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RMS End of Week Update 8/7/2026

Governor Hochul Slams Trump's New Medicare Cuts That Will Raise Prescription Drug Costs For 1.3 Million Seniors Across New York

This week Governor Hochul announced that the Trump Administration's controversial plan to end Medicare Part D subsidies will raise prescription drug costs for around 1.3 million seniors across New York State, according to policy analyst estimates.

Governor Hochul joined seniors in New York City today to demand that the Trump Administration stop these planned Medicare cuts and end their crusade to raise costs for millions of seniors across the nation. If the Trump Administration proceeds with its plans to end Medicare Part D subsidies, impacted seniors could see higher monthly premiums starting in 2027.

As Governor Hochul slammed Trump's latest plans for Medicare cuts, she also highlighted how New York has delivered healthcare savings for seniors through her major expansion of the Medicare Savings Program, banning copays for insulin, and other initiatives.

"The Trump Administration's latest attack on Medicare will raise prescription drug costs for seniors across New York -- and I'm calling on Trump to reverse these Medicare cuts now," Governor Hochul said. "While Republicans in Washington are hellbent on making life harder and more expensive for hard-working Americans, I'm staying laser-focused on helping seniors and putting money back into New Yorkers' pockets."

Last week, the Trump Administration announced it would end the Medicare Part D Premium Stabilization Demonstration Program by the end of the year - a year earlier than intended. This program, initiated by the Biden Administration in 2024, was intended to stabilize stand-alone prescription drug plan premiums for enrollees, by providing subsidies to plan sponsors. Analysts estimate that these subsidies offset the average prescription drug plan premium by $16 per month in 2026.

Raising prescription drug costs that millions of older New Yorkers rely on every day risks putting additional financial pressure on seniors living on fixed incomes.

To view the full press release please click here.

State Outlines Plans To Deepen Scrutiny Of Medicaid Providers

According to a recent article in POLITICO Pro the NYS Department of Health is "actively exploring" new triggers for enhanced provider scrutiny as part of its two-year Medicaid revalidation plan approved this week by the federal government.

The potential new triggers under consideration include billing anomalies, patient safety concerns and change-of-ownership applications in select, non-high-risk provider categories, according to a copy of the two-year plan shared with POLITICO by the Department of Health.

State Medicaid officials are also interested in developing real-time, dynamic risk-scoring models that could automate referrals to the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General for further scrutiny, the plan states.

Why it matters: The exploratory initiatives are among a suite of Medicaid program integrity strategies outlined in the two-year provider revalidation plan, which fulfills an April directive from CMS Administrator Mehmet Oz to states.

New York kicked off the two-year revalidation process by enacting a temporary enrollment moratorium for high-risk Medicaid providers. The moratorium is expected to last roughly six months and help ease the state's transition from the old, paper-based enrollment process to a new digital portal, according to state Medicaid Director Amir Bassiri.

The state will require revalidations every three years for providers in high-risk categories, as designated by CMS. Licensed home care agencies, applied behavioral analysis clinics and providers under the Home and Community-Based Services waiver are also now designated as high-risk in New York.

Bassiri said changes to the state's revalidation process will affect less than 10 percent of Medicaid-enrolled providers.

"These efforts build upon New York's nation-leading efforts to address Medicaid waste, fraud and abuse, ensuring these programs continue to meet federal requirements while delivering high-quality care to the New Yorkers who rely on these critical programs," Bassiri said in a statement Tuesday.

What's next: Revalidation will proceed in phases through June 2028, starting with current high-risk providers, durable medical equipment suppliers and any provider that has not been revalidated since the beginning of the Covid-19 public health emergency.

Newly designated high-risk providers will begin revalidation in the winter.

To view the full article please click here.

NYS Department Of Health Announces Modernized Medicaid Provider Revalidation Process

This past Tuesday, August 4, 2026, the New York State (NYS) Department of Health announced improvements to NYS Medicaid oversight and the modernization of the provider enrollment and revalidation process. NYS Department of Health is rolling out a phased implementation of its updated provider revalidation plan – a critical component of maintaining the integrity and accuracy of the NYS Medicaid program.

