

AN ACT

relating to expansion of the electronic eligibility information pilot project operated by the Health and Human Services Commission.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 531.02413, Government Code, as added by Chapter 605 (H.B. 321), Acts of the 80th Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 531.02413. ELECTRONIC ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION PILOT PROJECT. (a) The commission shall establish a pilot project in at least one urban area of this state to determine the feasibility, costs, and benefits of accepting, for the purpose of establishing eligibility for benefits under state and federal health and human services programs administered by the commission, the direct importation of electronic eligibility information from an electronic system operated by a regional safety net provider [~~indigent care~~] collaborative organization [~~system~~].

(a-1) Not later than September 1, 2010, the commission shall expand the pilot project to at least one additional urban area of this state if the commission has implemented the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) in the area selected for the expansion.

(b) An area selected for the pilot project under this section must possess a functioning safety net provider [~~indigent care~~] collaborative organization [~~system~~] that includes a network

1 of providers and assesses eligibility for health and human services
2 programs using electronic systems. The electronic systems used by
3 the collaborative organization [~~system~~] must be able to interface
4 with electronic systems managed by the commission to enable the
5 commission to import application and eligibility information
6 regarding applicants for health and human services programs.

7 (c) In establishing a pilot project under this section, the
8 commission shall:

9 (1) create [~~focus on creating~~] a project in which
10 [~~electronic applications for indigent care created by a~~] regional
11 indigent care networks interface with the commission through the
12 Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) or another
13 state electronic eligibility system, as appropriate, to share
14 electronic applications for indigent care created by the care
15 network [~~may be shared~~] with the commission to facilitate
16 enrollment in health and human services programs administered by
17 the commission;

18 (2) automatically import the application information
19 submitted under Subdivision (1) with minimal human intervention to
20 eliminate double data entry and data entry errors and to ensure most
21 appropriate use of commission resources while maintaining program
22 integrity;

23 (3) [~~(2)~~] solicit and obtain support for the project
24 from local officials and indigent care providers;

25 (4) [~~(3)~~] ensure that all identifying and descriptive
26 information of recipients in each health and human services program
27 included in the project can only be accessed by providers or other

1 entities participating in the project; and

2 (5) [~~(4)~~] ensure that the storage and communication of
3 all identifying and descriptive information included in the project
4 complies with existing federal and state privacy laws governing
5 individually identifiable information for recipients of public
6 benefits programs.

7 (d) In implementing the project under Subsection (c), the
8 commission shall review and process applications in a timely manner
9 and, to the extent allowed by federal law and regulations, work
10 directly with each organization to obtain missing documents and
11 resolve issues that impede enrollment. Each organization must be
12 authorized by the applicant to receive information concerning the
13 applicant directly from the commission.

14 (e) The commission shall provide a monthly statistical
15 report to each safety net provider collaborative organization that
16 submits an application under Subsection (d) and to the Legislative
17 Budget Board on the number of applications processed, the
18 timeliness of the application process, and the reasons for any
19 delays. The commission shall work with the safety net provider
20 collaborative organizations to decrease delays in processing
21 applications.

22 SECTION 2. Not later than December 15, 2011, the Health and
23 Human Services Commission shall:

24 (1) assess the cost-effectiveness, efficacy,
25 efficiency, and benefits of using electronic eligibility
26 information imported from electronic systems operated by regional
27 safety net provider collaborative organizations; and

1 (2) report the commission's findings resulting from
2 the pilot project established under Section 531.02413, Government
3 Code, as added by Chapter 605 (H.B. 321), Acts of the 80th
4 Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, and amended by this Act, to the
5 standing committees of the senate and house of representatives
6 having primary jurisdiction over health and human services issues.

7 SECTION 3. If before implementing any provision of this Act
8 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
9 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
10 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
11 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
12 waiver or authorization is granted.

13 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
14 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
15 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
16 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
17 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 583 was passed by the House on May 11, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 147, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 583 was passed by the Senate on May 26, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor