

End Medical Debt In New York



#ENDMEDICALDEBT

January 17, 2023 – Health Equity Alliance of Long Island



Agenda



- 1. Medical debt in New York & the #EMD Campaign**
- 2. End of the Public Health Emergency – update**
- 3. Discussion**
 - 1115 Health Equity Waiver**

Medical Debt In New York

#EndMedicalDebt



#ENDMEDICALDEBT

- **Medical debt is a crisis nationally and in NY**

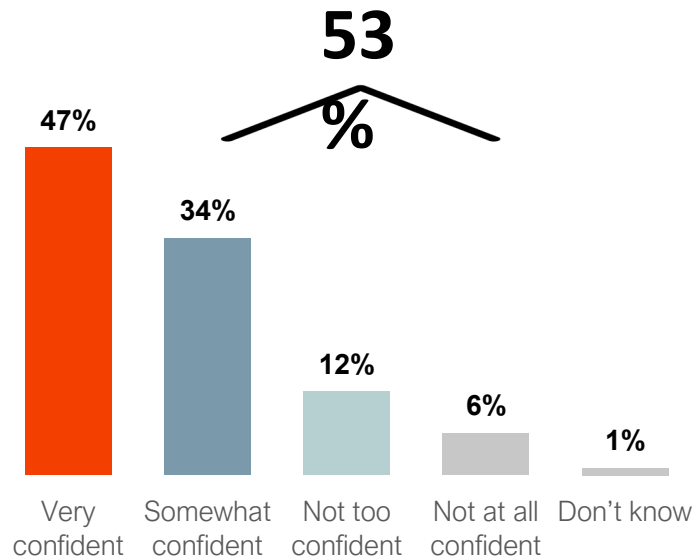
- 7 out of every 10 New Yorkers are worried about paying their bills; 41% have appealed a bill or paid one they didn't think they owed because they were afraid of debt collectors
- CHA has seen a **64% increase** in medical debt case

- **Hospitals have sued 53,000 New Yorkers**

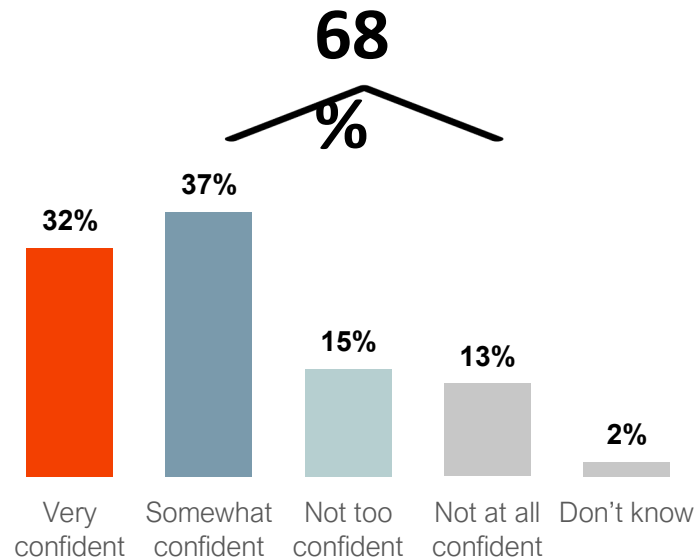
- Average lawsuit is for \$1,900
- Filed liens on people's homes, garnished thousands of wages
- Patients sued during the pandemic
- Data indicates **low-income patients** and **patients of color** are **targeted** for medical debt actions
- Many hospitals never sue at all

Half of New Yorkers express uncertainty about paying for usual healthcare services; 7 in 10 aren't very confident about paying for costs related to a major illness.

Q: Generally speaking, how confident are you that you have enough money or health insurance to pay the medical costs for the USUAL healthcare services that you or your family require?



Q: How confident are you that you have enough money or health insurance to pay the medical costs if you or a family member has a MAJOR ILLNESS?



	USUAL SERVICES	MAJOR ILLNESS
% NOT VERY CONFIDENT	53%	68%
Women	54%	69%
Men	52%	67%
18 to 34	60%	74%
35 to 54	56%	71%
55 to 64	49%	64%
65+	44%	58%
Black	55%	71%
Latino/Hispanic	58%	76%
White	49%	66%
Less than \$30K	64%	78%
\$30K to \$50K	53%	73%
\$50K to \$75K	59%	66%
\$75K to \$100K	48%	62%
\$100K or more	40%	57%
Democrats	47%	63%
Independents	62%	75%
Republicans	48%	65%
Buffalo/Rochester*	51%	70%
Long Island	51%	66%
NYC 5 Boroughs	52%	68%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	59%	68%
Rest of NY State	58%	70%

*See Appendix for details on counties by region.

