

(2) The process must seek to preserve existing provider-recipient relationships and relationships with providers that have traditionally served Medicaid recipients. If that is not possible, the State must distribute the recipients equitably among qualified MCOs and PCCMs available to enroll them, excluding those that are subject to the intermediate sanction described in § 438.702(a)(4).

(3) An “existing provider-recipient relationship” is one in which the provider was the main source of Medicaid services for the recipient during the previous year. This may be established through State records of previous managed care enrollment or fee-for-service experience, or through contact with the recipient.

(4) A provider is considered to have “traditionally served” Medicaid recipients if it has experience in serving the Medicaid population.

**§ 438.52 Choice of MCOs, PIHPs, PAHPs, and PCCMs.**

(a) *General rule.* Except as specified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a State that requires Medicaid recipients to enroll in an MCO, PIHP, PAHP, or PCCM must give those recipients a choice of at least two entities.

(b) *Exception for rural area residents.* (1) Under any of the following programs, and subject to the requirements of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a State may limit a rural area resident to a single MCO, PIHP, PAHP, or PCCM system:

(i) A program authorized by a plan amendment under section 1932(a) of the Act.

(ii) A waiver under section 1115 of the Act.

(iii) A waiver under section 1915(b) of the Act.

(2) A State that elects the option provided under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, must permit the recipient—

(i) To choose from at least two physicians or case managers; and

(ii) To obtain services from any other provider under any of the following circumstances:

(A) The service or type of provider (in terms of training, experience, and specialization) is not available within the MCO, PIHP, PAHP, or PCCM network.

(B) The provider is not part of the network, but is the main source of a service to the recipient, provided that—

(1) The provider is given the opportunity to become a participating provider under the same requirements for participation in the MCO, PIHP, PAHP, or PCCM network as other network providers of that type.

(2) If the provider chooses not to join the network, or does not meet the necessary qualification requirements to join, the enrollee will be transitioned to a participating provider within 60 days (after being given an opportunity to select a provider who participates).

(C) The only plan or provider available to the recipient does not, because of moral or religious objections, provide the service the enrollee seeks.

(D) The recipient’s primary care provider or other provider determines that the recipient needs related services that would subject the recipient to unnecessary risk if received separately (for example, a cesarean section and a tubal ligation) and not all of the related services are available within the network.

(E) The State determines that other circumstances warrant out-of-network treatment.

(3) As used in this paragraph, “rural area” is any area other than an “urban area” as defined in § 412.62(f)(1)(ii) of this chapter.

(c) *Exception for certain health insuring organizations (HIOs).* The State may limit recipients to a single HIO if—

(1) The HIO is one of those described in section 1932(a)(3)(C) of the Act; and

(2) The recipient who enrolls in the HIO has a choice of at least two primary care providers within the entity.

(d) *Limitations on changes between primary care providers.* For an enrollee of a single MCO, PIHP, PAHP, or HIO under paragraph (b)(2) or (b)(3) of this section, any limitation the State imposes on his or her freedom to change between primary care providers may be no more restrictive than the limitations on disenrollment under § 438.56(c).

**§ 438.56 Disenrollment: Requirements and limitations.**

(a) *Applicability.* The provisions of this section apply to all managed care