



VIRGINIA MEDICAID MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) MEMBER GUIDELINES

January 2025

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Purpose

The Virginia Medicaid Member Advisory Committee (MAC) functions in an advisory capacity to the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) Agency Director and their executive leadership team, staff, and the State Board of Medical Assistance Services. MAC has no direct policy making authority but is encouraged to make recommendations to the DMAS Agency Director on matters within its purview. DMAS and the entire Virginia Medicaid continuum of care values member and family participation in improving the Virginia Medicaid member experience. The Virginia Medicaid MAC provides a way for individuals with current or past lived experience with Virginia Medicaid to share recommendations and feedback on the programs and services of the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Service (DMAS) and all the partners along its continuum of care and coverage to ensure that their voices and perspectives are heard and considered in the decision-making process of the DMAS Agency Director.

The MAC is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Prioritize person and family centeredness, which means we respect and value individual strengths, preferences, and contributions, and work with members, not doing things to or for them.
- Provide opportunities for collaboration between VA Medicaid and members with the goal of improving member experience and the relationship between VA Medicaid and all members.
- Provide a way for VA Medicaid to test if programs, policies, and materials are working as designed and having the desired outcome.
- Fulfill the federal requirement that all state Medicaid agencies have a Beneficiary Advisory Council.

Discussion and recommendations from the MAC will help guide the Medicaid program and are shared with the Virginia Medicaid Leadership and its network.

Membership

The Virginia Medicaid Member Advisory Committee seeks current or previous Medicaid recipients from different backgrounds, geographical areas, eligibility groups and with different lived experiences to represent community members across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The MAC currently has 15 members.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

To serve on the MAC, interested individuals must be a current or previous Virginia Medicaid recipient or have direct experience supporting a Virginia Medicaid recipient, such as a parent or authorized representative, and be free of any conflicts of interest. Individuals must be willing to contribute to DMAS' goal of improving Virginia's Medicaid and FAMIS programs. The member does not need to be an expert on Medicaid. They only need to be able to speak to their personal experience within the Virginia Medicaid program.

MAC members are expected to engage by:

- Sharing Medicaid observations;
- Serving as a representative of their community;
- Taking information back to their respective community wherever possible;
- Bringing back and sharing information from other community members and stakeholders; and
- Offering recommendations on how the Virginia Medicaid program can improve to better service members across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

There are many people who have both Medicare and Medicaid and we will welcome those members if they have experience with Virginia Medicaid.

HOW TO JOIN THE MAC

People applying to join the MAC are called applicants. All applicants will apply to the MAC by submitting an online application. If you need help with the application, please send the MAC Steering Committee an email at MAC@dmas.virginia.gov. Virginia Medicaid encourages all Medicaid members interested in serving on the MAC to [apply](#).

SELECTING A NEW MEMBER TO BE ON THE MAC

The MAC Steering Committee will review applications and interview selected applicants to ensure membership is diverse and represents the Virginia Medicaid population and that members are free of conflicts of interest. Applicants are required to meet with the Outreach and Community Engagement Representative for a short interview. The Outreach and Community Engagement Representative recommends applicants for the MAC to the Deputy of Administration and Coverage and DMAS Agency Director. The DMAS Agency Director or their designee will make the final member appointments to the Virginia Medicaid MAC.

LEARNING ABOUT THE MAC

All new members of the MAC are required to attend orientation during the first meeting of the year. The MAC Steering Committee will review what to expect at MAC meetings in-person and virtually, member role, logistics and processes, Virginia Medicaid 101, the importance of lived-experience, community resources, and questions and answers. Members are given the opportunity to review recent topics discussed at MAC meetings and provide feedback around possible future topics.

All potential and chosen members are encouraged to review past meeting agendas, presentations, and materials on the [Virginia Medicaid Member Advisory Committee webpage](#).

MEMBERSHIP TERMS

The time a member serves on the MAC is called a term. All MAC terms are two (2) years. DMAS staggers member terms:

- Eight new members will serve for two years starting in 2025, and
- Seven current and returning members will be asked to serve for one additional year.

Staggering allows the MAC to be made of experienced members while welcoming new members.

