



Date: March 8, 2024

DMS Operations Memo 24-04

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff

Affected Programs:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BadgerCare Plus | <input type="checkbox"/> Caretaker Supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FoodShare | <input type="checkbox"/> FoodShare Employment and Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SeniorCare | |

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Division of Medicaid Services

Reinstatement of and Changes to BadgerCare Plus Premiums for Children

CROSS REFERENCE

- Process Help, [COVID-19 Information](#)
- BadgerCare Plus Handbook, [Chapter 19 Premiums](#) and [Chapter 48 Premiums for Children](#)
- Operations Memo, [23-08 "Ending of Temporary Health Care Policies Related to COVID-19"](#)
- Operations Memo, [23-44 "12-Month Continuous Health Care Coverage for Children"](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE

April 1, 2024

PURPOSE

This memo announces the reinstatement of and changes to premiums for BadgerCare Plus children. Premiums were temporarily suspended during the federal public health emergency (PHE) related to COVID-19. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is making changes to premiums based on guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued in 2023.

BACKGROUND

The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services declared a federal public health emergency on January 31, 2020, related to COVID-19. Based on related changes in federal and state law, Wisconsin implemented temporary program policies and processes to protect the health and safety

of applicants and members during the PHE. These policies included the temporary suspension of premiums for BadgerCare Plus children. This temporary suspension is ending as of April 1, 2024.

In late 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, was signed into law. This legislation requires that children in certain Medicaid programs and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are provided with 12 months of continuous health care coverage, with some limited exceptions. CMS issued guidance in 2023 that non-payment of a premium is not an exception to the continuous health care coverage requirement. For a child who has continuous coverage, that coverage may not be terminated for failure to pay a premium.

Because Wisconsin state law requires that premiums be charged to certain children enrolled in BadgerCare Plus, DHS will reinstate premiums for children. However, based on this new federal guidance, DHS may no longer terminate coverage for children for failure to pay a premium.

POLICY

REINSTATEMENT OF PREMIUMS FOR BADGERCARE PLUS CHILDREN

Effective April 1, 2024, premiums for BadgerCare Plus children will be reinstated. Children in families with income over 201% of the federal poverty level (FPL) will be charged a premium for BadgerCare Plus unless the child is exempt from having to pay a premium.

Applications with a filing date on or after April 1, 2024, will be charged premiums. Members enrolled prior to April 1, 2024, will not be charged premiums until after their next scheduled renewal for a new certification period beginning May 1, 2024, or later. Premiums will only be set for future months and only after advanced notice is provided.

Example 1: Mary applies for BadgerCare Plus for her son, Jack, on April 4, 2024. The household's income is 215% of the FPL. The application is processed and confirmed on April 5, 2024. Jack is eligible for BadgerCare Plus as of April 1 and a premium will be charged.

Example 2: Aarav's daughter Divya has been open for BadgerCare Plus since August 2023. The household's income is 220% of the FPL. Because Divya has continuous coverage through July 2024, a premium cannot be charged until after her renewal due in July 2024 is completed. Aarav completes the renewal on July 8, 2024, and Divya is determined eligible with household income above 201% of the FPL. A premium will be charged for Divya beginning with the month of August 2024. A premium statement will be sent to Aarav at the end of July for the August premium.

If an individual applies with a filing date before April 1, 2024, the individual will not be charged premiums during the initial certification period, even if the application is processed on or after April 1, 2024. The individual will be charged premiums after they complete their next scheduled renewal.

Example 3: Fatima applies for health care for her daughters, Amina and Aisha, with a filing date of March 25, 2024. The application is processed and confirmed on April 8, 2024, and Amina and Aisha are eligible for BadgerCare Plus with household income at 230% of the FPL. Because they applied before April 1, 2024, premiums will not be charged during the initial certification period. They are eligible for BadgerCare Plus with no premium from March 1, 2024, through February 28, 2025. If their household

income remains above 201% of the FPL after they complete their scheduled renewal, a premium will be charged for them at that time.

If a member has a renewal scheduled after April 2024, but completes an early renewal, premiums cannot be charged at that time because the member is still in their 12-month continuous coverage period. Premiums may be charged at the member's next renewal.

Example 4: Maya's son Nathaniel has been open for BadgerCare Plus since November 2023. The household's income is 250% of the FPL. Because Nathaniel has continuous coverage through October 2024, a premium cannot be charged until after his renewal due in October 2024 is completed. Maya calls the agency to renew Nathaniel's BadgerCare Plus in July 2024. This is during Nathaniel's continuous coverage period, so premiums cannot be charged. Premiums may be charged when the household completes their renewal in July 2025.

If a member was disenrolled from BadgerCare Plus before April 2024 because they did not complete their renewal, and they complete a late renewal on or after April 1, 2024, they will be subject to premiums after completing the late renewal.

Example 5: Choua did not complete the renewal for his son Chue's BadgerCare Plus that was due in February 2024, so Chue's BadgerCare Plus ended February 29, 2024. Choua completes a late renewal, the renewal is processed on April 2, 2024, and Chue is determined eligible with household income at 228% of the FPL. A premium will be charged for Chue beginning with the month of May 2024. A premium statement will be sent to Choua at the end of April for the May premium.

INITIAL PREMIUM

An initial premium will not be charged for a current or past month at application or renewal. Premiums will be charged only for future months after advance notice is provided, following adverse action logic.

If eligibility is determined prior to adverse action, the child will be charged a premium starting the following month.

