



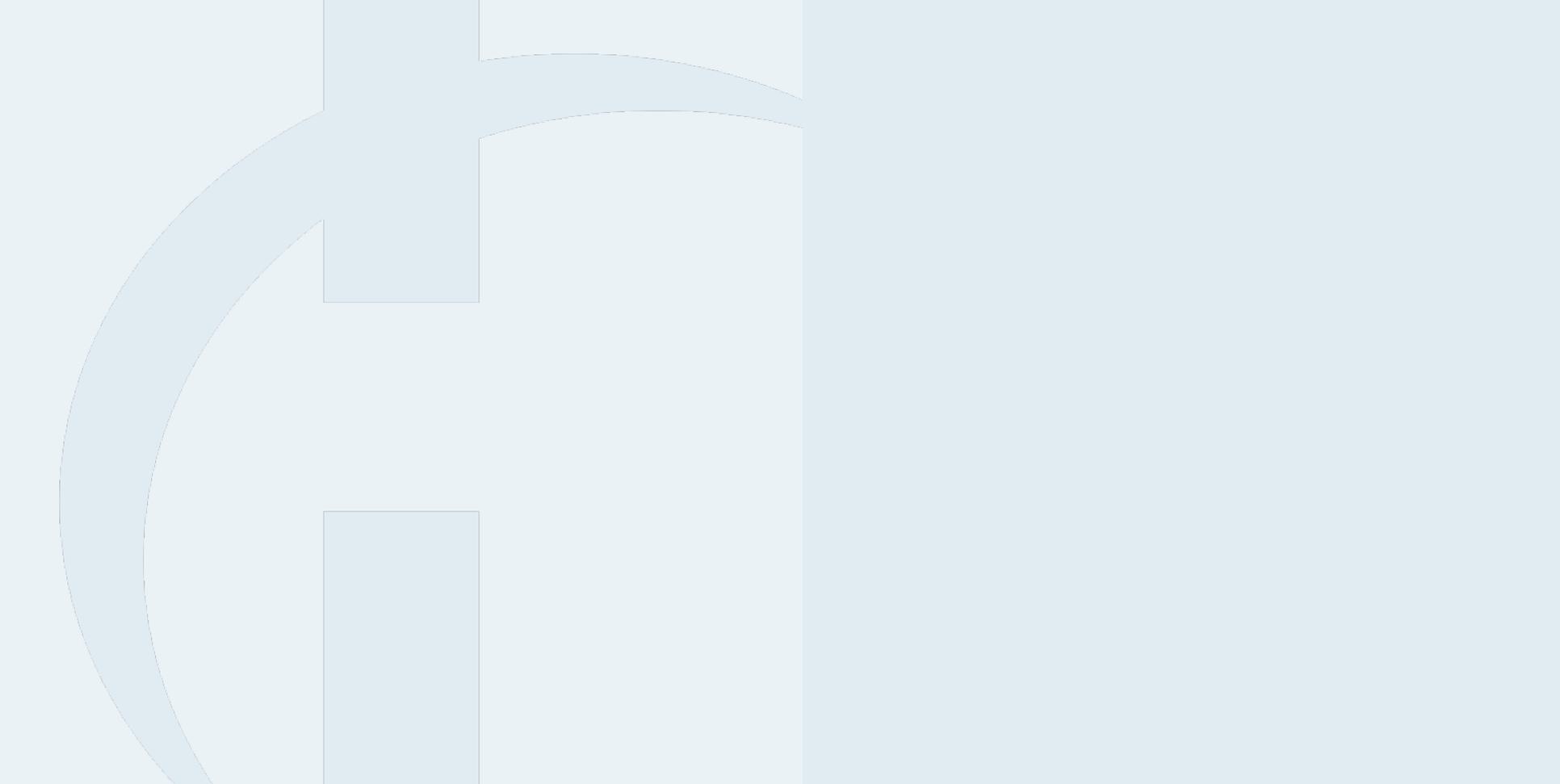
# Health Connector

## Winter MTF Presentation

January 2022

# Agenda

- **Special Enrollment Period (SEP) Review**
- **End of Year Tax Filing Reminders**
- **New Health Connector "Simple Sign Up" checkbox**