All providers serving NYS Medicaid members are now required to enroll and revalidate through the new NYS Medicaid Provider Services Portal (PSP).

To help you navigate this transition, NYSDOH has issued an official press release detailing the new risk-based, phased revalidation schedule running through June

2028. Additionally, they will be hosting an informational webinar to walk you through the new portal and answer your questions.

What You Need to Do:

- **REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR:** Register for the New York State Department of Health Medicaid Provider Revalidation webinar, held on **Thursday, August 6, 2026,** from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., to learn how to access the NYS Medicaid PSP. CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.
- **Review the press release:** The press release is now available and contains the complete details on the phased rollout.
- **Update your contact information:** Ensure your email and mailing addresses are current in our system, so you receive your official notification when it is your turn to revalidate. To update your contact information, please contact the eMedNY Help Desk at **1-800-343-9000**.

To view the press release please click here.
For more information and to register for the webinar please click here.

Medical Aid In Dying Law Is Now In Effect In New York: What New Yorkers Need To Know

Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) is now in effect throughout New York. It arrived with both applause and opposition to the procedure that now grants physician-assisted suicide to eligible sick patients in the Empire State.

The bill took effect on Aug. 5 after Gov. Kathy Hochul signed it into law in February, following more than 10 years of advocacy by supporters of MAID.

What is MAID?

The legislation, authored and championed by Assembly Member Amy Paulin, who represents Westchester, allows mentally capable, terminally ill adults with six months or less to live to request medication to self-administer to end their lives.

“Beginning today, terminally ill New Yorkers facing unimaginable suffering have the comfort of knowing they have one more compassionate option available to them,” Paulin said. “This law is about dignity, autonomy, mercy, and respecting deeply personal end-of-life decisions.”

New York joins about a dozen other states that have MAID laws, including nearby New Jersey, Delaware and Vermont.

Paulin said that even though only a small percentage of eligible patients are expected to utilize the life-ending procedure, experience in other states has shown that many terminally ill patients "find tremendous comfort simply in knowing the option exists," adding that many people who qualify for MAID never take the medication.

"For many families, simply having the choice provides comfort, reassurance, and a greater sense of control during one of life's most difficult moments," she said. "New York now joins a growing number of states that recognize medical aid in dying as a compassionate end-of-life option."

Manhattan Borough President Brad Hoylman-Sigal championed the bill, too, when he was in the state Senate last year.

"Terminally ill New Yorkers with fewer than six months to live deserve the right to die with dignity," he said. "I'm deeply grateful to the hundreds of patients, families, physicians, and faith leaders who bravely shared their stories and helped shape and deliver this legislation."

Who is eligible to receive MAID?

Only terminally ill adults with a prognosis of six months or less to live qualify to use MAID.

However, after discussions between Hochul and state legislators, certain safeguards were put in place within the law to ensure it is used "carefully" and "responsibly," advocates explained. These precautions include a mandatory five-day waiting period between when a prescription is written and filled; a written and oral request from the patient for the lethal drugs by video or audio; and a mental health evaluation.

People who stand to benefit financially from a patient's death cannot serve as witnesses or interpreters.

"The safeguards built into this law ensure that it will be implemented carefully, responsibly, and with the utmost respect for patients and families," Paulin said. "States that have had medical aid in dying laws in place for decades have demonstrated that these protections work, while giving tremendous peace of mind to those facing the end of life."

Was there opposition to the bill?

Yes. Although advocates have said that about 70% of New Yorkers support MAID, passing the bill did not come easy.

Many individuals and groups stood firmly against the action, including individual New Yorkers, fellow New York politicians, and religious and disability-rights groups.

"I fought this legislation tooth and nail from the day it was introduced until the final vote because I believe New York should always choose hope, compassion, and quality end-of-life care over physician-assisted death," NYS Sen. Bill Weber, who represents Rockland County and other areas just north of NYC, said on Wednesday.

Kristen Curran, director of government relations at the New York State Catholic Conference, told amNY in December that the bill is "dangerous" and was concerned about what passing it could lead to.

