

## Description: Release 28

Release date: December 15, 2023

On December 15, 2023, Release 28 (R28) was deployed in the online system at MAhealthconnector.org or commonly known as HIX. When you login on or after December 16<sup>th</sup>, you should make sure to [clear your cache and cookies](#) prior to opening up HIX.

- [Health Equity Questions](#)
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## Health Equity

For Release 28, improvements will be incorporated in the HIX online application for the health equity data collection, in order to refine the understanding of health disparities and health inequities among **Health Connector and MassHealth members**.

### HIX will update:

- All health equity questions will now be optional
  - Notices will default to be printed in English, if a selection is not made
- The selection options for *Preferred Spoken* and *Written Language* on the question of *What is your preferred language, if not English?*
  - The questions are optional for members to complete. Blank responses or “Don’t Know” responses will appear as “English by Default”.
    - **Notices will default to be printed in English when NO option is selected**

# HIX System Release Updates

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- **NEW** American Sign Language (**ASL**) will be added as a drop-down option for the question *“What is your preferred language, if not English? Spoken”* language
- Existing **“Chinese – Cantonese”** and **“Chinese – Mandarin”** selection options will be replaced with a new **“Chinese – Simplified”** selection option for preferred written language
- The questions of **“Race and Ethnicity”** is now optional
  - The name of the existing **“Race and Ethnicity”** screen is changed to the **“Additional Demographics”** screen

# HIX System Release Updates

## Sample Screenshot of Additional Demographics

Application Year 2023   Start Your Application   **Family & Household**   Income   Additional Questions   Review & Sign

### Logan yi - Additional Demographics

When you see an **i**, roll over it with mouse or select it by pressing tab with keyboard to get definitions and learn more.

Please tell us about your race and ethnicity. We collect this information to help improve the quality of care for those we serve. Please note that 'Don't know' and 'Choose not to answer' are options that can be selected.

Additional information about MassHealth & the Health Connector's efforts to improve health equity can be found [here](#).

Is Logan yi of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent? **i**

Yes, Hispanic or Latino    No, Non-Hispanic or Latino    Don't know    Choose not to answer

What is Logan yi's ethnicity? (Select up to five options) **i**

Select one or more

*Ethnicity is not listed here, (please specify):*

Asian Indian    Japanese

Contact Phone

Phone Number *	Extension	Phone Type
(743) 864-3927		Cell <input type="button" value="v"/>
Second Phone Number	Extension	Secondary Phone Type
		Home <input type="button" value="v"/>

Language Information

Preferred Spoken Language <input type="button" value="v"/>	Preferred Written Language <input type="button" value="v"/>
American Sign Language	Chinese - Simplified

Preferred written language may be used by MassHealth and the Health Connector to communicate with you. You can visit [this webpage](#) to see which notice languages are available. If you select "Don't know" or skip this question, we will send notices in English.



# HIX System Release Updates

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## Address Change

In Release 28, HIX will include a functionality “**Returned Mail**” for MassHealth members when returned mail is received or MassHealth receives address change data from the National database. Members will be prompted to **update their address information within 15 days**.

A banner message will display in the member’s Portal account on the “**My Account**” and “**Eligibility Application**” dashboard. Members will receive a notice alerting them to update their address. The notice will be sent to their current address on file and the new address found in the National database.

The Individual Portal and Assister Portal users can review, update, and confirm their current home and mailing addresses. Users will be required to select the applicable radio button to confirm or review their address. The banner will disappear once the address has been updated or confirmed.

If Members do not update or confirm their address within the designated timeframe, Members will get a Termination notice with one of the following reasons:

1. Closing Action Reason “Whereabouts unknown” if no forwarding address is available and redetermine eligibility.
2. Apply Closing Action Reason “Moved out of state”, and redetermine eligibility.

