

LAW OFFICE OF
TEXAS FOSTER YOUTH JUSTICE PROJECT
TEXAS RIOGRANDE LEGAL AID, INC.
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November 11, 2015

By Certified Mail No.: 7015 0640 0004 9673 6097

Commissioner Chris Traylor
Executive Commissioner
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78751-2316

By Certified Mail No.: 7015 0640 0004 9673 6080

Gary Jessee
State Medicaid Director
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78751-2316

Re: Former Foster Care Children Medicaid Program Access Problems

Dear Commissioner Traylor and Mr. Jessee:

Texas foster youth who age out of the Texas foster care system are entitled to receive Medicaid until they turn 26 years old. (42 U.S.C.A §1396a(1)(10)(A)(i) (IX)) However, on a regular basis aged out Texas foster youth are being wrongly denied Medicaid, and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) continues to fail to address the systematic issues causing these improper denials. The Texas Foster Youth Justice Project provides legal representation to current and former Texas foster youth. Since the implementation of the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Medicaid program in January 2014, we have represented many young adults whom have experienced difficulty obtaining FFCC Medicaid. While a few HHSC employees have been responsive to addressing the individual concerns of our clients, we continue to see clients who, for inexplicable reasons, are denied FFCC, despite the fact that they have indicated on their application they were in foster care and it should be evident from their prior Medicaid records. In addition, many of them seem to not even been provided with a denial notice. Problems with both HHSC computer systems and eligibility staff cause these denials. Unfortunately, we do not have enough information to pinpoint exactly what HHSC must do. But it is clear something must be done as many eligible young adults continue to be denied FFCC

Medicaid and not all of them obtain our assistance in addressing those denials. Aged out foster youth should not need a lawyer to obtain the health insurance Texas is obligated to provide them.

Our client Jasmine Johnson was inexplicably denied Medicaid, despite the fact that 'she submitted applications on 1/20/2015, 3/16/2015, and 04/08/2015 which were all denied even though the application indicated that she had been in foster care in Texas on her 18th birthday. In reviewing the case comments and documents, the applications were not routed to CBS for processing." This summary of what happened comes directly from HHSC case comments our office obtained pursuant to a public information request; we've enclosed a copy of that document. Jasmine finally obtained FFCC on June 1, 2015. A review of the applications in Jasmine's records show she completed a different application form on June 3, 2015. Instead of completing the standard, current H1010 form, Jasmine completed the H1011 form, Application for Youth Transitioning from Foster Care. This form is no longer in use by HHSC and the version Jasmine used was from December, 2010. But this was the form that she was able to get routed to Centralized Benefits Services (CBS). Jasmine obtained this form from Angel Reach, a program in Conroe, Texas, that provides services to aged out foster youth. Jasmine is a resident of an Angel Reach transitional program. Sandra Carpenter, Executive Director of Angel Reach, indicated that she provides this form to any young adults in her program who are applying for FFCC because when they use the online application or current H1010 forms, they are not being enrolled in Medicaid, while with H1011 they are enrolled. She regularly makes additional copies of the blank form to hand out to youth in her program as it is no longer publicly available. In Jasmine's case, she completed the H1011 on 5/27/2015 and per the HHSC Comments "[s]he submitted an application on 06/03/2015 which was processed by CBS staff and she was certified for FFCC effective 06/01/2015." We have enclosed a copy of her application. In addition, our project has advised foster youth since the early days of the FFCC program that they should not attempt to apply for any other benefits when they apply for FFCC because it makes it much more likely their application will be wrongly denied. Aged out foster youth should not need to track down an out of date, inaccessible form to obtain the health insurance Texas is obligated to provide them.

There are additional concerns related to Jasmine's incorrect denial in January, March and April, 2015. Jasmine was on FFCC Medicaid until 12/31/2014 when her certification ended and she did not return her renewal packet. Jasmine likely did not return the renewal packet because she moved to Conroe around that time. However, she reapplied within 20 days of her certification ending and it should have been clear in the HHSC system that she had FFCC Medicaid shortly before she applied to resume coverage. Unless she had turned 26 or moved out of Texas, once she reapplied, there should be no reason to not put her back on the FFCC Medicaid. Aged out foster youth frequently move and often experience homelessness. It is an unfortunate by-product of aging out of foster care. It is not uncommon for our clients to have lost their coverage due to not updating their address. But we have seen youth after youth struggle to get back on FFCC once they realize their coverage ended. HHSC systems and staff appear to be

incapable of recognizing something that should be obvious in their system: that they previously qualified for FFCC and should be reinstated. It is also not clear why applications where someone answers the question *Were you in foster care at age 18 or older?* are not flagged by the system for automatic consideration of FFCC and Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth. Based on the frequent denials and the TIERS comments made about those denials, it appears it is up to individual workers to remember the existence of the program and consider the applicant's eligibility for it. Rather than provide a critical resource to those that age out of Texas Foster care system to help support them as they transition to adulthood, HHSC's system places barriers to accessing that resource.

We have had several other clients who were inexplicably denied coverage. Here are the stories of a few of the more recent cases.

██████████ applied several times by calling in and online, with the assistance of her grandmother. She was told she was not eligible. It appears from the documents that we obtained from our public information request that eligibility staff did not take into account that she had been in foster care, even though this was indicated on the applications. ██████████ did not have Medicaid until our program contacted Glennell Strawn of HHSC. Ms. Strawn has been very helpful in assisting individual clients obtain FFCC coverage, but in ██████████'s case it took a long time because an "IT fix" was needed and we were told no timeframe to correct the problem could be obtained. In the meantime, ██████████ continued to be without health insurance.

██████████ reapplied for FFCC around June, 2014, after she realized her coverage had ended. When our office contacted Claire Middleton at HHSC in November, 2014, to find out why she had been denied, HHSC staff reprocessed her application from five months earlier and certified her back to the original application date; we were not given an explanation as to why she had been denied.

Angelica Gutierrez applied in December, 2014, for FFCC after her SSI benefits and accompanying Medicaid coverage ended; records support that she indicated she had been in foster care when she turned 18 on her application. She was interviewed in January 2, 2015, by an HHSC eligibility worker who told her she was not eligible. The case comments from the TIERS System, received from a public information act request, indicate the worker noted Angelica had been on FC Medicaid (presumably foster care Medicaid), was unemployed, goes to school, and is not pregnant and that she was denied because she was not eligible. Over the next several months Angelica made repeated efforts to find out why she was being denied, and even visited an HHSC office in person. Our office

contacted Glennell Strawn of HHSC in May, 2015, and Ms. Strawn had her application reprocessed to consider her eligibility for FFCC, and she was approved with coverage beginning on her original application date of 12/18/14. We were told she had been denied because her HHSC eligibility worker did not consider her eligibility for FFCC. Clearly the worker in this case was not familiar with the FFCC program and Angelica's case was not flagged for possible FFCC eligibility despite her repeatedly indicating she had been in foster care and wanted the aged out foster youth Medicaid. A copy of the case comments is enclosed.

██████████ filed an online application for FFCC in October, 2015, with the assistance of our project's paralegal. They selected the option to indicate he was not available to go in person for an interview. He received a notice that an in person interview was scheduled and he needed to bring extensive documentation about his income, assets and other resources that are not relevant to FFCC eligibility. It appeared he was being considered for the wrong Medicaid program and we notified Glennell Strawn who indicated she was reviewing it with eligibility staff. In the meantime our client called 2-1-1 in an effort to find out why an interview was needed and could he schedule it for a phone interview if it was necessary. He was transferred around repeatedly and none of the options were what he needed and he was unable to reach a live person. Later in the day, information on YourTexasBenefits.com indicated he had been approved for Medicaid and the information about the scheduled interview was removed from the interview tab.

These cases indicate there continue to be problems with the proper processing of applications for FFCC; they are not isolated incidents. For every aged out foster youth who seeks out our services, there are likely many more who have given up on receiving the promised health care benefits.

Beyond these issues, there are several more we have repeatedly brought to the attention of HHSC regarding online access to YourTexasBenefits.com by aged out foster youth on the FFCC Medicaid program. When a foster youth contacts us seeking legal assistance in accessing FFCC benefits, the first step of assistance we provide is assisting them in logging into YourTexasBenefits.com to review information in their account. Unfortunately, the information for Medicaid for our aged out foster youth clients is incomplete, incorrect and inaccessible. In February, 2015, I emailed a list similar to the enclosed list of online access problems that we had raised in multiple prior communications to Claire Middleton and was told that HHSC was reviewing our concerns and would respond as quickly as possible. I followed up in June, 2015, with an email to Claire Middleton and Glennell Strawn and noted "I am convinced that there are serious flaws in the HHSC system that are preventing many young adult aged out foster youth from obtaining their Former Foster Care Children's Medicaid. They are applying and being

incorrectly rejected due to problems in the computer system and ignorant HHSC eligibility staff. After almost two years there should not be these kinds of barriers to access to the FFCC Medicaid program. We have repeatedly reported problems to HHSC and while individual clients are often then put on FFCC, the same problems persist and HHSC has not provided any response about what they will do to correct these grave problems and the timeline.” I never received a response to my inquiries. Given the continued issues aged out foster youth encounter with the processing of their applications for FFCC, the lack of knowledge on the part of many involved in processing applications of the FFCC benefit, and the heavy reliance of HHSC for applicants and recipients to use YourTexasBenefits.com, these problems are creating huge barriers for the aged out foster youth community.

HHSC needs to take immediate steps to:

- 1) Identify and correct flaws in the systems that are causing these routine improper denials.
- 2) Designate an employee, who has ample authority, to lead and oversee the identification and correction of these flaws.
- 3) Require that the Information Technology Department prioritize resolution of those matters that require their participation.
- 4) Update the YourTexasBenefits.com system to address the problems we have highlighted and provide aged out foster youth meaningful access to information regarding their applications for their promised health insurance and their actual insurance benefits.
- 5) Provide additional training to eligibility staff to educate them regarding the FFCC Medicaid program and establish direct lines of communication to FFCC designated staff for addressing issues with establishing eligibility for the insurance.

We also request that you meet with us to further discuss our concerns. This is an issue of major importance to aged out foster youth in Texas, and our efforts to work with HHSC so far to satisfactorily resolve them have not been successful. While our individual clients have had their eligibility established once we contact HHSC, we do not believe the necessary resources have been devoted to diagnosing and rectifying the ongoing issues. Having assisted many clients with accessing FFCC Medicaid, we have valuable insight to offer into the problems that seem to plague our foster youth client community's access to this vital benefit. We would rather work collaboratively to address these concerns, as we have often done with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, rather than address them in a courtroom, which is a path we will need to take if we don't make significant progress in resolving these issues.

As we were preparing the final draft of this letter we were contacted by HHSC Open Records Coordinator Robert Patterson about two requests we had recently filed for clients who had been denied FFCC. Mr. Patterson told us that we had to contact the Texas Department of

Family and Protective Services for the records because their Medicaid was through the foster care system. This was puzzling as we have filed several prior similar requests with HHSC and received records. He directed us to Shari Nichols, an attorney with HHSC. We explained to Ms. Nichols that we were filing these requests because we had too many clients being inexplicably denied FFCC and, while Glennell Strawn helped us obtain the coverage for individual clients, there was no indication that the underlying problems were being addressed. On November 9, 2015, Ms. Nichols indicated she would look into the concerns, review the list of recent cases we supplied her, and would contact program management. It also is our understanding that our HHSC record request will be reviewed again and processed. We appreciate this effort but determined that we should proceed with addressing our concerns further with you as we are concerned that this has gone on far too long already with no actual improvements in sight.

