



# MEDICAID MEMBER ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

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## Purpose

ND Medicaid values member and family participation in improving the Medicaid member experience. The Medicaid Member Engagement Committee (MMEC) is a way for members to share their lived experience, give input, and bring positive change to ND Medicaid.

The MMEC is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Prioritize person and family centeredness, which means we respect and value individual strengths, preferences, and contributions, and work with members, not doing things to or for them.
- Provide opportunities for collaboration between ND Medicaid and members with the goal of improving member experience and the relationship between ND Medicaid and all members.
- Provide a way for ND Medicaid to test if programs, policies, and materials are working as designed and having the desired outcome.

Discussion and recommendations from the MMEC will help guide ND Medicaid and will be shared with the Medicaid Medical Advisory Committee, ND Medicaid Leadership, and ND Department of Health and Human Services Leadership.



## Membership

The MMEC will have 12 members. ND Medicaid seeks to have members with different backgrounds, geographical areas, and with different life experiences and situations represented on the MMEC. ND Medicaid encourages all Medicaid members interested in serving on the MMEC to apply.

## WHO SHOULD APPLY

ND Medicaid encourages current Medicaid members, people who have had Medicaid within the last three (3) years or are caring for a Medicaid member to apply for the MMEC.

Note: Medicaid Expansion members are not eligible to serve on the MMEC but can share their views on Medicaid Expansion with the [Medicaid Expansion Member Advisory Committee](#).

Medicaid is also different than Medicare. There are many people who have both Medicare and Medicaid, and we will welcome those members if they have experience with Medicaid.

## HOW TO JOIN THE MMEC

People applying to join the MMEC are called applicants. All applicants will apply to the MMEC by submitting an [application](#). If you need help with the application, you can ask the Member Liaison for help by calling 701-328-8666 or emailing [jsheppard@nd.gov](mailto:jsheppard@nd.gov)

## **SELECTING A NEW MEMBER TO BE ON THE MMEC**

ND Medicaid will review applications and interview selected applicants to ensure membership is diverse and represents the ND Medicaid population. Applicants will meet with the Member Liaison for a short interview. The Member Liaison will recommend applicants for the MMEC to the Medicaid Director. The Medicaid Director will appoint members to the MMEC.

## **LEARNING ABOUT THE MMEC**

All new members of the MMEC will meet with the Member Liaison. The Member Liaison will review what to expect at MMEC meetings, show individuals how to use technology to participate in MMEC meetings, and go over recent topics discussed at MMEC meetings.

## **MEMBERSHIP TERMS**

The time a member serves on the MMEC is called a term. Each member will serve a two (2)-year term. A member can serve up to two (2) terms. Terms cannot be served in a row. This allows other Medicaid members to bring new perspectives to the work of this committee.

If a member wants to serve a second term, they will need to apply and will be evaluated alongside other applications.

## **MEDICAID MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Medicaid Medical Advisory Committee (MMAC) is made of members who are representatives of state or local consumer advocacy groups, clinical providers, representatives of managed care plans, legislators, tribal leaders, and members.

This committee reviews recommended policy changes and state plan amendments, discusses Medicaid initiatives and activities, and reviews quality, access, and expenditures.

Federal regulation requires that a portion of the MMAC be made of members serving on the MMEC.

Medicaid Member Engagement Committee Members serving on the MMAC shall serve a term of two (2) years from the date of appointment unless they resign, or their membership is terminated. Only active MMEC members may fill the five (5) designated MMEC seats. Former MMEC members may apply to serve a two (2) year MMAC term as a non- MMEC Medicaid member.

## **CHAIRPERSON**

A chairperson may be chosen from current MMEC members during their two-year term.

The chairperson will:

- Help the Member Liaison organize and plan meetings,
- Find guests to share information, and
- Run the meeting.

## **RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL**

Resignation is when a member feels they need to leave the MMEC before their term is ending. If a member cannot be on the MMEC anymore, a seat will be opened.

Members may be removed from their seat on the MMEC for good cause. Examples of good cause are:

- Excessive absences from MMEC meetings.
- Misconduct during MMEC meetings.

