

**441—75.14(249A) Establishing paternity and obtaining support.**

**75.14(1)** As a condition of eligibility, Medicaid applicants and members in households with an absent parent shall cooperate in obtaining medical support for each applicant or member as well as for any other person in the household for whom Medicaid is requested and for whom the applicant or member can legally assign rights for medical support, except when good cause as defined in subrule 75.14(8) for refusal to cooperate is established.

*a.* The applicant or member shall cooperate in the following:

- (1) Identifying and locating the parent of the child for whom Medicaid is requested.
- (2) Establishing the paternity of a child born out of wedlock for whom Medicaid is requested.
- (3) Obtaining medical support and payments for medical care for the applicant or member and for a child for whom Medicaid is requested.
- (4) Rescinded IAB 2/3/93, effective 4/1/93.

*b.* Cooperation is defined as including the following actions by the applicant or member:

- (1) Appearing at the income maintenance unit or the child support recovery unit to provide verbal or written information or documentary evidence known to, possessed by or reasonably obtainable by the applicant or member that is relevant to achieving the objectives of the child support recovery program.
- (2) Appearing as a witness at judicial or other hearings or proceedings.
- (3) Providing information, or attesting to the lack of information, under penalty of perjury.

*c.* The applicant or member shall cooperate with the department in supplying information with respect to the absent parent, the receipt of medical support or payments for medical care, and the establishment of paternity, to the extent necessary to establish eligibility for assistance and permit an appropriate referral to the child support recovery unit.

*d.* The applicant or member shall cooperate with the child support recovery unit to the extent of supplying all known information and documents pertaining to the location of the absent parent and taking action as may be necessary to secure medical support and payments for medical care or to establish paternity. This includes completing and signing documents determined to be necessary by the state's attorney for any relevant judicial or administrative process.

*e.* The income maintenance unit shall make the determination of whether or not the applicant or member has cooperated.

**75.14(2)** Failure of the applicant or member to cooperate shall result in denial or cancellation of the person's Medicaid benefits. In family medical assistance program (FMAP)-related Medicaid cases, all deductions and disregards described at paragraphs 75.57(2) "a," "b," and "c" shall be allowed when otherwise applicable.

**75.14(3)** Each Medicaid applicant or member who is required to cooperate with the child support recovery unit shall have the opportunity to claim good cause for refusing to cooperate in establishing paternity or securing medical support and payments for medical care. The provisions set forth in subrules 75.14(8) to 75.14(12) shall be used when making a determination of the existence of good cause.

**75.14(4)** Each Medicaid applicant or member shall assign to the department any rights to medical support and payments for medical care from any other person for which the person can legally make assignment. This shall include rights to medical support and payments for medical care on the applicant's or member's own behalf or on behalf of any other family member for whom the applicant or member is applying. An assignment is effective the same date the eligibility information is entered into the automated benefit calculation system and is effective for the entire period for which eligibility is granted. Support payments not intended for medical support shall not be assigned to the department.

**75.14(5)** Referrals to the child support recovery unit for Medicaid applicants or members. The department shall provide prompt notice to the child support recovery unit whenever assistance is furnished with respect to a child with a parent who is absent from the home or when any member of the eligible group is entitled to support payments.

*a.* A referral to the child support recovery unit shall not be made when a parent's absence is occasioned solely by reason of the performance of active duty in the uniformed services of the United States. "Uniformed service" means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, or Public Health Service of the United States.

*b. “Prompt notice” means within two working days of the date assistance is approved.*

**75.14(6)** Pregnant women establishing eligibility under the mothers and children (MAC) coverage group as provided at subrule 75.1(28) shall be exempt from the provisions in this rule for any born child for whom the pregnant woman applies for or receives Medicaid. Additionally, any previously pregnant woman eligible for postpartum coverage under the provision of subrule 75.1(24) shall not be subject to the provisions in this rule until after the end of the month in which the 60-day postpartum period expires. Pregnant women establishing eligibility under any other coverage groups except those set forth in subrule 75.1(24) or 75.1(28) shall be subject to the provisions in this rule when establishing eligibility for born children. However, when a pregnant woman who is subject to these provisions fails to cooperate, the woman shall lose eligibility under her current coverage group and her eligibility for Medicaid shall be automatically redetermined under subrule 75.1(28).