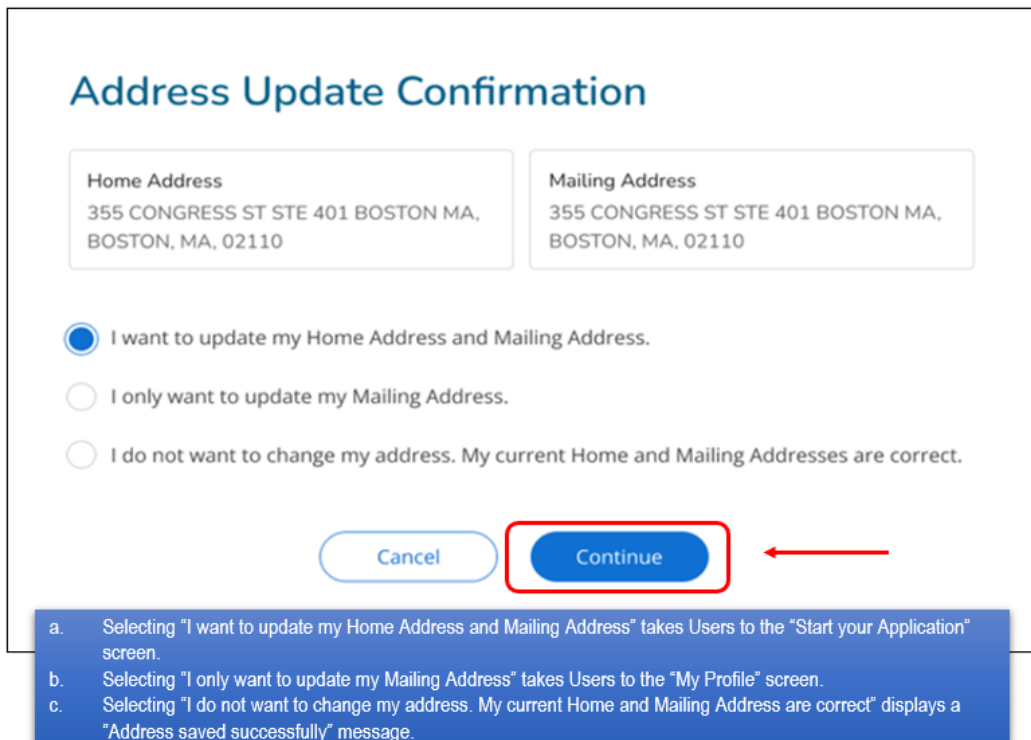
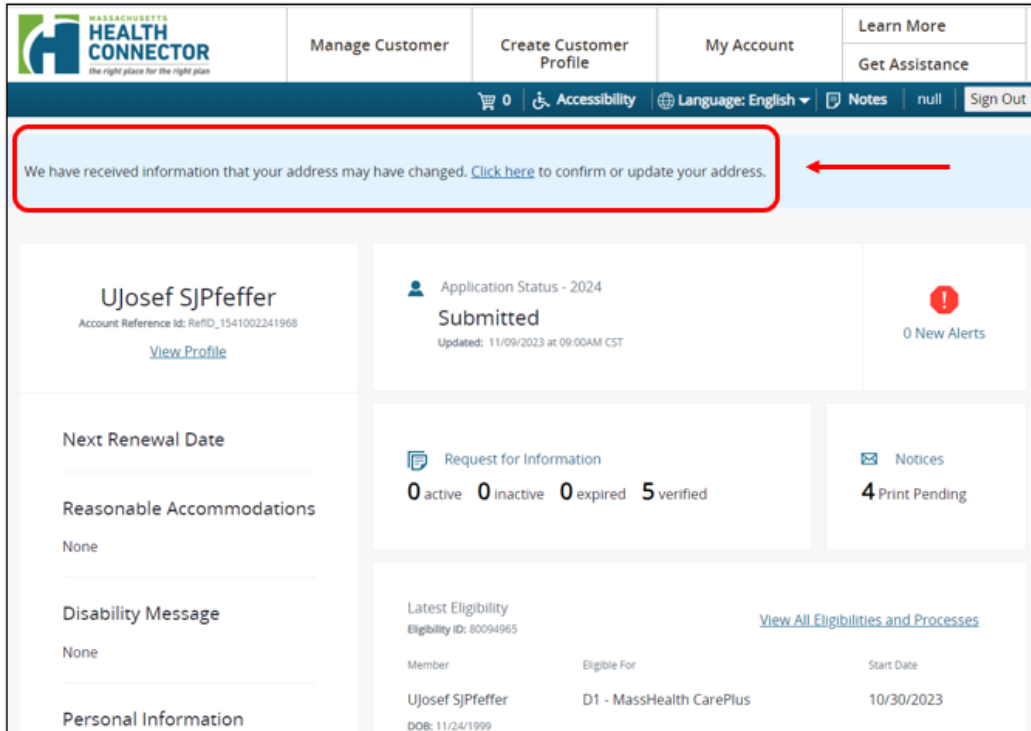
If an in-state forwarding address is available and the member does not respond within the given timeframe, their address will be updated to the in-state forwarding address and the member **will not** be terminated.

