

DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 2-2020
EFS_RA_AL-2-2020

Refugee Medical Assistance Certification Period Extension

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Work First Managers and Supervisors

DATE: May 5, 2020

SUBJECT: Refugee Medical Assistance Certification Period Extension

EFFECTIVE: Upon Receipt

PRIORITY: For Information and Action

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

On March 10, 2020 Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 116, Declaration of a State of Emergency to Coordinate Response and Protective Actions to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19. As a result of this Declaration, the Department of Health and Human Services will extend the certification periods for all Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) cases with a participant Date of Entry between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020 and their eight-month period will be exhausted between April 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020.

II. ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

Pursuant to its authority under 45 C.F.R. § 400.300, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is extending the RMA eligibility period from eight months to up to eighteen months for clients who became eligible for RMA on or after April 1, 2019. Specifically, the eligibility period will be extended for up to eighteen months for clients with a Date of Entry between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020, with the additional months not extending beyond September 30, 2020. For clients with Date of Entry on or after February 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain at eight months.

III. POLICY PROCEDURES

The caseworker will key a Forced Eligibility – Medical application on the Income Support Case that contains the Refugee Medical Assistance PDC. The Refugee Medical Assistance program should be selected. Refer to “Forced Eligibility for Income Support, Medical Assistance, Special Assistance & Cash Assistance” in NC FAST Help, for additional assistance.

To prepare for the extension, the following will occur:

1. The county will be notified by the Refugee Resettlement Agency of clients who may potentially be eligible for an extension of their RMA benefits. After receiving the notification, caseworker will react to reopen or extend RMA cases for all Refugee

arrivals between April 1, 2019 and January 30, 2020. Counties will be able to conduct telephone interviews in-place of face to face interviews.

2. NC FAST will create a report titled "COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Medical Assistance" that can be used to confirm the identity of the potential client. The report will be located under Economic Services Reports; RA Section in NC FAST Help. NC FAST will send a communication once the report is available.

Mapping for the report: Economic Services> COVID-19> Reports> Refugee Medical Assistance> COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Cash Assistance

Previous clients whose cases have closed, clients whose benefits are about to terminate or who successfully exited the program would requalify for RMA.

1. Client's statements are acceptable.
2. The extension period will start on the date of re-application.
3. Certification periods will not be extended for cases that have Refugee arrivals who became eligible for RMA on or after February 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain at eight months. These RMA cases will be processed as normal with an 8-month certification process. See examples below:

Scenario one, client A has refugee status; arrived on May 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date May 1, 2019 through end date December 31, 2019. RMA benefits exhausted in December 2019. Client is eligible to reapply for extended RMA benefits through September 30, 2020 regardless of income, unemployment benefits or RCA benefits at time of application.

Scenario two, client B received granted asylum letter (refugee status) on September 1, 2019. Client visited the DSS on November 1st was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date November 1, 2019 through eligibility end date April 30, 2020 (total of 8 months from date of eligibility). Client is now eligible to receive extended RMA benefits for an eligibility effective date of May 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.

Scenario three, client C with refugee status of Special Immigrant Visa Holder (SIV) date of entry February 1, 2020. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date February 1, 2020 through end date September 30, 2020.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Certification Extension applies only to cases with Refugee eligible clients who arrived into the United States between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020. The RMA certification periods can only be extended through September 30, 2020. Submit any questions regarding this information to dss.refugeeassistance.policy.question@dhhs.nc.

Sincerely,



David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services

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