Young adults, whose parents have private health insurance, can remain on a parent's insurance up to age 26. Young adults, who age out of foster care, are supposed be able to remain on their parent's insurance until the age of 26 as well; their parent is the State of Texas. Access to health insurance is critical for aged out foster youth; they are at an elevated risk for chronic mental and physical illnesses as a result of their stressful upbringing. In addition, they lack the family support and resources that other young adults have as they transition through early adulthood. It is unfortunate that their parent, Texas, rather than provide them assistance in accessing an important resource, instead routinely improperly denies them that resource. Sadly, most aged out foster youth just accept the denial of FFCC Medicaid. They have grown up in a foster care system where they moved from home to home, to facility, to shelter, their biological families have failed to come through for them, and they have had to rely on dozens of caseworkers, CASAs, attorneys, foster parents, facility staff, PAL workers, aftercare workers and countless others who all too often have not done what they said they would or were supposed to do. When they are told they do not qualify for Medicaid, even if it is contrary to what they learned about after foster care benefits, most don't see the point in pursuing what seems to be a futile process. It is just yet another instance of a wrongful denial that their time in foster care taught them they needed to just accept as it is too emotionally draining to not do so. Steps are needed to fulfill Texas' obligation to their young adult children and provide them easy access to FFCC Medicaid coverage.

Case Comments JJohnson, Case Number [REDACTED]

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 09/14/2015 | dabarnett | Intake | Processing MA prior coverage per complaint received in FFCC mailbox. Client was denied FFCC Medicaid effective 12/31/2014 due to her certification period ended and she did not return a renewal packet. She submitted applications on 1/20/2015, 3/16/2015, and 04/08/2015 which were all denied even though the application indicated that she had been in foster care in Texas on her 18th birthday. In reviewing the case comments and documents, the applications were not routed to CBS for processing. She submitted an application on 06/03/2015 which was processed by CBS staff and she was certified for FFCC effective 06/01/2015 on case number 1026979123. . However, she has unpaid medical bills for the month of January when she gave birth to her child. TWA processed prior coverage for month of Jan 2015 using File date 3/16/2015 as 1113 was included with this app. |
| 2 | 09/14/2015 | dabarnett | Intake | Barnett, Danielle; Medical Expenses - Summary; 2015-09-14 12:13:16.328; Johnson, Jasmine 20F, Johnson, Jasmine 20F, Hospitalization, outpatient treatment, nursing care, 0.00 |

IMAGE ONLY Cover Sheet



DO NOT FAX
Image Only Documents



Form HHSC-IOCS
Rev. 12/2011
Page 1
ENG

*** REQUIRED FIELDS**

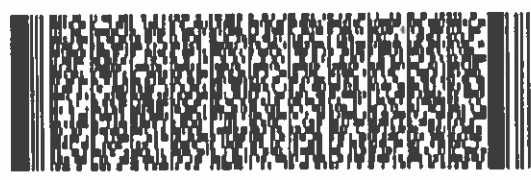
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| TIERS CASE INFORMATION | OFFICE MAIL CODE* | <input type="text" value="0185"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | TIERS CASE NUMBER* | <input type="text" value="REDACTED"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| DOCUMENT TYPE | <i>(Select one only):</i> Fill in the circle (○) like this (●). |
| | <input checked="" type="radio"/> APPLICATION <input type="radio"/> APPEAL <input type="radio"/> SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS <input type="radio"/> REDETERMINATION <input type="radio"/> CHANGES |

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BK210490 4393 R060315 P06031510:44C00042

Received

JUN 01 2015

Form H1011
December 2010

Texas Health and Human
Services Commission

Application for Medicaid for Youth Transitioning from Foster Care Solicitud de Medicaid para jóvenes que salen del cuidado temporal

CBS

Please answer all questions as completely and accurately as you can./Por favor, conteste todas las preguntas tan cuidadosa y correctamente como pueda.