### NOTES:

- This update will impact **MassHealth-Only** Households.
- Users can continue to change their information via Report-a-Change (**RAC**) and not necessarily use the banner option as long as they review the address screen and submit the application.

# HIX System Release Updates

Sample Screenshot of new Address Update Message





# HIX System Release Updates

## Periodic Data Matching Update

A new Medicare attestation question will be presented immediately prior to the "**Rights and Responsibility**" page and will be added to the Member's Renewal Form (or Pre-Populated Form) after the "**Health Reimbursement Account Information**" section, and before Supplement A.

This question will appear regardless of eligibility, but the answers will only be used when a member who is eligible for Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) is found to have verified Medicare during the Periodic Data Matching (PDM) process.

- Do you want to continue receiving Unsubsidized **Health Connector**? Or
- Do you want to disenroll from all Health Connector Benefits?

**NOTE:** HIX will default to answer "**member does not want to disenroll from Health Connector**" if a selection is not made.

### Health Connector Enrollment Attestation

If you and your dependents are eligible for a Health Connector plan with a \$0 premium, you can choose to be automatically enrolled in that plan.

Check this box to give the Health Connector permission to automatically enroll you and your dependents in a \$0 Health Connector plan. If you are eligible for more than one \$0 plan, the Health Connector will select one for you.

By checking this box, you agree to the following statements:

- I understand that if I am automatically enrolled in a Health Connector plan, I will be accepting Advance Premium Tax Credits from the federal government to help pay for that plan, and I must file a federal income tax return for each year I receive those tax credits.
- I understand that I may have to repay some or all of those premium tax credits if my income is higher than what I reported to the Health Connector in this application or if I gain access to or enroll in other coverage during the year and do not report it to the Health Connector.
- I have read and agree to the [Terms and Conditions of Enrollment](#).

If you are automatically enrolled in a plan, you will have an opportunity to change to another plan, if one is available in your area. You will receive more information about your plan options after you submit your application.

On behalf of myself and all of the people listed on this application I understand, represent and agree as follows:

If I or anyone else on my application is enrolled in Health Connector coverage and is later found to be eligible for Medicare during the plan year, the Health Connector can automatically end that person's health plan. This means that anyone who loses financial help in paying for their Health Connector plan because they have Medicare won't have to stay enrolled in a Health Connector plan and pay full cost. \*

I agree to allow the Health Connector to end the coverage of the people on my application who are found to have Medicare.

I don't give the Health Connector permission to end the coverage of the people on my application who are found to have Medicare. I understand that the affected people will no longer be eligible for financial help and will need to pay full cost for their Health Connector plan.

