Karen House, Medical Eligibility Program Manager, Office of Client and Community Services/Healthy Kids, Oregon Health Authority

Number: SS-PT-11-038

Authorized Signature

Issue Date: 11/15/2011

Topic: Medical Benefits

Transmitting (check the box that best applies):

- [x] New Policy
- [ ] Policy Change
- [ ] Policy Clarification
- [ ] Executive Letter
- [ ] Administrative Rule
- [ ] Manual Update
- [ ] Other: _________________________________

Applies to (check all that apply):

- [ ] All DHS employees
- [ ] County Mental Health Directors
- [ ] Area Agencies on Aging
- [ ] Health Services
- [ ] Children, Adults and Families
- [ ] Seniors and People with Disabilities
- [ ] County DD Program Managers
- [x] Other (please specify): CAF SSP transmittal group

Policy/Rule Title: Express Lane Eligibility for Free and Reduced School Lunch Program recipients

Policy/Rule Number(s): Release No:

Effective Date: November 14, 2011

Expiration:

References: CHIP Reauthorization Section 203

Web Address:

Implementation/Transition Instructions:

History of ELE

The CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2009 provided the option for states to implement Express Lane Eligibility (ELE) for Medicaid and CHIP. ELE allows states to borrow some eligibility findings from other agencies approved by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) as Express Lane Agencies (ELA), such as SNAP or WIC, and to use those agencies’ findings to determine eligibility for children without re-gathering or re-verifying the information.

Initially, the only ELA was approved based on SNAP eligibility. SNAP income calculations are now used in the OPC and CHP programs for children in filing groups...
where no one is currently receiving medical assistance. The case descriptor, Express Lane SNAP (ELS) was created to identify the children found eligible based on an ELE determination.

**National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to be new ELA**

OHA has received approval from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement ELE based on the NSLP findings.

- Approximately five school districts have agreed to pilot ELE based on NSLP;
- On the NSLP application, the districts have provided parents/guardians of students with a way to indicate their student is uninsured and interested in medical assistance;
- The individuals who indicate an interest are now being compiled on a data base and will soon be provided with a simple form to complete and return to OHA (Branch 5503);
- Based on information from the NSLP, Medicaid (OPC) or CHIP can be opened for those children found eligible based on NSLP findings;
- The case descriptor for children found eligible for Medicaid/CHIP through the NSLP will be ELL.

**Role of OHA Statewide Processing Center (Branch 5503)**

ELA findings must be used only at the Statewide Processing Center. The team at Branch 5503 who currently opens medical for children found eligible through an approved SNAP ELA will continue to open medical for children found eligible through the NSLP ELA.

**How ELE for SNAP and NSLP works**

Federal regulations require states implementing ELE to add 30 percentage points to the highest children’s Medicaid income standard in order to account for any differences in eligibility methodologies between ELA’s and medical assistance programs. The highest Medicaid income standard in Oregon for children is the OP6 standard of 133 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), so the ELE Medicaid standard for Oregon is 163 percent of the FPL. Using the ELA’s findings, children are placed in OPC or CHP as follows:

- Children in households with NSLP or SNAP income below 163 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) will be placed in the OPC program.
- Children in households with NSLP or SNAP income at or above 163 percent FPL will be placed in the CHIP program.

**Implementation of ELL**

Letters included with the NSLP application paperwork have already been sent home with students in five pilot school districts. The NSLP application gives the parents/guardians the opportunity to indicate interest in medical assistance for uninsured children. Once the parent/guardian returns the NSLP application and
indicates interest in medical assistance for their student, the information will be compiled and forwarded to Branch 5503. A simple form will be mailed to these families to ensure enough information is available to open medical assistance.

As calls are received and forms are returned, Branch 5503 staff will:

- Establish a date of request;
- If available, gather information about absent parents;
- Verify citizenship using current processes;
- Obtain information about tribal membership;
- Use the NSLP data to code the filing group size in the #OHP field on medical cases;
- Use the NSLP income data provided to code the HPI income on medical cases;
- Open the appropriate OPC or CHP cases based on ELE rules and FPL and family group size;
- Add the new ELL case descriptor; and
- Obtain health insurance information and complete the MSC 415H form for children who are OPC eligible.

When the ELE findings are applied to the child’s medical determination, there are no additional verification requirements for:

- Income;
- Filing group Size;
- SSN;
- Residency.

The following eligibility factors must still be verified:

- Citizenship (Branch 5503 will open with CIP coding if needed);
- Health Insurance information for children eligible for OPC

**Reminder:** Children covered by private major medical health insurance are ineligible for CHIP. When children are found to have SNAP or NSLP income at or above 163 percent of the FPL but the children have health insurance, they cannot be enrolled in CHIP. Prior to denying medical for the child(ren), eligibility will need to be determined based on current Medicaid or CHIP policy. A new Notice Writer pend notice, CMEXTPL has been produced for this purpose.

**Processing for MAA/MAF**

Branch 5503 will also review for potential MAA/MAF eligibility:

- If the income appears low enough for MAA/MAF and the parents are not requesting medical, the children will be placed in the OPC program based on the ELE determination;
If the income appears low enough for MAA/MAF and the parents are requesting medical benefits, the children will initially be placed in the OPC program based on the ELL finding and cases will be pended for whatever is necessary for MAA/MAF eligibility determination. If the parent/caretaker relative returns the pended items and the student is eligible for MAA/MAF, Branch 5503 will open MAA/MAF for all who are eligible and requested medical assistance. If the parents do not respond to the pend notice or are not eligible for MAA/MAF, Branch 5503 will leave the children on OPC based on the ELE determination.

When an ELE form is turned in to a local branch office
When individuals who have received ELE letters contact local branch offices, they should be referred to the Healthy Kids phone number at Branch 5503, 877-314-5678 or 711 (TTY).

If a local branch office receives ELE letters from clients, they should be faxed directly to Branch 5503 at 503-373-7493.

Redeterminations of medical assistance
For children with ELL or ELS case descriptors who remain eligible for a year, eligibility will be redetermined using normal methods at the end of their certification period. Once a redetermination has been processed, remove the ELE coding from the CM case.

Training/Communication Plan: The team at the Statewide Processing Center is being trained on medical eligibility for children based on the new ELA.

Local/Branch Action Required: Review and discuss new ELA information with eligibility staff.

Central Office Action Required: FSM will be updated to include the new ELA.

Field/Stakeholder review: ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, reviewed by: [Blank]

Filing Instructions:

If you have any questions about this policy, contact:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact(s)</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Clarkson</td>
<td>503-945-6106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Mack</td>
<td>503-947-5129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Berg</td>
<td>503-945-6072</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vonda Daniels</td>
<td>503-945-6088</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewel Kallstrom</td>
<td>503-947-2316</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christy Garland</td>
<td>503-947-5519 or 541-684-2344</td>
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</tbody>
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Email: SSP-Policy, Medical