

# Kentucky Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) October Meeting Minutes

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Date: Monday, October 13, 2025

Meeting Called to Order: 2:01 PM

Meeting Adjourned: 3:56 PM

## Attendees

**BAC Members Present:** Bryan Proctor, Peggy Roark, Tania Whitfield, Theda Simpson-Mosby, Kelli Jo Blair, Jessica Sheene, Cory Goff, Eric Wright, Emily Beauregard, Zachary Hart, Dana Emmitt-Steadman, Lee Guice, Alicia Arnett

**Altarum Institute Staff:** Helen Dawson, Megan Szalwinski, Carrie Butt, Amanda Starkey, Laurel Ruesch

**Kentucky DMS Staff:** Commissioner Lisa Lee, Senior Deputy Commissioner Veronica Judy-Cecil, Deputy Commissioner Dr. Leslie Hoffman

## Welcome and Introductions

- Megan Szalwinski from the Altarum Institute started the meeting. She welcomed everyone, explained how to use Zoom reactions and the chat, and went over the schedule for the meeting.
  - Commissioner Lisa Lee welcomed the BAC members and thanked them for being part of the group. She said their ideas and stories are important for making Medicaid better. She shared that 1.4 million people in Kentucky get help from Medicaid, and 90% of them are in Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). She said the BAC is an important step forward and reminded everyone that the Kentucky Medicaid Team wants to hear all kinds of experiences—good and bad—to help improve the program.
  - Senior Deputy Commissioner Veronica Judy-Cecil also welcomed the members and said she was excited to work together to make Medicaid better for the people who use it.
  - Deputy Commissioner Dr. Leslie Hoffman said she was happy to be there and welcomed the group too.
  - After that, BAC members introduced themselves by sharing their names, where they were from, and why they wanted to be part of the BAC.
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## BAC Leadership Elections

- Megan Szalwinski talked about the leadership roles in the BAC and explained how the group would vote to choose members for those roles.
- BAC members in leadership roles will help lead and support all BAC activities. During the meeting, members nominated themselves for these roles. Each person shared a short reason why they would be a good fit. The group then voted, and the people with the most votes were chosen for the leadership positions.
- **BAC Chair:** Leads BAC meetings, represents the Council when needed, works with members and the DMS team to develop and finalize agendas, makes sure the BAC sticks to the bylaws, maintains open communication with the MAC, TACs, and Medicaid leadership, and makes sure meetings remain respectful and on topic.
  - Candidates: Emily and Kelli Jo (all self-nominated)
  - Motion: Eric motioned to approve nominations.
  - Result: Emily was elected Chair with 9 votes.
- **Vice-Chair:** Serves as backup to the Chair by taking on their responsibilities in their absence or if the Chair's term ends early, makes sure the group understands and sticks to the bylaws, and provides help to the Chair as needed.
  - Candidates: Kelli Jo, Eric, and Jessica (all self-nominated)
  - Motion: Alicia motioned to elect; Peggy Roark seconded.
  - Result: Eric Wright was elected Vice-Chair with 8 votes.
- **Secretary:** Records meeting minutes and official votes, tracks attendance and follows up with absent members, makes sure the BAC sticks to the bylaws, and provides support to the Chair and Vice Chair as needed.
  - Candidate: Kelli Jo (self-nominated)
  - Motion: Lee Guice motioned; Dana seconded.
  - Result: Kelli Jo was unanimously elected Secretary.

## Bylaws Review and Approval

- The BAC follows a set of rules called Bylaws. During the meeting, members looked over the Bylaws and approved them by voting. Most members agreed to accept them.
  - Megan Szalwinski shared the BAC Bylaws. She talked about why the BAC exists, what is expected of BAC members, and how the meetings will work.
    - **Purpose of the BAC:** Established under 42 CFR 431.12 to advise the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) on Medicaid program policies and operations, including service changes, eligibility and renewal processes, communication practices, cultural and language accessibility, equitable treatment, and overall access to quality care
    - **Member Expectations:** Attend and actively participate in meetings, prepare by reviewing materials in advance, engage respectfully and without bias in discussions, stay informed about the Medicaid program, assist with the
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annual report, and refrain from speaking publicly for the BAC without proper authorization.

- **BAC Meetings:** DMS collaborates with the BAC to organize meetings held in person, by phone, or online; a quorum of eight members is required for votes, which pass by majority; meetings are scheduled for broad participation, may be opened to the public by unanimous consent, and agendas and materials are distributed in advance to ensure preparation and transparency.
- Lee Guice noted a small typo to the top of the seventh page where the word “what” was missing from a sentence. This will be fixed in the Bylaws.
- Helen Dawson also mentioned that the date at the beginning of the document would be updated to today’s date if the Bylaws were approved.
- Members voted to approve the Bylaws.
- The BAC Bylaws were officially adopted on October 13, 2025.

