

TO: Local District Commissioners, Medicaid Directors

FROM: Betty Rice, Director
Division of Consumer and Local District Relations

SUBJECT: Medicaid Eligibility for Infants

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

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This GIS message is to remind local social services districts of the policy regarding Medicaid eligibility for infants under one year of age.

Chapter 412 of the Laws of 1999, section 366-g, states, in part, that the "commissioner of health shall establish a procedure to ensure that every child born to a woman who is receiving medical assistance...is automatically enrolled in the medical assistance program." The intent of the law is to ensure that eligible infants are enrolled in the Medicaid program in a timely manner. Consistent with the intent of the law, it is Department policy that all infants in receipt of Medicaid shall be entitled to a full year of Medicaid (13 months from the first day of the birth month through the last day of the month of the infant's first birthday), except in the following instances:

- the child is not a resident of the state;
- a request has been made on behalf of the child by a custodial parent or legal guardian to terminate eligibility;
- the child is deceased;
- there are concurrent benefits, intra-state;
- there are concurrent benefits, interstate, or
- the child has been added to another TA/MA or Medicaid case. (In this instance, the infant is not losing eligibility; the child's eligibility is authorized in another case.)

Districts must make every effort to assure that the infant gets a full year of Medicaid coverage. This policy includes infants who move out of the district, as long as the infant continues to reside in New York State. Under Social Services Law 62.5(b), the district in which the mother was last determined eligible is the district of fiscal responsibility for the infant, until and unless the child is determined eligible in the new district.

Districts must coordinate the closing in one district with the opening in the infant's new district of residence when necessary to ensure that there is no gap in coverage for the infant.

Systems modifications are being explored to prevent inappropriate closings of eligible infants.