# **Special Enrollment Period (SEP) Review**

# Special Enrollment Periods (SEP)

**If an individual qualifies for a SEP, they can enroll in or change health insurance plans outside the annual Open Enrollment period**

- **Changes that allow an individual to qualify for a SEP are called Qualifying Events, and may include:**
  - Changes in household composition, income, immigration status, or address
  - Certain life changes, like getting married, having a baby, or losing job-based health insurance
  - All Qualifying Events should be reported as soon as possible and within 30 days of occurring
- **A SEP gives someone 60 days from the date of the qualifying event to select a new plan**
  - Individuals may pay after the 60-day window, but they must submit a plan selection in the shopping process within 60 days—a plan in their shopping cart is not enough
  - Payment and enrollment deadlines still apply during a SEP

# Qualifying Events

- Gains a dependent or becomes a dependent as a result of:
  - Marriage
  - Birth, adoption or placement for adoption or foster care or court-ordered care of a child
- Loses minimum essential coverage (MEC) for a reason other than failure to pay premiums or fraud
- Loses pregnancy-related coverage or medically needy coverage under the Social Security Act
- Is enrolled in Health Connector coverage and loses a dependent because of death, divorce or legal separation
- Moves to Massachusetts or gains access to new plans as a result of a permanent move (including release from incarceration)
- Is an American Indian or Alaska Native
- Becomes a Lawfully Present individual
- Is determined newly eligible for ConnectorCare or has a ConnectorCare plan type change
- Is enrolled in Health Connector coverage and becomes newly eligible or ineligible for APTCs
- Is a victim of domestic abuse or spousal abandonment
- Start or end of a ConnectorCare premium waiver
- Exceptional circumstances
- Waiver from the Office of Patient Protection
- Erroneously enrolled or not enrolled due to error, misrepresentation, or misconduct or inaction of the Health Connector or entity affiliated with the Health Connector providing enrollment activities
- Carrier substantially violated a material provision of its contract with the enrollee
- NOTE: A new applicant who applies during closed enrollment and is determined eligible for tax credits only and who doesn't meet another qualifying event above, does NOT qualify for an SEP as a result. (Those individuals with incomes between 300.1 – 400 % FPL)

# ConnectorCare SEPs

**Becoming newly eligible for ConnectorCare gives consumers 60 days to enroll from the date of the eligibility determination.**

- The online system will look at any existing eligibility to determine if consumer is newly eligible
- ConnectorCare members cannot change plans unless they experience a new qualifying event, which includes a change of plan type or the start or end of a ConnectorCare premium waiver
  - Example: John applies on 4/1 and is determined ConnectorCare eligible. He has 60 days to shop. He picks a plan and pays his first premium by the due date and is enrolled in a ConnectorCare plan
  - In June, John reports an income change to his application that results in a ConnectorCare Plan Type change. John is eligible to change plans, as a ConnectorCare Plan Type change is a qualifying event

# Health Connector Policies

To review the complete policy on qualifying events for individuals and families go to: [Policy NG-5 Mid-Year Life Events or Qualifying Events \(mahealthconnector.org\)](https://www.mahealthconnector.org/about/policy-center/policies)

To find all of the Health Connector policies, go to the Policy Center

[Policies – Massachusetts Health Connector \(mahealthconnector.org\)](https://www.mahealthconnector.org)

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with links for 'Get an Estimate' and 'Help Center'. The main header features the Massachusetts Health Connector logo and navigation links for 'GET STARTED', 'LEARN', and 'ABOUT'. The page title is 'Policies'. Below the title, there is a paragraph stating: 'These policies are for insurance plans offered through the Health Connector. From time to time, our policies...'. Under the heading 'Policy Groups:', there is a bulleted list: 'Non-group Policies – For individuals and families, only' and 'Small-group Policies – For Health Connector for Business, only'. Below this, there is a section for 'Non-Group Policies' and an 'Eligibility' section with two links: 'NG-1: Eligibility for Individual / Family Plan' and 'NG-2: Eligibility for Federal and State Financial Support for Individual / Family Plan'.