**A third of adults (31%) have appealed or questioned a bill.
And, 20% say they have paid a bill they thought was wrong because they were afraid of being sued.**

31%

Of New Yorkers have fought a healthcare bill

Q: Have you ever appealed, questioned, or fought a healthcare bill you received?

20%

Of New Yorkers have paid a bill they thought was wrong to avoid being sued or harassed

Q: Have you ever just paid a healthcare bill you thought was wrong because you feared being sued or harassed if you did not pay it?

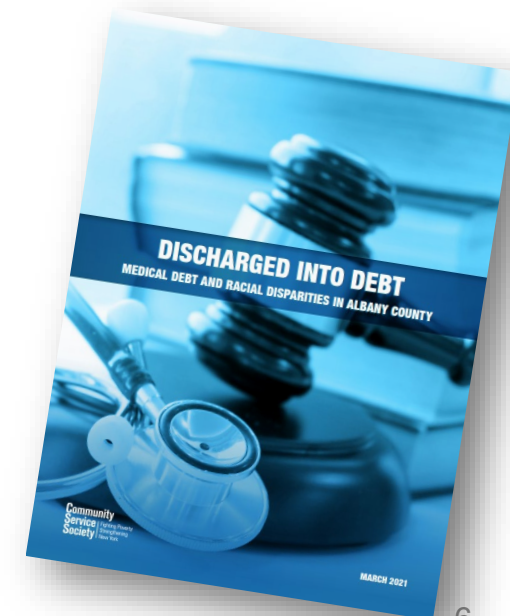
41%

Of New Yorkers have either fought a healthcare bill or paid a bill they thought was wrong

	FOUGHT A BILL	PAID WRONG BILL
% Yes	31%	20%
Women	29%	18%
Men	33%	22%
18 to 34	25%	29%
35 to 54	38%	21%
55 to 64	34%	17%
65+	26%	8%
Black	26%	19%
Latino/Hispanic	24%	19%
White	33%	19%
Less than \$30K	20%	16%
\$30K to \$50K	33%	26%
\$50K to \$75K	29%	19%
\$75K to \$100K	43%	28%
\$100K or more	43%	21%
Democrats	33%	24%
Independents	29%	16%
Republicans	31%	20%
Buffalo/Rochester	38%	17%
Long Island	34%	33%
NYC 5 Boroughs	30%	19%
Westchester / Hudson Valley	30%	13%
Rest of NY State	26%	19%

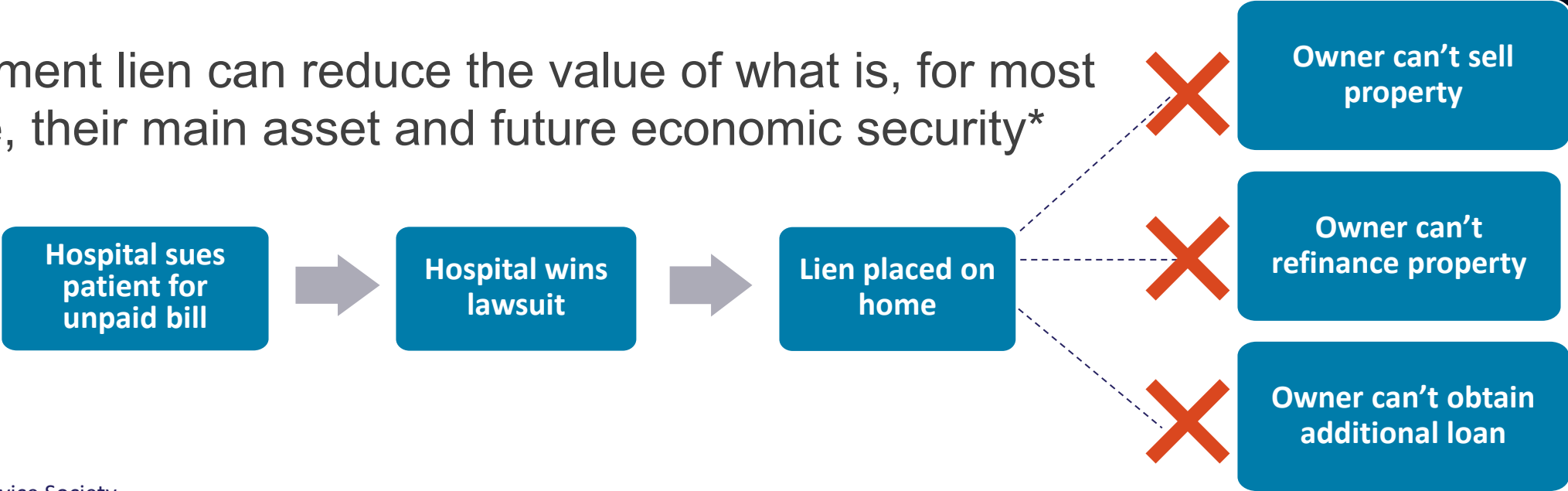
Medical debt is a public health concern for low-income & minority patients