Members may serve an inconsecutive second term at the discretion of the agency. If a member desires to serve a second term, they need to be evaluated alongside other applicants. Members are limited to serving two inconsecutive terms.

RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

Resignation is when a member feels they need to leave the MAC before their term has ended. If a member chooses to voluntarily resign from the MAC, a seat will be opened and filled utilizing the selection process previously shared (Refer to **SELECTING A NEW MEMBER TO BE ON THE MAC**).

Members may be removed from their seat on the MAC for good cause. Examples of good cause are:

- Misconduct before, during, or after MAC meetings;
- Excessive or unexcused absences from MAC meetings per the Electronic Meetings Policy;
- Limited or no communication with MAC Steering Committee Members resulting in an excessive delay in meeting processes; and/or
- Failure to disclose a conflict of interest. (Refer to **MEMBER CONDUCT**)

BENEFITS

We value our MAC members! While you are on the committee:

- The Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) offers members access to our resources and staff while serving their term. Please contact the MAC Steering Committee at MAC@dmas.virginia.gov to learn more.

MAC members that fulfill their commitment:

- Can ask for a letter of recommendation from the designated outreach and community engagement representative, and
- Can use the designated outreach and community engagement representative as a professional reference.

Letters of reference and professional references are helpful when applying for jobs or other committee-like work.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Virginia Medicaid request that members sign a release allowing their name, pictures, and/or basic information about the member be published on DMAS and Cover Virginia media channels and in reports. Members have the option to limit or opt-out of the release of their information.

Member Conduct

DMAS and the entire Virginia Medicaid network of support values the feedback of Medicaid members and their families. DMAS asks MAC members to share their lived experiences with each other and others attending MAC meetings. The agency seeks to give all members a chance to be heard. Virginia Medicaid asks MAC members to act in good faith with each other and agree to a set of guidelines and a pact regarding how MAC members will interact with each other and the agency staff. This includes being honest and not doing things that will harm MAC, agency staff, and the collective network of Medicaid support. It also includes behavior outside of meetings. Expectations include:

- Members are required to attend and actively participate in all meetings. If members cannot attend a meeting, they are required to advise the designated VA Medicaid Outreach and Community Engagement representative in a timely manner.
 - After missing a meeting, the member should plan to meet with a member of the MAC Steering Committee to go over what happened at the meeting and provide any necessary feedback.
- Members agree to be respectful of other MAC members, VA Medicaid staff, and external presenters and guests. They will listen to each other and seek to understand the other's perspectives, even if they

disagree.

- Members agree to make every effort to share their feedback, lived experience, and bring forward any concerns or highlights. Lack of participation may lead to removal.
- Members agree to refrain from personal attacks, purposefully harming the MAC, and publicly criticizing or mis-stating information shared by other MAC members during the meeting.
- Any written communications, including emails, text messages, blogs and other social networking media (Ex. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), will follow these same guidelines and will maintain a respectful tone even if highlighting different opinions.

Meetings

The MAC meets in person. If a member needs to attend a meeting virtually, they must follow the [Electronic Meeting Policy](#). The request must be made for each meeting. Meetings will be held by the agency preferred electronic meeting application. Meeting days consist of three sections that each last between 1.5 - 6 hours.

- Closed to the Public
 - MAC C4: Coffee, Conversation, and Continued Consideration (Max 1.5 hours)
 - New Member Orientation & Returning Refresher (Max 6 hours) (*Only held during the first meeting of the year.*)
- Open to the Public
 - General Meeting (Max 2 hours)

Additional meetings are held as needed when requested by administration or the majority of the committee members.

VA Medicaid will publish a yearly MAC meeting schedule. All meeting notifications and agendas will be posted on the [Virginia Regulatory Town Hall](#) website.

ATTENDANCE

VA Medicaid holds four (4) MAC C4 and general meetings a year in each quarter. DMAS requires each MAC member attend three (3) meetings a year. If a MAC member misses more than one meeting within a 12-month timeframe, a discussion between the member and MAC Steering Committee will determine if the member is able to participate in the remaining meetings for the year. If it is determined the member is unable to attend and fully participate in the remaining term meetings, another applicant will replace the MAC member for their remaining term.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes are notes of what was talked about at a meeting. Minutes will be taken at every general meeting. DMAS will summarize topics, suggestions, and follow up on progress. Minutes are posted on the [DMAS MAC webpage](#) and the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall website.

ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report is a document that provides a detailed overview of the MAC's activities over the previous year. The MAC annual report will be developed throughout the year. The report will summarize members,

topics, suggestions, follow up on progress, and data. Pictures are taken throughout the year to support this report and others. The annual report is posted on the [DMAS MAC webpage](#).

DISABILITY AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Virginia Medicaid is committed to providing language access services and reasonable accommodations to Medicaid applicants and members with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency, including to those serving on the MAC. DMAS will make every effort to ensure individuals who need services will receive them from qualified interpreters, translators, and auxiliary aids suppliers in order to access in a meaningful way programs and services that they qualify for, in accordance with federal and state laws, as well as Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with LEP, issued August 11, 2000. Meaningful access is defined as language assistance and auxiliary aids services that result in accurate, timely, and effective communication with the LEP individual and individuals with disabilities.

To learn more about what actions Virginia Medicaid is taking on an ongoing basis to ensure meaningful access to all Medicaid programs, services, and activities for LEP individuals and individuals with disabilities please review the [DMAS Language and Disability Access Plan](#).

DMAS encourages members to share on the MAC application any assistance or accommodation they will need to attend and fully participate in the MAC meetings.

DMAS will also make accommodations for written or recorded materials presented at meetings such as translation, captions, descriptions of pictures, etc. upon request.

MEETING LOGISTICS AND ACCOMODATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS

Meeting Materials

The MAC Steering Committee communicates with members via email, phone, and text. Correspondence related to meeting dates, agendas, and materials are shared in advance of the meeting. Please refer to **“DISABILITY AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS”** for guidance around translation services and accessible documents.

Feedback

MAC members are required to be actively engaged in the feedback process. They are expected to contribute to pre- and post-meeting surveys and follow up to engagement requests and opportunities in between meetings in a timely manner. Feedback is documented and followed up on via the MAC email inbox, during the meetings, and via phone calls and text as required.

TRAVEL, LODGING, & FOOD

Currently DMAS makes one type of payment to MAC members. The agency will retrospectively reimburse out-of-pocket expenses incurred while traveling to participate in approved work related to the MAC. Travel, lodging, and food expenses are reimbursable within the approved fiscal guidelines set forth by the agency and

Commonwealth of Virginia. Reimbursement is defined as a refund of out-of-pocket expenses paid by the member on behalf of DMAS business.

Contacts

Point of Contact:

- Natalie Pennywell, MPH, CHES, Outreach and Member Engagement, mac@dmass.virginia.gov

Medicaid Member Advisory Committee (MAC)

Community Outreach and Member Engagement, EPO Division

Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)

600 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Cover Virginia: <https://coverva.dmass.virginia.gov/>

The MAC Pact

MAC member expectations for interactions and strategies for accomplishing goals together are as follows:

How We Interact Together	How We Get Things Done
<p>We are welcoming to one another in our authentic state.</p> <p>We prioritize time to get to know each other during meetings and promote a healing environment.</p> <p>We commit to respecting and collaborating with one another and suspending judgment.</p> <p>It is important to us that all MAC member voices are heard.</p> <p>We share our personal experiences and perspectives, but we consider the experiences of other members as well.</p> <p>We approach challenges with solution- focused energy.</p> <p>We want to be hard on the problem, not each other.</p> <p>We respect the time and energy each members takes to invest in providing feedback to the DMAS Director.</p>	<p>We are mindful of acronyms and commit to spelling them out in conversation and in writing.</p> <p>We are mindful of time, but flexible and intentional when the schedule may need to change.</p> <p>It is important to us that only one person speaks at a time.</p> <p>All those participating are mindful of each other’s time and will make good and respectful use of it while gathered.</p> <p>We enjoy collaborating with a designated facilitator to keep the meeting on course.</p> <p>We will maintain a “parking” lot of items for future discussion.</p> <p>We want to see the action! It is important to us to have a timely follow-up when feedback is given.</p> <p>Change it up! We prefer to vary our activities, topics, and lunch selections when possible.</p>