## **H.R. 1 Impacts and Approaches**

- Veronica Judy-Cecil talked about H.R. 1 and reminded members that the Kentucky Medicaid team is always available to answer any questions about it.
  - Key points discussed included:
    - **H.R. 1 Overview:** Enacted on July 4, 2025, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act introduced major Medicaid provisions, including a Rural Health Transformation Program and new 1915(c) waiver authority, along with updates to provider tax rules, work requirements, and state-directed payment limits.
    - **H.R. 1 Eligibility Changes:** The bill introduces new Medicaid eligibility rules, including shorter retroactive coverage periods, mid-year eligibility reviews, work requirements for expansion members ages 19–64 (with exemptions for the disabled and elderly), cost-sharing beginning in 2028 for certain income groups, and restrictions for some lawfully present individuals.
  - She said the BAC will be an important part of helping share information and reach out to others, so everyone understands the changes..
  - Emily Beauregard asked for data on how many Kentuckians will be affected by the H.R. 1 provisions.
    - This will be a potential future agenda item for the next meeting.
  - Cory Goff asked about the current Federal Poverty Level. The group shared in the chat that in 2025, the poverty guideline for one person is \$15,650 a year. For each extra person in the household, it goes up by \$5,500.
    - They also shared that \$21,597 a year is 138% of the Federal Poverty Level for one person. All this information was shared in a PDF in the chat and can also be found online.
  - Lee Guice asked if the new guidance included extra funding.
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- Veronica Judy-Cecil confirmed that no new funding was provided to states.
- She also reviewed the Rural Health Transformation Program:
  - **Rural Health Transformation Program:** Provides \$50 billion in federal grants (FY 2026–2030) to strengthen rural health care by funding disease prevention, sustainable access, workforce development, innovative care models, and technology use; applications are due November 5, 2025, with awards announced by December 31, 2025.

## Waiver Program Overview

- Dr. Leslie Hoffman gave a quick summary of some of the programs under Kentucky's Medicaid Waiver Programs. She encouraged members to ask questions or talk more if they wanted to learn about specific programs.
  - **Overview:** Kentucky's Medicaid program offers both institutional and Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) through 1915(c) waivers and 1915(i) State Plan Amendments to support individuals with disabilities or complex conditions in community settings.
  - **State Requirements:** States must ensure eligibility determination, cost neutrality, quality assurance, and appropriate service settings to receive federal funding for HCBS programs.
  - **Eligibility:** Participants must meet Nursing Facility (NF) or Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) level of care standards and qualify financially for Medicaid, with special rules for waiver applicants.
  - **Kentucky Transitions Program:** Supports individuals moving from nursing facilities back into community living through federally funded Money Follows the Person initiatives.
  - **1915(c) CHILD Waiver:** Launching in 2026, this program will serve children and youth with complex behavioral or developmental needs, offering services such as case management, community living supports, respite care, home modifications, residential care, and clinical therapeutic supports.

## Meeting Logistics and Scheduling

- Helen Dawson told members that the slides would be shared after the meeting and that they would get an email with the meeting materials.
  - Megan Szalwinski started a discussion about when future meetings should be held and how often.
    - Theda Simpson-Mosby asked how often the BAC will meet.
    - Emily Beauregard suggested meeting every two months instead of every three, saying it would help cover all the important topics.
    - Dana Emmitt-Steadman agreed, and several others like Kelli Jo Blair, Cory Goff, Eric Wright, and Lee Guice also supported the idea.
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- Lee Guice suggested that the every-other-month meetings should start in January, since December might be a busy month.
- Helen Dawson said they can plan to have meetings every other month and will find the exact dates. She suggested meeting from 2:00 to 4:00 PM on the second Monday every other month, starting in January.
  - The group agreed with this plan.
- The choice to meet every other month will be shared with the Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC) when they meet in November, since MAC meets after BAC. The Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services will work with MAC to set the dates.
- Veronica Judy-Cecil reminded members that BAC liaisons from Altarum will keep sharing information, help with questions, and communicate between meetings.

## Closing Items

- Member Privacy Requests
    - At any time, a BAC member can contact their Altarum liaison to ask for their name to be removed from meeting materials or anything posted on the public website.
    - When members applied, they were asked if they wanted their name included or removed. At that time, no one asked to keep their name private. But the group will keep asking to make sure everyone's wishes are respected.
  - Next Steps: Liaisons will send out the meeting materials and information about the next meeting.
  - There will also be a feedback survey for all BAC members after the meeting. The link will be sent in the email with the materials. But members can share feedback with the Altarum team anytime.
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