- **JAMA (2021); CFPB (2022)**
 - Medicaid debt disparately impacts patients who are low-income and/or people of color
- **Discharged Into Debt series of reports revealed:**
 - **Pandemic (1/21):** Hospitals sued 5,000 New Yorkers during the pandemic
 - **Racial Disparities (3/21):** Significant racial disparities in medical debt
 - 200-400% more common in majority minority zip codes (Westchester, Albany, Monroe, Onondaga, Erie, and Schenectady counties)
 - **Albany:**
 - 65% of lawsuits filed in zips w/high proportion of people of color
 - 50% of lawsuits filed in zips where median family income is less than 200% of the FPL, which is far below the income cutoff under the State’s hospital financial assistance law



The relationship between medical debt and housing insecurity

- *Discharged Into Debt: Nonprofit Hospitals File Liens on Patients' Homes (11/21)*
- 56 hospitals filed a total of 4,880 liens between 2017 and 2018 – while getting \$442 million in State ICP funds
- A judgment lien can reduce the value of what is, for most people, their main asset and future economic security*



Media Reactions

TIMES UNION

Report: Local hospitals filed hundreds of liens on patient homes over medical debt

Proposed law seeks to bar New York hospitals from filing liens, garnishing wages over unpaid medical bills

[Bethany Bump](#)
Nov. 10, 2021 Updated: Nov. 10, 2021 6:46 p.m.

Bloomberg Businessweek

Medical Debt Is Crushing Black Americans, and Hospitals Aren't Helping

Billing tactics are inflicting financial harm on patients—and sometimes health-care companies aren't even aware of their own practices.

By John Tozzi +Follow

OPINION

Hospitals must stop placing liens on medical debtors' homes

By **DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL BOARD**
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
NOV 14, 2021 AT 4:00 AM

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Share](#)

POLITICO PRO
CITY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT & 7 OTHERS

Lawmakers target hospital collection practices in wake report

BY: SHANNON YOUNG | 11/10/2021 01:01 PM EST

The New York Times

One Hospital System Sued 2,500 Patients After Pandemic Hit

The largest health system in New York, led by a close ally of the governor, continued to sue over medical debt during the Covid-19 crisis, even after other big hospitals suspended lawsuits.

syracuse.com

...ild ban liens on patients' homes over

Modern Healthcare

NEWS DIGITAL HEALTH INSIGHTS DATA/LISTS OP-ED AWARDS

November 12, 2021 01:38 PM

Report: New York hospitals have thousands of liens on patients' bills

CRAIN'S NEW YORK BUSINESS

Maya Kaufman

...ds of New nsecurity due

...ew Yorkers' homes, re future.

KEY COUNTIES

THESE 15 COUNTIES REPRESENT THE BULK OF MEDICAL DEBT LAWSUITS IN NEW YORK STATE WITH

44,633 LAWSUITS

THAT'S 85% OF ALL MEDICAL DEBT LAWSUITS IN NEW YORK STATE



Medical Debt on Long Island



#ENDMEDICALDEBT

- Long Island is a medical debt “hot spot”
 - More lawsuits are filed in Long Island than in any other region of the state (outside of Syracuse)
- Between 2015-2020, non-profit hospitals on Long Island sued 18,275 patients
 - Northwell & NYU Winthrop sued the most patients
- Northwell sued patients during the pandemic (March – December 2020), when the courts were effectively closed to the public
 - 1,500 patients in Suffolk
 - 700 patients in Nassau