Continue

## Update to End Date Rules and Deduplication Process

In R28, the system will include the MassHealth termination reasons when closing a member's benefit due to **"No longer residing in the household."** The closing date will be extended to the notice date **plus 30 days to the end of the month.** This will allow members more time to re-apply for MassHealth on their own account or on an existing account.

### Notice Updates:

- The new notice language for reason of "No longer in household" will be one of the below messages:
  - The applicant is not in the household. The person will need to fill out a new application for themselves and the other members of their household. If the listed person had been getting benefits, they should submit a new application before the coverage end date to see if they still qualify for benefits.
  - MassHealth cannot process the application because the applicant seeking benefits does not live with the head of the household who submitted the application. The applicant will need to fill out a new application for themselves and other members of their household. Also, for children younger than age 19, an adult who lives with them must fill out and submit their application. If the listed person had been getting benefits, they should send us the new application before the coverage end date on this letter to see if they still qualify for benefits.



# HIX System Release Updates

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## MassHealth Notices

In R28, the notice language of the following notices has been updated:

- Automatic Renewal Notice
- Request for Information (RFI) for Non-Custodial Parent Notice

Currently, the Automatic Renewal Notice includes information about MassHealth premium, even when a premium has been assessed in HIX. For R28, the language on this notice will be updated to include MassHealth premium information and the monthly premium amount.

The language for the Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) Request for Information (RFI) will be updated, removing the words “**Absent Parent**” and including the child’s name for whom the NCP form is required.

The NCP RFI language can be found in the following notice types:

- MassHealth Renewal (or PPF) cover letter
- RFIs
- Unacceptable proof
- Denial Notice
- Termination Notice

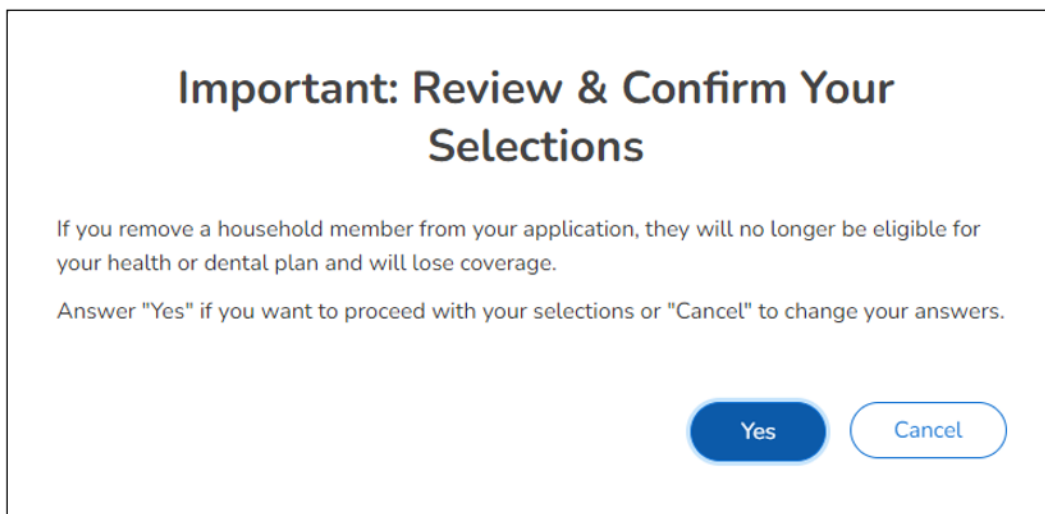
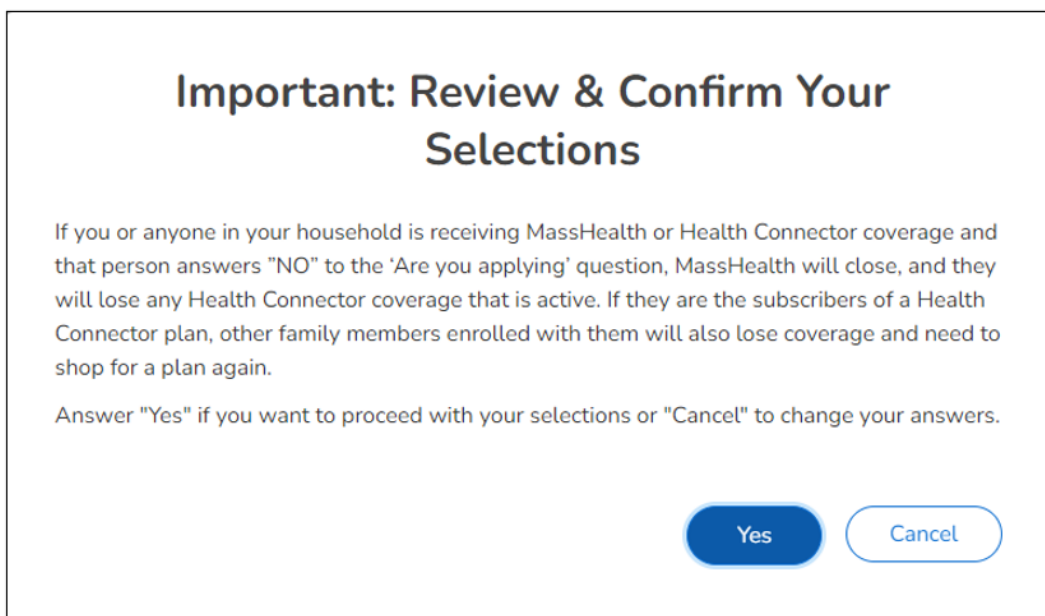