**75.14(7)** Notwithstanding subrule 75.14(6), any pregnant woman or previously pregnant woman establishing eligibility under subrule 75.1(28) or 75.1(24) shall not be exempt from the provisions of 75.14(4) and 75.14(5) which require the applicant or member to assign any rights to medical support and payments for medical care and to be referred to the child support recovery unit.

**75.14(8)** Good cause for refusal to cooperate. Good cause shall exist when it is determined that cooperation in establishing paternity and securing support is against the best interests of the child.

*a.* The income maintenance unit shall determine that cooperation is against the child’s best interest when the applicant’s or member’s cooperation in establishing paternity or securing support is reasonably anticipated to result in:

- (1) Physical or emotional harm to the child for whom support is to be sought; or
- (2) Physical or emotional harm to the parent or specified relative with whom the child is living which reduces the person’s capacity to care for the child adequately.
- (3) Physical harm to the parent or specified relative with whom the child is living which reduces the person’s capacity to care for the child adequately; or
- (4) Emotional harm to the parent or specified relative with whom the child is living of a nature or degree that it reduces the person’s capacity to care for the child adequately.

*b.* The income maintenance unit shall determine that cooperation is against the child’s best interest when at least one of the following circumstances exists, and the income maintenance unit believes that because of the existence of that circumstance, in the particular case, proceeding to establish paternity or secure support would be detrimental to the child for whom support would be sought.

- (1) The child was conceived as the result of incest or forcible rape.
- (2) Legal proceedings for the adoption of the child are pending before a court of competent jurisdiction.
- (3) The applicant or member is currently being assisted by a public or licensed private social agency to resolve the issue of whether to keep the child or relinquish the child for adoption, and the discussions have not gone on for more than three months.

*c.* Physical harm and emotional harm shall be of a serious nature in order to justify a finding of good cause. A finding of good cause for emotional harm shall be based only upon a demonstration of an emotional impairment that substantially affects the individual’s functioning.

*d.* When the good cause determination is based in whole or in part upon the anticipation of emotional harm to the child, the parent, or the specified relative, the following shall be considered:

- (1) The present emotional state of the individual subject to emotional harm.
- (2) The emotional health history of the individual subject to emotional harm.
- (3) Intensity and probable duration of the emotional impairment.
- (4) The degree of cooperation required.
- (5) The extent of involvement of the child in the paternity establishment or support enforcement activity to be undertaken.

**75.14(9)** Claiming good cause. Each Medicaid applicant or member who is required to cooperate with the child support recovery unit shall have the opportunity to claim good cause for refusing to cooperate in establishing paternity or securing support payments.

*a.* Before requiring cooperation, the department shall notify the applicant or member using Form 470-0169 or 470-0169(S), Requirements of Support Enforcement, of the right to claim good cause as an exception to the cooperation requirement and of all the requirements applicable to a good cause determination.

*b.* The initial notice advising of the right to refuse to cooperate for good cause shall:

(1) Advise the applicant or member of the potential benefits the child may derive from the establishment of paternity and securing support.

(2) Advise the applicant or member that by law cooperation in establishing paternity and securing support is a condition of eligibility for the Medicaid program.

(3) Advise the applicant or member of the sanctions provided for refusal to cooperate without good cause.

(4) Advise the applicant or member that good cause for refusal to cooperate may be claimed and that if the income maintenance unit determines, in accordance with these rules, that there is good cause, the applicant or member will be excused from the cooperation requirement.

(5) Advise the applicant or member that upon request, or following a claim of good cause, the income maintenance unit will provide further notice with additional details concerning good cause.