"This is an incredibly dangerous piece of legislation," she said. "The bill as written right now would be the most permissive assisted-suicide legislation in the country. Part of why this is so dangerous is because they are not going to stop here."

In Canada, MAID was expanded to include patients who do not have a fatal or terminal illness as eligible for the procedure.

Going forward

A person can withdraw their request for MAID medication at any time. Doctors will have to document information regarding the patient's medical record, including dates of oral requests and noting that all requirements have been met.

The cause of death on the individual's death certificate, who dies after self-administering the lethal medication, will be the underlying terminal illness or condition.

To view the full amNY article please click here.

Governor Hochul And Attorney General James Issue Statement On Federal Challenge To New York's Immigration Laws

This week a federal judge blocked a New York State law that makes officers show their faces, but allowed a ban on local police acting as federal immigration agents. The governor and attorney general vowed to fight for the mask ban even as some municipalities refuse to end their 287(g) immigration contracts.

Governor Hochul and New York Attorney General James released the following statement:

"As we have said from the start, New York's ban on 287(g) agreements is legal and will keep our communities safe. Local law enforcement should be focused on local matters, and New York taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for any collaboration with ICE.

"While the court enjoined enforcement of New York's mask ban, we stand firm in our belief that masked agents do not make New York safer, and our offices are reviewing all legal options at this time."

To view the full statement please click here.

Governor Hochul And Attorney General James Announce Lawsuit Against Trump Administration To Stop Latest Round Of Illegal Tariffs

This week, Governor Kathy Hochul and New York Attorney General Letitia James announced that New York joined a coalition of 24 other states to sue the Trump Administration for once again implementing illegal tariffs that will raise costs for hard working families and businesses nationwide.

"President Trump's illegal tariffs are nothing more than a tax on hardworking families, driving up the cost of groceries, household essentials, building materials and countless everyday goods that New Yorkers rely on," Governor Hochul said. "The Supreme Court has made it clear that this Administration cannot ignore the law to impose sweeping tariffs. I will not stand by as New Yorkers continue to suffer the consequences of the President's trade war, and I'm proud to join Attorney General James in fighting back against the Trump Administration to protect families and businesses across our state."

Attorney General Letitia James said, "After losing at the Supreme Court, the administration is once again trying to illegally raise taxes on families and businesses with a new round of tariffs. No matter how the administration tries to justify it, the law and our Constitution are clear that the president does not have the power to impose sweeping tariffs on whatever countries he wants. I will continue to stand up to this administration's illegal policies that threaten to raise costs for New Yorkers."

After the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the President's sweeping tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and the Court of International Trade struck down tariffs imposed under Section 122 of the Trade Act, the Trump administration is trying yet again to implement illegal tariffs, this time under Section 301 of the Trade Act.

While the administration claims to be using Section 301 to combat forced labor in global trade, the lawsuit argues that this is a pretext for imposing the same sweeping tariffs the administration has repeatedly tried and failed to enact. The administration has violated the law by failing to follow Section 301's requirements for imposing tariffs and implementing new tariffs without any clear connection to their stated goal of combating forced labor practices. The state plaintiffs are asking the Court of International Trade to declare these tariffs illegal.

Section 301 gives the United States Trade Representative (USTR) the authority to take action to stop a trading partner's "unreasonable or discriminatory" acts or policies. In March 2026, the Trump administration announced investigations into 59 countries and the European Union (EU) under Section 301, claiming to investigate forced labor practices in global trade. On July 23 – the day that the previous round of tariffs the administration tried to implement under Section 122 were set to expire – the administration enacted sweeping new tariffs on the EU and these countries under Section 301.

Investigations into single countries under Section 301 are complex and typically take up to a year to complete. The states argue that the administration's tariffs based on a supposed investigation into countries' efforts to combat forced labor do not satisfy the requirements of Section 301. Instead, the administration is using "forced labor" as an excuse to continue its policy of indiscriminately enacting damaging tariffs on a wide range of countries.