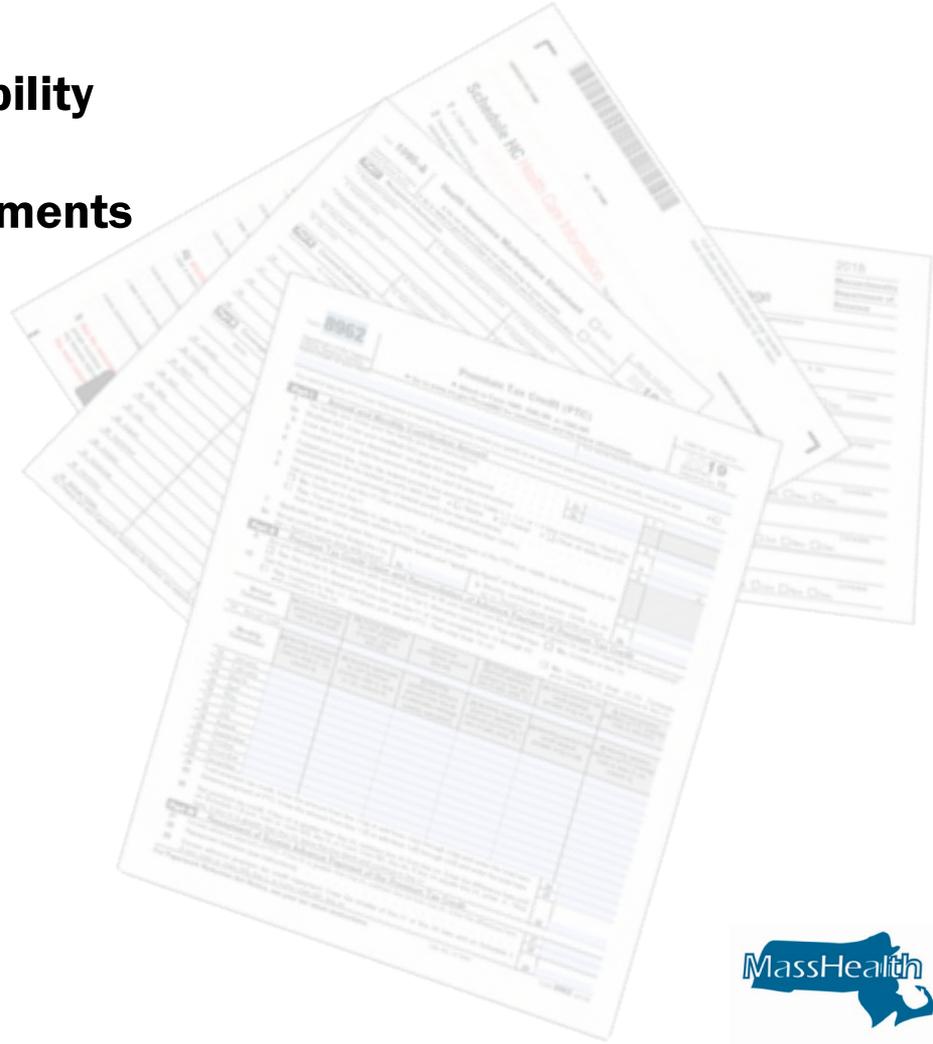


# **End of Year Tax Filing Reminders**

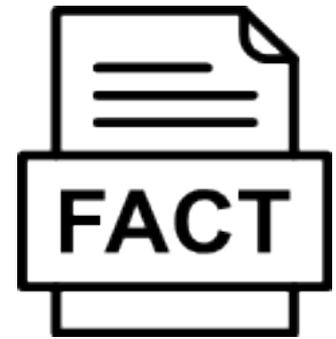
# Health Coverage and Taxes

Health insurance information is needed for federal and state taxes for two reasons:

1. Determining subsidy eligibility
2. Meeting coverage requirements



# Health Coverage and Taxes

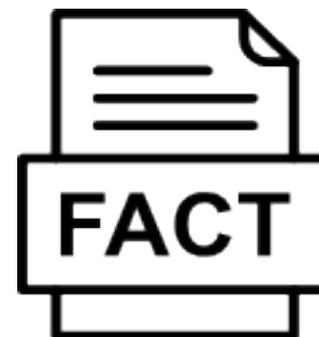


## Important Facts:

### Federal Tax Filing:

- Consumers that receive federal advance premium tax credits (APTCs) must file and reconcile them on their federal tax return in order to continue to be eligible for them in future years
- An applicant's tax filing status also impacts their ability to receive tax credits. For example, married couples must file taxes jointly to receive access to APTCs (with the exception of victims of domestic violence)
- In 2017 the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act set the penalty for the federal individual mandate to \$0 beginning with tax year 2019
  - Individuals will not have to show that they had health insurance coverage when filing their federal taxes
  - Individuals that did not have Minimal Essential Coverage (MEC) for all or part of the year will not have to pay a penalty or file for an exemption **on their federal tax return**

# Health Coverage and Taxes (continue)



## Important Facts:

### State Tax Filing:

- The Massachusetts Individual Mandate is still in effect
  - Massachusetts requires most adults 18 and over to purchase health insurance if it is affordable to them and meets Minimum Creditable Coverage (MCC) standards
  - Consumers will have to provide proof of their enrollment in health coverage on their state taxes
    - Failure to have health insurance for the entire year may result in a **state** tax penalty
    - Consumers may be able to get an exemption if Minimum Creditable Coverage is not affordable for them or for other special circumstances or hardships

# Health Connector Members Get a 1095 and a 1099-HC

These forms will be used when members file their Massachusetts State Taxes and Federal Taxes

Program	1095 info	1099-HC info
ConnectorCare	1095-A from the Health Connector	1099-HC from their health plan
QHP with APTC or unsub		
Catastrophic plan	1095-B from the carrier	
Health Connector for Business		

To request a correction to form 1095-A:

- If Members believe there's a mistake on their form 1095-A, they should call Health Connector Customer Service. A Customer Service Representative can let Members know if a corrected form is needed

# MassHealth Members Get a 1095-B and a 1099-HC

MassHealth members enrolled in certain MassHealth coverage types must:

- File taxes showing proof of coverage for each month in which they were enrolled in MEC during the calendar year

Program	1095-B Info	1099- HC Info
MassHealth Standard	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth CarePlus	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth CommonHealth	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
MassHealth Family Assistance (Direct Coverage)	1095 – B	1099-HC from MassHealth, unless member was 18 years or older and was <150% FPL all year
Health Safety Net	No form – Not MEC	No form – Not MCC
MassHealth Limited	No form – Not MEC	No form – Not MCC

- If individuals have questions about why they received the Form MA 1099-HC or Form 1095- B from MassHealth, or if they need a duplicate copy of either form, they should contact the MassHealth Customer Service Center at (866) 682-6745, TTY: (800) 497-4648 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled

# Important Dates in 2022

Dates	Action
Mid-Late January	1095-A forms sent to all Health Connector members enrolled in a QHP (including ConnectorCare members)
January	1095-B forms will be sent to certain MassHealth Members
March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Individuals are asked to report any corrections to 1095 or 1099-HC forms to the Health Connector and/or MassHealth and new forms to be sent out prior to the tax filing deadline
<b>April 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>State and Federal Tax filing deadline</b>



# **Key Points for Health Connector and MassHealth Members**

# Key Points for Health Connector Members

## Health Connector members enrolled in a Qualified Health Plan (including ConnectorCare) must:

- Reconcile any APTCs they received during the year on their federal tax returns
- Members get APTCs based on their projected income. At tax time, they must "reconcile," or compare, the amount of credits they received in advance during the year against the amount they qualify for based on the income they calculated on their tax return.
- Households that did not claim an APTC during the year may claim a Premium Tax Credit when they file their taxes if they are eligible for one, even if they did not request financial assistance when they applied
- There is not a requirement to file state income taxes based on enrollment in a Health Connector plan the same way enrollees who receive tax credits must file a federal return.
  - However, enrollees who do file a state return will be asked to show proof of coverage that meets Minimum Creditable Coverage (MCC) standards
  - All health insurance plans sold through the Health Connector meet the MCC standards