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Name (Last, First, Middle)/Nombre (Apellido, primer nombre, segundo nombre) Johnson Jasmine | | Date of Birth/Fecha de nacimiento | Social Security Number |
| Home Address/Dirección del domicilio | | City/Ciudad Conroe | State/Estado TX |
| Mailing Address (if different from home address)/Dirección postal (si es diferente a su domicilio) | | City/Ciudad | State/Estado Montgomery |
| Area Code and Telephone No./Clave del área y teléfono | | Are you a U.S. citizen? | |
| Home/De la casa | | Other/Otro | |
| Are you a legal alien?/¿ | | Gender/Sexo <input type="checkbox"/> Male/Masculino <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female/Femenino | Are you Hispanic or Latino?/¿ |
| What is your race? (select one or more)/¿Cuál es su raza? (Escriba una o más) | | | |
| Do you have medical insurance?/¿Tiene usted seguro médico? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Sí <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | Name of Insurance Company/Nombre de la compañía de seguros | |
| Insurance Company's Area Code and Telephone No./Clave del área y teléfono de la compañía de seguros | | Do you have Medicaid?/¿Recibe usted Medicaid? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Sí <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Do you have unpaid medical bills for services received three months before this month?/¿Tiene usted cuentas médicas sin pagar por servicios que recibió en los tres meses anteriores a este mes? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes/Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No | | If yes, in which months did you receive medical services?/Si contesta "Sí", ¿en cuáles meses recibió servicios médicos? | |
| List your current income before taxes. Include wages, unemployment compensation, Social Security or any other money you regularly receive./Anoté sus ingresos actuales, antes de la deducción de impuestos. Incluya el sueldo, compensación de desempleo, seguro social o cualquier otro dinero que recibe con regularidad. | | | |
| Employer Name or Source of Income/Nombre del empleador o fuente de ingresos | How much?/¿Cuánto recibe? | How often are you paid?/¿Con qué frecuencia lo recibe? | |
| | \$ | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly/Cada semana <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> every 2 weeks/Cada 2 semanas <input type="checkbox"/> twice a month/Cada quincena <input type="checkbox"/> monthly/Cada mes | |
| | \$ | <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly/Cada semana <input type="checkbox"/> every 2 weeks/Cada 2 semanas <input type="checkbox"/> twice a month/Cada quincena <input type="checkbox"/> monthly/Cada mes | |
| Do you have more than \$10,000 in bank accounts, cash on hand, or anywhere else that is available to you?/¿Tiene usted más de \$10,000 en cuentas bancarias, efectivo a la mano o en cualquier otro lugar que esté a su disposición? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Sí <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| Do you have two or more cars, trucks or other vehicles worth more than \$10,000 each?/¿Tiene dos o más carros, camionetas u otros vehículos de un valor de más de \$10,000 cada uno? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Sí <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| Signing up to vote: Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency. If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | | Inscripción para votar Llenar la solicitud del registro para votar o negarse a inscribirse no afectará la cantidad de asistencia que este departamento le dará. Si no está inscrito para votar donde vive ahora, ¿le interesa llenar hoy mismo la solicitud del registro para votar? <input type="checkbox"/> Sí <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | |
| IF YOU DO NOT CHECK EITHER BOX, YOU WILL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE DECIDED NOT TO REGISTER TO VOTE AT THIS TIME. If you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private. If you believe that someone has interfered with your right to register or to decline to register to vote, or your right to choose your own political party or other political preference, you may file a complaint with the Elections Division, Secretary of State, P.O. Box 12060, Austin, TX 78711. Phone: 1-800-252-8683. | | SI NO MARCA NINGUNA CASILLA, ESO SIGNIFICARÍA QUE USTED HA DECIDIDO NO REGISTRARSE PARA VOTAR EN ESTE MOMENTO. Si quiere ayuda para llenar la solicitud del registro para votar, le podemos ayudar. Usted decide si necesita o quiere aceptar la ayuda. Puede llenar la solicitud en privado. Si cree que alguien ha interferido con su derecho a inscribirse o negarse a inscribirse para votar, o con su derecho de escoger un partido político u otra preferencia política, puede presentar una queja en Elections Division, Secretary of State, P.O. Box 12060, Austin, TX 78711. Número de teléfono: 1-800-252-8683. | |

Received

NOV 10 1951

CBS

I understand that information I provide in connection with this application is subject to verification by HHSC and other state and federal agencies. My signature below authorizes release of this information and indicates that I agree that this information may be used to determine if I qualify for assistance.

Entiendo que la información que brinde en conexión con esta solicitud está sujeta a verificación de la HHSC y otros departamentos estatales y federales. Mi firma a continuación autoriza la divulgación de esta información e indica que acepto que esta información sea utilizada para determinar si lleno los requisitos para recibir ayuda.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the information I have provided on this application is true and correct. If I know or believe that any information I have provided is not, I may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Cerifico bajo pena de perjurio que la información que brindé en esta solicitud es verdadera y correcta. Si no lo es, yo podría estar sujeto a sanciones penales (incluyendo multas e imprisonment) y/o sanciones civiles (incluyendo multas e imprisonment).