The states argue that the administration has violated the Administrative Procedure Act by imposing these tariffs. The administration failed to conduct a meaningful investigation or engage substantively with testimony and comments submitted, and then arbitrarily applied across-the-board tariffs to a sweeping range of countries and products with no meaningful explanation for how the tariff rates would combat forced labor. The lawsuit also argues that USTR's authority under Section 301 is limited to specific circumstances and subject to rigorous procedural requirements, and that Congress has only delegated limited tariff authority to the executive branch. The states are seeking a court order declaring the tariffs illegal.

Joining New York in filing this lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin, along with the governors of Kentucky and Pennsylvania.

To view the full press release please click here.

June 2026 Medicaid Update Released

The Office of Health Insurance Programs of the New York State Department of Health has approved the release of the June 2026 Medicaid Update. Please find the print-ready version of the issue available for download at:https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/update/2026/docs/mu_no07_jun26_pr.pdf. You may also go straight to an article or topic that pertains to you by selecting from the current issue's table of contents below.

All Providers

30-Day Public Comment Period Opened for the 1115 Medicaid Redesign Team Waiver Extension Application (Cover)
New York State Department of Health Announces Modernized Medicaid Provider Revalidation Process

Policy and Billing
[Guidance for Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Cell and Gene Therapy Access Model]
[Standing Order for Doula Services Reissued]

1115 Medicaid Redesign Team Waiver: Extension Request Public Hearing On Tuesday, August 11, 2026
This is a reminder that the New York State (NYS) Department of Health will hold a public hearing this Tuesday, August 11, 2026, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to discuss the state's Section 1115(a) demonstration extension request. This hearing will also serve as the Annual 1115 Public Forum. This is an opportunity for members of the public to provide comments.

Meeting Details:
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2026
Time: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: Virtual*

*This webinar is virtual and will be hosted via WebEx. Pre-registration is required for all attending, as well as for those who wish to provide comments.

Providing Comments
Individuals who wish to provide comment must register using the online registration form, include "SP" before their name (e.g., "SP Jane Doe") and email 1115waivers@health.ny.gov by 4 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2026, to confirm their registration. Speakers will be called in the order they register. To ensure all voices are heard, please limit comments to five minutes per presenter. ASL interpretation will be available as well as closed captioning, provided by the Webex platform.

Questions and Additional Information:
Questions should be directed to 1115waivers@health.ny.gov.

For additional information regarding the extension request, refer to the Full Public Notice: Department of Health Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) Section 1115(a) Demonstration Extension Request.

Comptroller DiNapoli Released Report On Business Costs In New York City
According to a report released by Comptroller DiNapoli this week New York City remains one of the nation's most expensive places to start or operate a business, but several major business expenses have grown at a slower rate than in competing metropolitan areas over the past decade.

“New York City remains one of the world’s premier places to do business because of its unmatched talent, innovation and access to customers,” DiNapoli said. “While operating here remains expensive, this report shows that some core businesses costs have grown more slowly than in many competing regions. Understanding where costs are rising more quickly can help inform policies that support both economic growth and affordability.”

Several of New York City’s largest business expenses have grown more slowly than national averages and many competing metropolitan areas over the past decade, including:

- **Private-sector wages.** Average private-sector pay reached $129,030 in 2025, among the highest in the nation, but inflation-adjusted wage growth trailed the national average over the last decade.
- **Office rents.** Manhattan office rents remain the highest in the country but rent growth has been modest compared with many competing markets.
- **Employee benefits.** Employer spending on health insurance, retirement benefits and paid leave remains above the national average, but growth in those costs has been lower than nationwide trends.

At the same time, several business costs in New York City continue to outpace national trends and pose significant challenges for employers, including:

- **Electricity costs.** Commercial electricity rates in the city substantially exceed national averages and have risen faster than nationwide rates.
- **Health insurance costs.** Health insurance remains one of the fastest-growing expenses facing employers and has increased more rapidly in the Northeast than nationally.
- **Natural gas costs.** Commercial natural gas costs have surged over the past decade, with some business customers seeing costs more than double since 2017.
- **Business taxes.** City businesses face the nation’s highest nominal combined corporate tax rate.