*c.* When the applicant or member makes a claim of good cause or requests additional information regarding the right to file a claim of good cause, the income maintenance unit shall issue a second notice, Form 470-0170, Requirements of Claiming Good Cause. To claim good cause, the applicant or member shall sign and date Form 470-0170 and return it to the income maintenance unit. This form:

(1) Indicates that the applicant or member must provide corroborative evidence of good cause circumstance and must, when requested, furnish sufficient information to permit the county office to investigate the circumstances.

(2) Informs the applicant or member that, upon request, the income maintenance unit will provide reasonable assistance in obtaining the corroborative evidence.

(3) Informs the applicant or member that on the basis of the corroborative evidence supplied and the agency's investigation when necessary, the income maintenance unit shall determine whether cooperation would be against the best interests of the child for whom support would be sought.

(4) Lists the circumstances under which cooperation may be determined to be against the best interests of the child.

(5) Informs the applicant or member that the child support recovery unit may review the income maintenance unit's findings and basis for a good cause determination and may participate in any hearings concerning the issue of good cause.

(6) Informs the applicant or member that the child support recovery unit may attempt to establish paternity and collect support in those cases where the income maintenance unit determines that this can be done without risk to the applicant or member if done without the applicant's or member's participation.

*d.* The applicant or member who refuses to cooperate and who claims to have good cause for refusing to cooperate has the burden of establishing the existence of a good cause circumstance. Failure to meet these requirements shall constitute a sufficient basis for the income maintenance unit to determine that good cause does not exist. The applicant or member shall:

(1) Specify the circumstances that the applicant or member believes provide sufficient good cause for not cooperating.

(2) Corroborate the good cause circumstances.

(3) When requested, provide sufficient information to permit an investigation.

**75.14(10)** Determination of good cause. The income maintenance unit shall determine whether good cause exists for each Medicaid applicant or member who claims to have good cause.

*a.* The income maintenance unit shall notify the applicant or member of its determination that good cause does or does not exist. The determination shall:

(1) Be in writing.

(2) Contain the income maintenance unit's findings and basis for determination.

(3) Be entered in the case record.

*b.* The determination of whether or not good cause exists shall be made within 45 days from the day the good cause claim is made. The income maintenance unit may exceed this time standard only when:

(1) The case record documents that the income maintenance unit needs additional time because the information required to verify the claim cannot be obtained within the time standard, or

(2) The case record documents that the claimant did not provide corroborative evidence within the time period set forth in subrule 75.14(11).

*c.* When the income maintenance unit determines that good cause does not exist:

(1) The applicant or member shall be so notified and be afforded an opportunity to cooperate, withdraw the application for assistance, or have the case closed; and

(2) Continued refusal to cooperate will result in the loss of Medicaid for the person who refuses to cooperate.

*d.* The income maintenance unit shall make a good cause determination based on the corroborative evidence supplied by the applicant or member only after the income maintenance unit has examined the evidence and found that it actually verifies the good cause claim.

*e.* Before making a final determination of good cause for refusing to cooperate, the income maintenance unit shall:

(1) Afford the child support recovery unit the opportunity to review and comment on the findings and basis for the proposed determination, and

(2) Consider any recommendation from the child support recovery unit.

*f.* The child support recovery unit may participate in any appeal hearing that results from an applicant's or member's appeal of an agency action with respect to a decision on a claim of good cause.

*g.* Assistance shall not be denied, delayed, or discontinued pending a determination of good cause for refusal to cooperate when the applicant or member has specified the circumstances under which good cause can be claimed and provided the corroborative evidence and any additional information needed to establish good cause.

*h.* The income maintenance unit shall:

(1) Periodically, but not less frequently than every six months, review those cases in which the agency has determined that good cause exists based on a circumstance that is subject to change.

(2) When it determines that circumstances have changed so that good cause no longer exists, rescind its findings and proceed to enforce the requirements pertaining to cooperation in establishing paternity and securing support.