May 26, 2015

Date/Fecha

Agency Use Only

Already registered

Mailed to client Other

Agency staff signature _____

Received
JUN 01 2015
CBS

Received
JAN 01 2012
CBS

Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System

Summary Details

Case Comments - Summary

Case Name: Gutierrez, Angelica Case # [Redacted] Case Mode: Ongoing Case Status: Approved

Add

| Serial No | Create Date | Created By | Case Mode |
|--|-------------|------------|-----------|
| 1 | 05/15/2015 | ancarpes | Reopen |
| CBS: Received email to FFCM/MTFCY mailbox regarding FFC application that local office denied in error with file date 12/18/14. Local office received email from Ms. Strawn stating client is eligible for FFC and should have been approved for FFC at the time client provided application at 12/13/14. Reopened case using original file date. FFC approved. | | | |
| 2 | 05/15/2015 | cabrown | Reopen |
| TVA return medical to deny for correct reason and had supervisor forward to CAS. | | | |
| 3 | 01/02/2015 | cabrown | Reopen |
| EID 12/15/2014 Interview date 01/02/2015 client is currently unemployed and goes to school full time at ACC. Client is not pregnant. client previously received FC medical. PA denied due to no eligible siblings. Cassandra Brown 512-919-7242. Austin Capital Plaza. | | | |
| 4 | 01/02/2015 | cabrown | Ongoing |
| TVA called client at 11:10 at [Redacted] and unable to leave voicemail due to one not but MI (VA will call back in 10 minutes). | | | |
| 5 | 12/30/2014 | wchapman | Ongoing |
| Rescheduled telephone. Friday, 01/02/2015 11:15 am, ? REGIONWIDE - Central Time 4616 HOWARD LANE AUSTIN TX 78720. Programs Requested for Interview: NA. Programs Applied For: NA. Action: Application. Comments: den 86404991 cll call to reach missed phone aupt.call [Redacted] (att line Required Flag : N. Appointment confirmed by : Phone. | | | |
| 6 | 12/30/2014 | natawora | Intake |
| McCore, Natashia. Tomlin, [Redacted] TVA attempted to contact cll 2x at [Redacted] and the message stated that vlc [Redacted] not setup. no other number provided. cll was [Redacted] lobby waiting | | | |
| 7 | 12/30/2014 | blacour | Intake |
| Scheduled telephone. Tuesday, 12/30/2014 10:00 am, ? REGIONWIDE - Central Time 4616 HOWARD LANE | | | |

Add



**Problems Accessing Former Foster Care Children Medicaid Benefits
Information on YourTexasBenefits.com
November 10, 2015**

Inability to Verify for Access to YourTexasBenefits.com

If the young adult is not able to successfully enter self-verification information, they are unable to access YourTexasBenefits.com. While it is understandable that verification is required, as far as we can tell there is no recourse for assisting the young adult if they can't verify online. Many foster youth have lived so many places and have limited information about former addresses or even the immediate area of where they lived. The system will sometimes ask them for the current address of a former foster parent but often the aged out foster youth no longer has contact with the foster family/facilities. Aged out foster youth simply can't answer those verification questions and there is nobody they can contact to help them sort out what the closest hospital was, what street number is associated with the "following address", and other detailed geographic questions. A common question asked is what name is associated with their account. Usually our clients do not recognize any of the names, however, often there is not an option "None of the Above". While we have been able to help some youth "guess" answers, many are not successful. So the former foster youth is left in a permanent limbo of being unable to access any information on YourTexasBenefit.com. This means they have to navigate the tedious, time consuming 211 system to attempt to get information, which is often provided in limited quantities with questionable accuracy

Lack of Information and Options in Medicaid and Interview Tab

If the young adult is able to successfully answer the four questions during the verification section of setting up their account, they can access some but not all information and options on YourTexasBenefits.com. While they are able to access Case Facts and Actions tabs, they are not able to access meaningful information in the Medicaid and Interview tabs. These tabs do not provide the options it provides to other Medicaid recipients. It appears, based on the limited information listed in these tabs discussed further in **Inaccurate, Confusing, Out of Date Information**, that this is either because they are still considered to be in the Medicaid program for children in foster care, despite the fact that FFCC and Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) are both Medicaid programs for youth who have aged out of foster care and are no longer in the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, or because they once were in foster care and had the Medicaid coverage for children in foster care.