## **BENEFITS**

We value our MMEC members! While you are on the committee:

- Medical Services offers members direct access to our resources and staff while they serve their term. Please contact the Member Liaison to learn more.

MMEC members that fulfill their commitment:

- Will be able to ask for a letter of recommendation from our Member Liaison
- Can use the Member Liaison as a professional reference.

These are helpful when you are applying for a job or other committee-like work.

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION

ND Medicaid may request that members sign a release allowing a picture, the name, and/or basic information about the member to be published on the [www.hhs.nd.gov](http://www.hhs.nd.gov) website.



## Meetings

The MMEC will meet online every other month. Meetings will be held on Teams with an option for individuals to join the meeting by phone. Meetings will last no more than two (2) hours and are closed to the public. This means that only those invited to the meeting can attend. We have closed meetings to maintain a safe space for our members to honestly and openly share their stories and suggestions. Additional meetings will be held as needed when requested by committee members.

ND Medicaid will publish a yearly schedule for MMEC meetings. The meeting schedule will be posted on the MMEC website.

## ATTENDANCE

ND Medicaid encourages members to attend every meeting to the best of their ability. ND Medicaid asks each MMEC member to commit to attending at least four (4) meetings a year.

If a MMEC member misses more than three (3) meetings per calendar year, ND Medicaid may work with the member to determine if they are able to participate or if another Medicaid member should attend the MMEC in their place.

MMEC members may attend quarterly MMAC meetings to observe, give member-based input, and share MMEC progress and/or concerns.

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting minutes are notes of what was talked about at a meeting. Minutes will be taken at every meeting. ND Medicaid will summarize topics, suggestions, and follow up on progress. Minutes will be posted on the MMEC website.

## **OFFICIAL MEMBER ROLES**

The MMEC has a communal leadership structure without official roles such as a chair or co-chair. All members hold an equal number of responsibilities. If current MMEC members choose to consider designating official roles, a vote will be held to decide whether official roles will be put into place. The committee will discuss and approve these positions and their duties with a majority vote.

Members may volunteer or accept nomination for an official position. Members will then select a volunteer or nominee for the official position with a majority vote.

## **DISABILITY AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS**

ND Medicaid will assist members with accommodations such as American Sign Language (ASL) translation, captioning, and caregiver participation for members with barriers. ND Medicaid encourages members to tell the Member Liaison about any assistance they will need to attend and participate in the MMEC meetings.

ND Medicaid will also make accommodations for written or recorded materials presented at meetings such as translation, captions, descriptions of pictures, etc.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The MMEC is meant to improve the ND Medicaid experience for the entire member body. MMEC members should not benefit from their membership beyond the benefits gained by all ND Medicaid members. A conflict of interest is:

- A circumstance where a member, entity, or individual closely affiliated with the member could financially benefit from the member's participation in or connection to the MMEC.
- A situation where a member cannot separate their personal agenda from their service on the MMEC.

- A member's personal relationships, activities, or interests that cause conflicting goals, impair a member's participation, or inappropriately influence their decisions or actions.

Time will be held at every meeting to allow members to express potential conflicts of interest. When a potential conflict is expressed, the remaining, present members will determine whether the situation is to be considered a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists if the conflicted member's participation, voting, or further actions related to the matter result in that member benefiting or being impaired as described above.

If the remaining, present members find there is a conflict of interest, the conflicted member should excuse themselves from conversations, voting, and further actions on matters related to the conflict. If the remaining, present members find the potential conflict of interest not a conflict, the potentially conflicted member may resume regular participation.

Disclosures of conflicts will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

## **COMPENSATION**

### **Stipend for Committee Members for Scheduled Meeting Attendance**

North Dakota Health and Human Services (HHS) or a contracted designee may pay committee members for their time spent serving on a committee for a program administered or under the supervision and direction of HHS. Stipend may be available for time spent attending committee meetings and orientation training. If a stipend is paid, it will be made out to the individual committee member.

