



Gov. Kevin Stitt requests Health Care Authority audit

By Tres Savage, Editor in Chief -
March 6, 2019

Gov. Kevin Stitt has asked State Auditor and Inspector Cindy Byrd to begin an Oklahoma Health Care Authority audit. The agency manages Medicaid, a state-federal partnership that provides health insurance coverage for low-income children, parents and disabled adults.

"It is important that we ensure our resources are supporting those in our state that need it the most," Stitt said in a press release shortly after 1:30 p.m. today.

Stitt requested that the audit seek to:

- Determine whether OHCA is meeting mandatory requirements for determining eligibility and re-eligibility or re-certification of Medicaid Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) beneficiaries
- Determine whether individuals enrolled in the Medicaid or CHIP programs meet state and federal eligibility requirements
- Determine whether OHCA is timely processing and removing from the Oklahoma Medicaid and CHIP rolls persons who no longer meet eligibility requirements.

"States across the nation have already completed Medicaid audits and found significant savings because of it," Stitt said. "I believe this audit will allow us to continue to be transparent and efficient with taxpayer dollars while also ensuring we are providing a safety net for the most vulnerable in Oklahoma."

Jo Stainsby, director of public information for the agency, offered a short statement on Stitt's announcement.

"The OHCA welcomes an audit of our processes," she said via email.

The Health Care Authority is already audited annually by Byrd's office, and it undergoes a series of federal audits as well:

Background on the Health Care Authority

Stitt's audit request comes less than 24 hours after he and GOP legislative leaders announced an agreement to grant him the ability to hire and fire the directors of five state agencies, including the Oklahoma Health Care Authority.

The agency was formed in 1993 and manages Medicaid, called SoonerCare in Oklahoma. In recent years, the program has been criticized by conservative groups who have attempted to implement work requirements and other limitations.

Meanwhile, Democrats, health care advocates and self-described pragmatic Republicans have been pushing for a version of Medicaid expansion allowed under the Affordable Care Act. Oklahoma is one of a handful of states not to have expanded its Medicaid program to serve more working adults, despite the federal government's 90 percent coverage of associated costs.

Governor Stitt Request Letter – Oklahoma Health Care Authority – March 4, 2019



J. Kevin Stitt
Office of the Governor
State of Oklahoma

March 4th, 2019

Cindy Byrd
Oklahoma State Auditor & Inspector
2300 North Lincoln Boulevard, Room 123
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Auditor Byrd:

As authorized by Sections 212 (C) and 213.2 (B) of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes, I respectfully request a performance audit of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018. As required by the above citations, the cost of the audit shall be borne by OHCA.

The scope of the audit should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Determine whether the OHCA is meeting mandatory requirements for determining eligibility and re-eligibility or recertification of Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) beneficiaries.
- Determine whether individuals enrolled in the Medicaid or CHIP programs meet state and federal eligibility requirements.
- Determine whether OHCA is timely processing and removing from the Oklahoma Medicaid and CHIP rolls persons who no longer meet eligibility requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Stitt", written over a white background.

J. Kevin Stitt
Governor