# Key Points for All Members (cont'd)

## Remind members:

- Tax filing status also impacts a member's ability to receive tax credits. For example, married couples must file taxes jointly to receive APTCs
- To tell the state about any changes such as income, job loss or change, marriage or pregnancy, to help minimize unexpected repayments when reconciling their taxes
- To keep MassHealth and the Health Connector documents as they may be needed if the IRS or their tax preparer has questions about their coverage:
  - 1095 and 1099-HC forms
  - Eligibility and enrollment notices which can be used to help determine their coverage effective date
- They can indicate their wish to apply for a state mandate exemption on their Schedule HC when filing their state taxes
- There is free tax assistance available, if needed



# **Free Tax Assistance**

# Free Tax Assistance

**VITA:** The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$57,000 or less, persons with disabilities and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals

**TCE:** The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older, specializing in questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. The IRS-certified volunteers who provide tax counseling are often retired individuals associated with non-profit organizations that receive grants from the IRS

**AARP Foundation Tax-Aide:** offers free tax help to anyone especially for those age 50 and older who can't afford a tax preparation service. IRS-certified volunteers understand that retirement or other life changes may make tax filing a little more complicated. AARP membership is not required

# Helpful Tax Resources

- Free Tax Return Preparation for Qualifying Taxpayers
  - <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-you-by-volunteers>
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) Tax Provisions
  - <http://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act>
- Individual Shared Responsibility Provision
  - <https://www.irs.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/Individuals-and-Families/Individual-Shared-Responsibility-Provision>
- Health Connector tax resources
  - <https://www.mahealthconnector.org/taxes>



# **Simple Sign-Up**

# **New Health Connector "Simple Sign-Up" Checkbox on DOR Schedule HC**

**Simple Sign-Up is an easy new way for Massachusetts taxpayers to get help getting into health insurance coverage – right from their 2021 state tax returns.**

- By checking the box, taxpayers are letting DOR and the Health Connector know they are interested in getting help enrolling in health insurance from the Health Connector
- The Health Connector will then reach out to the taxpayer about how to enroll in health insurance coverage with personalized help
- Schedule HC is a Massachusetts state tax form where individuals report any health insurance they had during the year
- Please note: Married taxpayers must BOTH check the box to have their information sent over

# Getting health insurance can be confusing, but the Health Connector can help

Most uninsured individuals qualify for low- or no-cost coverage through the Health Connector or MassHealth, the state's Medicaid agency, but may not know they qualify

- Free, in-person help is available to help people apply and enroll in a plan.
  - [Help Center – Massachusetts Health Connector \(mahealthconnector.org\)](https://mahealthconnector.org)
- Applying for or enrolling in health insurance will not negatively affect someone's immigration status, and individuals may still apply even if someone in their household does not have a valid immigration status.
- Health Safety Net is not insurance and may leave someone with large bills if they become sick or injured.
- Checking the box is fast and easy, and the Health Connector will reach out to the taxpayer as soon as their tax return is processed and the authorized information is transferred.
- The Health Connector will reach out to people who “check the box” and provide them with an easy to understand estimate of the coverage they could qualify for, and provide them with help enrolling.
- Tax preparers can help this effort by encouraging taxpayers who need health coverage to take advantage of Simple Sign-Up by checking the opt-in box when filing their 2021 taxes.

# New Language on Schedule HC

## Sample Image:

### **You might be eligible for low- or no-cost health insurance coverage.**

If you (and/or your spouse, if married filing jointly) do not have health insurance coverage, you might be eligible for health insurance coverage programs made available by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. By filling in the oval below, you authorize DOR to share information from your tax return and attached schedules with the Health Connector. If you are married filing jointly, both spouses must check the box for the Health Connector to receive all of your information. The Health Connector will assess your eligibility for those coverage options, including low- or no-cost coverage, and contact you with information. See instructions.