### **Rate and Attendance Requirements**

HHS or a contracted designee may pay committee members at a set rate within the limit of legislative appropriation. Use of federal funds to pay for any portion of the set rate for the stipend must also comply with any federal funding requirements, if applicable. The set rate is up to twenty-five dollars (\$25) per thirty (30) minutes, for scheduled committee meeting attendance. The committee member may receive a stipend for attending a regular committee meeting if they have been present for at least thirty (30) minutes. The committee member may be paid for the next thirty (30) minutes if they are present for twenty (20) of the next thirty (30) minutes, and so on, for the length of the meeting. Travel time to and from meetings and meal breaks are not considered part of meeting attendance.

## **Issuance of Payment**

HHS or a contracted designee may issue a stipend to the recipient in the form of electronic funds transfer (EFT) or paper check to be sent via standard mail. Committee members receiving stipend from HHS must complete and submit the SFN-10230 and a W-9. If the committee member chooses to have an EFT, they will also need to submit a blank check and/or have a letter of direct deposit issued from their bank. The letter of direct deposit must be produced on the bank's letterhead and contain the account holder's name, account number, and routing number, and the bank representative's name, signature, and contact information.

## **Process of Requesting Payment**

Committee members may request a stipend for each scheduled committee meeting or orientation training they attend by working with the committee facilitator to complete and submit [SFN 10230](#). Requests for a stipend will be processed within one week of the meeting attended.

## **Member Eligibility for Payment**

Committee members may be eligible to receive a stipend for attending scheduled committee meetings if they:

- Agree to receive a stipend and are active committee members; and
  - Are receiving assistance or services under a program administered by or under the supervision and direction of HHS and related to the committee's focus;
  - Are a provider of a recipient receiving assistance or services under a program administered by or under the supervision and direction of HHS and related to the committee's focus; or
  - Are a legal representative of an individual receiving assistance or services under a program administered by or under the supervision and direction of HHS and related to the committee's focus. A legal representative is considered a recipient for the purpose of being eligible to receive a stipend.

Committee members are not eligible to receive a stipend for attending scheduled committee meetings if they:

- Refuse to receive a stipend;

- Are working for a contracted designee during scheduled committee meeting attendance;
- Are attending a scheduled committee meeting as a part of paid employment duties; or
- Are a legislative member, as prohibited by 2025 Senate Bill No. 2113.

### **Member Responsibilities for Payment**

Members receiving a stipend are responsible for reporting this stipend as income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Members are also responsible for reporting this income to any assistance programs provided by HHS.

### **Key Advice**

Eligible committee members will be made aware that the acceptance of a stipend for committee meeting attendance can impact their eligibility for assistance programs. Eligible committee members have the right to refuse a stipend and should notify the committee facilitator, in writing, of their desire to refuse a stipend.



## Member Conduct

ND Medicaid values the feedback of Medicaid members and their families. The MMEC asks members to share their lived experiences with each other and others attending MMEC meetings and give all members a chance to be heard. ND Medicaid asks members of the MMEC to act in good faith with each other and agree to a set of guidelines for how the MMEC will interact with each other. This includes being honest and not doing things that will harm the MMEC. It also includes behavior outside of meetings. Expectations include:

- Members should try to attend and actively participate in all meetings. If members cannot attend a meeting, they are requested to advise the ND Medicaid Member Liaison. After missing a meeting, the member should plan to meet with Member Liaison to go over what happened at the meeting.
- Members agree to be respectful of other MMEC members, ND Medicaid staff, and other presenters. They will listen to each other and seek to understand the other's perspectives, even if they disagree.
- Members agree to make every effort to share their feedback and experience and bring forward any concerns.
- Members agree to refrain from personal attacks, purposefully harming the MMEC, and publicly criticizing or mis-stating information shared by other MMEC members during the meeting.

- Any written communications, including emails, blogs, and other social networking media (Ex. Facebook, Instagram), will follow these same guidelines and will maintain a respectful tone even if highlighting different opinions.



## Contacts

### Member Liaison

Jen Sheppard

[jsheppard@nd.gov](mailto:jsheppard@nd.gov) | 701-328-8666.

### Alternative Contact

Janice Tweet

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