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Spokane, Washington  
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**Wire Report**  
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## CMS sets 2022 deadline for states

### *Have to meet Medicaid standards by then*

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has given states three extra years to carry out plans for helping elderly and disabled people receive Medicaid services without being forced to go into nursing homes.

Federal standards requiring states find ways of delivering care to Medicaid enrollees in home and community-based settings will take effect in 2022 instead of 2019, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced this week.

The standards were set by an Obama administration rule adopted in 2014 that governs where more than 3 million Medicaid enrollees get care.

Among other things, the rule requires states to provide opportunities for enrollees to engage in community life, control their own money and seek employment in competitive settings. It also ensures that enrollees in group homes and other residential settings get more privacy and housing choices that include places where non-disabled people live.

Matt Salo, executive director of the National Association of Medicaid Directors, applauded the delay.

“We have long been on record saying that the regulation was hopelessly unrealistic in its time frame,” he said. “Delaying it actually helps consumers because the underlying regulation was going to push too many changes too fast into a system that wasn’t ready.”

The Obama administration’s 2014 rule was an effort to create a federal standard to improve the quality of care that the disabled receive outside institutions.

Some states had tried — and struggled — to make changes on their own, partly because of a lack of funding and political difficulties of changing deeply-entrenched relationships with providers.

Some had, for instance, forced providers to change long-standing operations at group homes and so-called sheltered workshops such as Goodwill Industries where disabled people often work apart from other employees, performing menial tasks for less than minimum wage.

The administration’s announcement of the delay came less than a week after the House passed the American Health Care Act, which would take \$880 billion over 10 years out of the Medicaid program. It was expected after Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price in March invited states to apply for waivers from federal Medicaid rules that he said were too onerous to help improve the program.

*by Phil Galewitz for Kaiser Health News*

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