medicaid Infrastructure Grant for this program requires outreach efforts and involvement of people with disabilities. To meet this requirement, contracts will be issued to organizations serving people with disabilities to provide outreach, education and client representation activities for the MBI-WPD program. Contractors are expected to work closely

with the LDSS to coordinate activities properly. More information will be forthcoming when available.

In order to elicit LDSS input on procedural issues the Department has scheduled an ATT conference call. The call will take place on Tuesday, April 22, 2003, from 1:00pm to 3:00 pm. The dial-in number is 1-877-322-9648 and the access code is 374829. We encourage all districts to participate in this call. Your input is critical to the success of this important initiative.