# HIX System Release Updates

## Updates to Pop-Up Message

In Release 28, HIX will update the verbiage in the existing pop-up message on the "**Who Are Your Household Members?**" screen. Specific messages will display when a member moves from *applying* to *not applying* and when a member is being removed from an application. This is a warning message to inform the User before they proceed that the member will lose coverage.

*Sample Screenshot of Who Are Your Household Members?*



## New Income RFI Extension & New Income Rules Used to Determine Health Connector Members

In R28, HIX will be updated to align with a new federal regulation, requiring the Health Connector to systematically allow an **Income RFI extension**, when the member does not send verification within the allowed timeframe (**90 Days**).

This extension of “**60 days**” will be applied for any “**Income RFI**” when the member has APTCs. This extension is based on “**current year**” eligibility not “**renewal year**”. This may impact MassHealth members with provisional eligibility. They may be in the provisional eligibility status longer when they have a Health Connector member with an outstanding Income RFI.

For Program Determination (**PD**) when the Income RFI deadline expires and the response from the electronic data match is an error, the TAX FPL will be based on self-attested income.

### Example Scenarios

#### 1. Scenario for RFI extension:

Mary has subsidized QHP, and her daughter Susan has MassHealth Family Assistance. Mary reports that her income has decreased. Mary’s income cannot be electronically verified because it is not reasonably compatible with data sources. Mary stays in subsidized QHP and *MassHealth Pends* for an upgrade; Susan is upgraded to Provisional MassHealth Standard. RFI is issued. Mary fails to respond to the RFI so at day 95, she will have another 65 days to respond to the Income RFI. Mary remains in a pending status for MassHealth and in a Health Connector benefit and Susan will have Provisional MassHealth Standard.

#### 2. Scenario for Tax Filing Household using self-attested:

Kevin submitted an application with his son John. Kevin is a tax-filer and John is his tax dependent. Kevin self-attested to an income that puts his FPL at 185% but there is no response from data sources. Kevin is approved for subsidized QHP and John receives MassHealth Family Assistance. An RFI is generated, and Kevin fails to respond. After the RFI deadline passes, the tax filing Household FPL will be 185% and MassHealth MAGI FPL will be unknown. Kevin and John will both receive subsidized QHP. John will be terminated from MassHealth for reason of “Did not provide verification”.