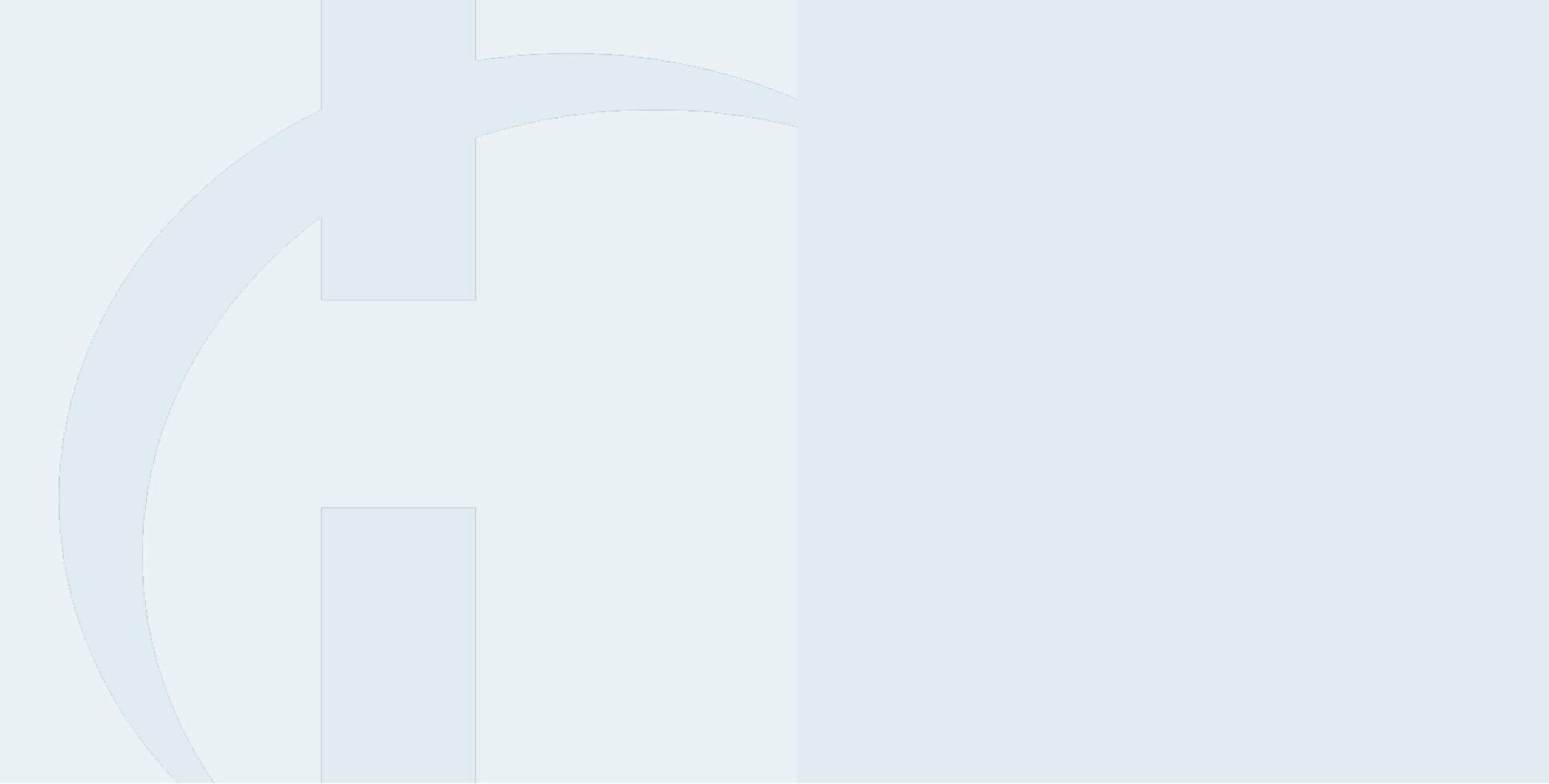
**You:**  I authorize DOR to share this tax return including attached schedules with the Massachusetts Health Connector for the purpose of assessing my eligibility for insurance affordability programs and contacting me with information about the same.

**Spouse:**  I authorize DOR to share this tax return including attached schedules with the Massachusetts Health Connector for the purpose of assessing my eligibility for insurance affordability programs and contacting me with information about the same.

# Working with Uninsured Residents

If you encounter someone who used Simple Sign Up to get started, just continue to help them as you would help anyone newly applying for coverage.

- They may show you a letter or email from the Health Connector.
- Once sample communications become available, they will be shared with Assisters.



# Questions