Example 6: Roberto applies for BadgerCare Plus for himself and his son Jorge on July 2, 2024. The application is processed on July 8, and Jorge is determined eligible effective July 1 with household income at 215% of the FPL. A premium is not charged for July. A premium will be charged for Jorge beginning with the month of August. A premium statement will be sent to Roberto at the end of July.

Example 7: Melissa's daughter Beth has been open for BadgerCare Plus since August 2023. Beth completes a renewal on July 1, 2024. On July 5, 2024, Beth is determined eligible effective August 1 with household income above 201% of the FPL. A premium will be charged for Beth beginning with the month of August. A premium statement will be sent to Melissa at the end of July.

If eligibility is determined after adverse action, the child will be charged a premium the month after the following month.

Example 8: Lisa and her family apply for BadgerCare Plus on July 25, 2024. The application is processed on July 31, and the family is determined eligible effective July 1 with household income above 201% of the FPL. A premium is not charged for July or August. A premium will be charged for each child beginning with the month of September. A premium statement will be sent to Lisa at the end of August.

Example 9: Cua applies for BadgerCare Plus for her son Blong on August 31, 2024. The application is processed on September 27, and Blong is determined eligible effective August 1 with household income at 225% of the FPL. A premium is not charged for August, September, or October. A premium will be charged for Blong beginning with the month of November. A premium statement will be sent to Cua at the end of October.

Example 10: Julio's daughter Mia has been open for BadgerCare Plus since September 2023. Julio completes a renewal on August 23, 2024. On August 29, 2024, Mia is determined eligible effective September 1 with household income above 201% of the FPL. A premium is not charged for September. A premium will be charged for Mia beginning with the month of October. A premium statement will be sent to Julio at the end of September.

Example 11: Carly's son Jasper has been open for BadgerCare Plus since October 2023. Carly completes a renewal on September 30, 2024. Due to the need to verify income, Jasper's eligibility is not confirmed until October 22, 2024. Jasper is determined eligible effective October 1 with household income above 201% of the FPL. A premium will not be charged for October or November. A premium will be charged for Jasper beginning with the month of December. A premium statement will be sent to Carly at the end of November.

NON-PAYMENT OF PREMIUM

Payment of a premium is not a condition of eligibility for BadgerCare Plus. If no payment is made by adverse action of the benefit month, no premium is owed for that benefit month. Members will no longer be subject to a restrictive re-enrollment period, and they will not be penalized for non-payment of premiums at the end of the certification period.

Example 12: Kwame's son Kofi is eligible for BadgerCare Plus and a \$10 premium is charged beginning July 2024. A premium statement is sent to Kwame at the end of June with a due date of July 10. Kwame does not make a payment by July adverse action. Kofi remains eligible for BadgerCare Plus. A premium statement for the \$10 premium due in August will be sent to Kwame at the end of July.

PARTIAL PAYMENT

When a partial payment is made by adverse action of the benefit month, the remainder of the premium is not needed.

Example 13: Petra's son Viktor is eligible for BadgerCare Plus and a \$10 premium is charged beginning October 2024. A premium statement is sent to Petra at the end of September with a due date of October 10. Petra submits a \$5 payment on October 1. Viktor remains eligible for BadgerCare Plus. A premium statement for the \$10 premium due in November will be sent to Petra at the end of October.

LATE PAYMENT

When a payment is made between adverse action of the benefit month and the last day of the benefit month, the payment is applied to the next month's premium.

Example 14: Alan's daughter Victoria is eligible for BadgerCare Plus and a \$15 premium is charged beginning August 2024. A premium statement is sent to Alan at the end of July with a due date of August 10. Alan does not make a payment by adverse action of August. Victoria remains eligible for BadgerCare Plus. Alan submits the \$15 payment on August 21. The payment is applied to the premium for September that is due on September 10.

REFUNDS

When there is no premium due for the next benefit month, a payment made after adverse action of the benefit month will be refunded. When the premium due for the next benefit month is lower than what was paid, the excess amount will be refunded.

Example 15: Angel's son Felix is receiving BadgerCare Plus and is due for renewal in March 2025. A \$15 premium has been charged for Felix during the certification period that ends in March 2025. Angel completes the renewal on March 5, 2025, and Felix is determined eligible for a new certification period starting in April 2025 with a new premium amount of \$10. Angel submits a \$15 payment on April 1, 2025. This payment exceeds the premium due amount for April by \$5, so \$10 is applied to the April premium and \$5 is refunded to Angel.

CHANGE IN PREMIUM OBLIGATION AND PREMIUM AMOUNT

A child can have a new premium obligation at application or at renewal or a late renewal. Existing premiums for an individual child cannot increase during their 12-month continuous coverage period, including at an early renewal, but they may be reduced if applicable. If the premium is lowered, that new amount becomes their premium cap for the rest of the 12-month continuous coverage period.

While an individual child's premium cannot increase during their 12-month continuous coverage period, there may be instances where the household's total premium amount does increase, for example when another child is added to the household and that new child owes a premium. See [Operations Memo, 23-44 "12-Month Continuous Health Care Coverage for Children"](#) for more information.

ELECTRONIC PREMIUM PAYMENT OPTIONS

Previously, members paid premiums for children receiving BadgerCare Plus by check, money order, through electronic funds transfer (EFT) or wage withholding. Members will now be able to pay premiums using a credit card, debit card, or EFT from a checking or savings account using the [ACCESS](#) website or MyACCESS mobile app. Members will also be able to view their premium information and payment history through [ACCESS](#) and MyACCESS.

CONTACTS

DHS CARES Problem Resolution Team

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