

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R4788 AND-F

S.B. 921
By: Sparks
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

When Medicaid beneficiaries are up for renewal, federal regulations require that state agencies first attempt to automatically renew beneficiaries using readily available and verifiable information. These are referred to as "ex parte" renewals. To keep people enrolled in the wake of COVID-19, the Biden administration granted new waivers that allow states to conduct ex parte renewals using unreliable information. One such waiver utilized by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) allows the agency to use unverified information provided on SNAP applications as justification to automatically renew Medicaid benefits. Relying on self-attested, unverified information provided on applications for other public assistance programs opens the door for waste, fraud, and abuse in Texas Medicaid program. S.B. 921 would prohibit HHSC or any other state agency that administers any part of Medicaid from conducting an ex parte renewal of a recipient's Medicaid eligibility.

As proposed, S.B. 921 amends current law relating to a prohibition on conducting an ex parte renewal of a recipient's Medicaid eligibility.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter J, Chapter 532, Government Code, as effective April 1, 2025, by adding Section 532.0456, as follows:

Sec. 532.0456. EX PARTE RENEWALS PROHIBITED. (a) Defines "ex parte renewal."

(b) Prohibits the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or a state agency that administers any part of Medicaid, except as expressly required by federal law, from conducting an ex parte renewal of a recipient's Medicaid eligibility.

SECTION 2. Requires HHSC, not later than the 180th day after the effective date of this Act, to seek any waiver or authorization from a federal agency necessary to implement Section 532.0456, Government Code, as added by this Act, and authorizes delay of implementation until the waiver or authorization is granted.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.