Inability to Print out Medicaid Card

Call center staff repeatedly refer FFCC recipients to the Medicaid tab to print out their card. However, this is not an option listed under the Medicaid tab for those on FFCC. The staff is unable to appreciate the lack of access to the tab and offer any meaningful solution. FFCC recipients must wait a month or more for one to be mailed to them. Obtaining a card from an HHSC office is often very difficult for our clients because they lack transportation, work and attend school during business hours and many lack photo identification.

Inaccurate, Confusing, Outdated Information

The Interview tab lists the following: *You get Medicaid through a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) program. To protect your privacy, your interview isn't shown on this website. Need help with your DFPS Medicaid case? Call 1-800-233-3405 (toll-free).* The Medicaid tab reads *You get Medicaid through a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) program. Medical Consenters for children in DFPS conservatorship can view Medicaid services and health histories by going to <http://www.fostercaretx.com/health-passport>. Need help with your DFPS Medicaid case? Call 1-800-233-3405 (toll-free).* Sometimes, the Case Facts tab reads: *Someone on your case gets Medicaid through a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) programs. The case status for that person's DFPS Medicaid isn't shown on this website to protect their privacy. If they need help with their DFPS Medicaid case, call 1-800-233-3405 toll free.*

These messages appear to be for those who have the Medicaid for children and youth currently in foster care, not FFCC Medicaid or Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth, which are programs for those aged out of foster care. Beyond the confusion of those references, directing the user to DFPS's 1-800-233-3405 number is highly misleading. This sends a caller to the Texas Foster Care and Adoption Inquiry Line. Options listed include: interest in becoming a foster or adoptive parent, if you are already are a foster or adoptive parent, if you want information about a specific child registered with the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE), and voluntary adoption registry, closed records or private licensed adoption agencies in Texas. Selecting none of the options routes you the Foster and Adopt Department with a message to call Elise Cruz for any information or inquiries at 254-526-9011. If the caller selects "if you are already a foster or adoptive parent", they will then get options that include information about Medicaid for a child you have adopted or a child in foster care. Neither of these is applicable to aged out foster youth. If the caller manages to finally reach a live person after navigating the system, they will reach a DFPS employee who has nothing to do with the Former Foster Children's Medicaid program and who will state that they can only assist those currently in foster care. Furthermore, when our program has attempted to discuss issues with aged out foster youth accessing Medicaid with the

Texas Department of Family Protective Services, the agency has staunchly held they have no role to play with FFCC and MTFY Medicaid and concerns must be addressed with HHSC. It is highly inefficient and demoralizing to continue to direct aged out foster youth to DFPS's 1-800-233-3405 and these messages need to be removed so aged out foster youth are not launched into a bureaucratic maze that likely leads to them giving up on obtaining health insurance. We began notifying HHSC that this was not a correct number well over a year ago and no action has been taken.

Case Facts Tab does not Specify Medicaid Program

The Case Facts tab simply lists Medicaid, and not a specific Medicaid program. For clients that had or have Medicaid, we cannot determine which Medicaid program it was. For Medicaid denials, we cannot determine which Medicaid program HHSC processed the application under. Our clients' filed applications are often not accessible online, so we are unable to verify that they accurately answered questions about having been in foster care.

Inability to Switch Insurance Plans via Medicaid Tab

It is our understanding that recipients of Medicaid, other than former foster youth, can use the Medicaid tab to switch their insurance plan. We do not have confirmation as we have not been able to view what this tab looks like. But if that is indeed what is there, it would be most helpful for former foster youth to be able to access it so they can view options for plans. Some former foster youth do not have access to a phone to update their plan but do have access to a computer at a school or library. In addition, most of our clients indicate they have not been sent a packet of plans to choose from. Furthermore, it appears there is a very short time frame, possibly only 17 days, for them to make a choice before they are defaulted to the traditional plan.