**75.14(11) Proof of good cause.** The applicant or member who claims good cause shall provide corroborative evidence within 20 days from the day the claim was made. In exceptional cases where the income maintenance unit determines that the applicant or member requires additional time because of the difficulty in obtaining the corroborative evidence, the income maintenance unit shall allow a reasonable additional period upon approval by the worker's immediate supervisor.

*a.* A good cause claim may be corroborated with the following types of evidence:

(1) Birth certificates or medical or law enforcement records which indicate that the child was conceived as the result of incest or forcible rape.

(2) Court documents or other records which indicate that legal proceedings for adoption are pending before a court of competent jurisdiction.

(3) Court, medical, criminal, child protective services, social services, psychological, or law enforcement records which indicate that the putative father or absent parent might inflict physical or emotional harm on the child or specified relative.

(4) Medical records which indicate emotional health history and present emotional health status of the specified relative or the children for whom support would be sought; or written statements from a mental health professional indicating a diagnosis or prognosis concerning the emotional health of the specified relative or the child for whom support would be sought.

(5) A written statement from a public or licensed private social agency that the applicant or member is being assisted by the agency to resolve the issue of whether to keep the child or relinquish the child for adoption.

(6) Sworn statements from individuals other than the applicant or member with knowledge of the circumstances which provide the basis for the good cause claim.

*b.* When, after examining the corroborative evidence submitted by the applicant or member, the income maintenance unit wishes to request additional corroborative evidence which is needed to permit a good cause determination, the income maintenance unit shall:

- (1) Promptly notify the applicant or member that additional corroborative evidence is needed, and
- (2) Specify the type of document which is needed.

*c.* When the applicant or member requests assistance in securing evidence, the income maintenance unit shall:

- (1) Advise the applicant or member how to obtain the necessary documents, and
- (2) Make a reasonable effort to obtain any specific documents which the applicant or member is not reasonably able to obtain without assistance.

*d.* When a claim is based on the applicant's or member's anticipation of physical harm and corroborative evidence is not submitted in support of the claim:

(1) The income maintenance unit shall investigate the good cause claim when the office believes that the claim is credible without corroborative evidence and corroborative evidence is not available.

(2) Good cause shall be found when the claimant's statement and investigation which is conducted satisfies the county office that the applicant or member has good cause for refusing to cooperate.

(3) A determination that good cause exists shall be reviewed and approved or disapproved by the worker's immediate supervisor and the findings shall be recorded in the case record.

*e.* The income maintenance unit may further verify the good cause claim when the applicant's or member's statement of the claim together with the corroborative evidence do not provide sufficient basis for making a determination. When the income maintenance unit determines that it is necessary, the unit may conduct an investigation of good cause claims to determine that good cause does or does not exist.

*f.* When it conducts an investigation of a good cause claim, the income maintenance unit shall:

(1) Contact the absent parent or putative father from whom support would be sought when the contact is determined to be necessary to establish the good cause claim.

(2) Before making the necessary contact, notify the applicant or member so the applicant or member may present additional corroborative evidence or information so that contact with the parent or putative father becomes unnecessary, withdraw the application for assistance or have the case closed, or have the good cause claim denied.

**75.14(12)** Enforcement without specified relative's cooperation. When the income maintenance unit makes a determination that good cause exists, the unit shall also make a determination of whether or not child support enforcement can proceed without risk of harm to the child or specified relative when the enforcement or collection activities do not involve their participation.

*a.* The child support recovery unit shall have an opportunity to review and comment on the findings and basis for the proposed determination and the income maintenance unit shall consider any recommendations from the child support recovery unit.

*b.* The determination shall be in writing, contain the income maintenance unit's findings and basis for the determination, and be entered into the case record.

*c.* When the income maintenance unit excuses cooperation but determines that the child support recovery unit may proceed to establish paternity or enforce support, the income maintenance unit shall notify the applicant or member to enable the individual to withdraw the application for assistance or have the case closed.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 249A.3 and 249A.4.