The report underscores the need for policymakers to better understand the factors driving business costs and competitiveness in New York City. While the city’s access to talent, capital, and customers remains a significant advantage, addressing rising energy, health care and tax costs could help ensure businesses of all sizes can continue to grow, invest and create jobs in the five boroughs. Recent efforts to reform regulations at both the state and city levels are steps in the right direction; but continued engagement with businesses and other stakeholders will be key to building on that progress across the five boroughs.

To view the full report please click here.

Rumors Circling That Zellner Is In Line For DMV Commissioner

According to a recent article in City & State NYS Senator Jeremy Zellner is in line for a position in Gov. Kathy Hochul's administration, a post which would end his longtime leadership of Erie County Democrats in a matter of months.

Multiple sources confirmed to City & State that Zellner is in line for a top job from Hochul, most likely commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles, left vacant with the retirement of Mark Schroeder this year. The discussion comes as Zellner is ramping up his campaign to win an eighth term as chair of the Erie County Democratic Committee in September. Zellner has drawn two opponents in his reelection campaign. Zellner would need to step down from his party post to accept the Hochul administration job, though he would need to be confirmed by the state Senate.

Zellner was quick to dampen speculation that he was planning to leave the county party. "I haven't had any discussions about that, and you know, there haven't been any discussions about that," Zellner told City & State. "My plan is to find a position where I can continue serving as chair and doing the good work that I've done for the last 14 years."

A spokesperson for Hochul declined to comment on a potential nomination.
The speculation that Zellner is in line for the DMV job, or another from Hochul, is being widely discussed in Western New York politics. Zellner dismisses the source of any such discussion as people who want to "cause drama."

Discussion of Zellner's future has reached fever pitch since the June primary, which not only saw his defeat by Assembly Member Jonathan Rivera in a landslide, but the defeat of a party-backed candidate for Rivera's Assembly seat by Democratic Socialists of America-backed candidate Adam Bojak, as well, leading some to question the establishment's strength under Zellner's leadership. Dissent against Zellner has grown since the party picked him over Rivera to run in February's special election. Zellner has long said that he recused himself from the Senate nominating process.

Zellner now faces challenges from Amherst Town Council Member John Davis and Erie County Legislator Jeanne Vinal as he looks to remain party chair. Most observers say Zellner will easily prevail over the little-known Davis and Vinal, noting that Zellner has a strong base of support within the Democratic committee. Davis' town government colleagues and Vinal's county legislative colleagues have backed Zellner, along with Hochul and Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, a longtime ally.

The current conventional wisdom is that the plan will be for Zellner to be reelected in September and see Hochul through her likely reelection and then step down in January to join her administration. But some are pushing for an earlier time frame. This one would have Zellner leaving at the September reorganization meeting, allowing for a new county party chair to be elected then by the full committee and then taking the helm of the party for Hochul's reelection campaign. If Zellner were to leave after winning an eighth term, the county party's executive committee would select his successor.

Zellner stressed that he has not had any discussions or received any offers to join the Hochul administration. He said his priority is next year's open county executive race.

"If I was chosen to be on the next presidential ticket as the vice president, would I think about it? Yes. I mean, I would never say no to opportunities, but my priority here is to get reelected for an eighth term as party leader and guide our party through the county executive process of next year because it's a really important year, and that has been my goal all along," he said

To view the full article please click here.

Helpful Links and Resources
2026 RMS HMH End of Session Update
RMS Revenue and Tax Final Budget Table
RMS Health/Mental Hygiene Final Budget Table
FY 2027 Enacted Budget Financial Plan
Empire State Development Tariff Resource Guide
NYS COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard
NYS COVID-19 Fatalities Tracker
Eliminating Distractions In Schools Resource
Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Financial Services information and resources
New York COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page
Department of Health
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home
COVID-19 Guidance for Medicaid Providers
Office of Mental Health
https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html
OPWDD
https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance
State Education Department
http://www.op.nysed.gov/COVID-19.html
NYS Department of Labor
https://dol.ny.gov/