Medical Debt on Long Island

Hospital Lawsuits Filed Against Individuals in Nassau and Suffolk County Civil Courts (2015 – 2020)

Hospital	2015 - 2020	% of Long Island Cases	Indigent care pool distribution, 2019	Fin. Assistance to Eligible Patients, 2017
Nassau	6,937	38%		
NYU Winthrop	2,333	13%	\$2,425,667	\$2,303,367
North Shore University Hospital (Northwell)	1,803	10%	\$21,027,011	\$18,399,351
Mount Sinai South Nassau	994	5%	\$5,669,603	\$21,027,011
Others	1,807	10%		
Suffolk	11,337	62%		
John T Mather (Northwell)	5,563	30%	\$1,942,741	\$1,048,037
Huntington Hospital (Northwell)	1,674	9%	\$2,926,371	\$3,890,971
Southside Hospital (Northwell)	1,084	6%	\$7,639,360	\$12,420,247
Others	3,016	17%		

The #EndMedicalDebt Package



#ENDMEDICALDEBT

✓ Passed & signed

- ✓ **2021: Judgment interest rate** reduced from 9% to 2% for consumer/medical debt
- ✓ **2020: Statute of limitations** reduced from 6 to 3 years for medical debt

✓ Passed & signed

- ✓ **2022: Ban Medical Liens and Wage Garnishments** for medical debt
- ✓ **2022: Regulate Facility Fees**
Make New York the first state to **ban facility fees** for **preventive care** and **tell patients about** them beforehand.

TO DO in 2023

- ✓ **Ounce of Prevention Act: Modernize Hospital Financial Aid**
Patients are being sued and placed into collections because it is too hard for patients to find out about and apply for the assistance they qualify for.

Ounce of Prevention Act

S7625A/A8441A



#ENDMEDICALDEBT

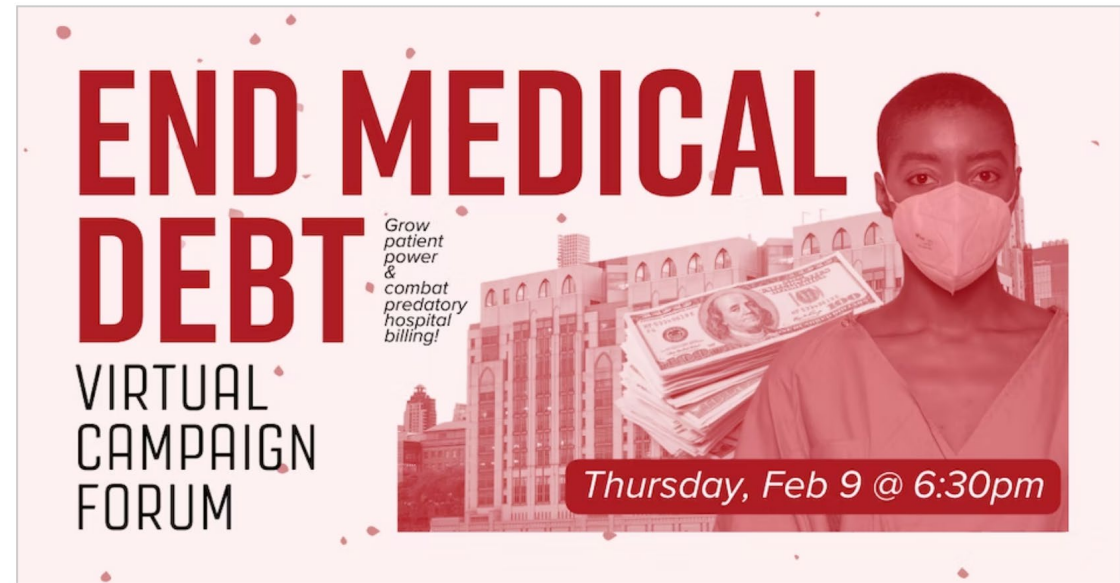
- **NY hospitals are non-profits & get \$1.1 billion annually to offer Hospital Financial Assistance**
 - So why are so many people being harassed and sued?
- **Ounce of Prevention Act S7625A/A8441 would:**
 - Create 1 common application form
 - Simplify and increase income eligibility limits
 - Eliminate obsolete rules and streamline applications

What can YOU do to help stop medical debt?

- Tell YOUR story on the Long Island #EMD Virtual Town Hall!
 - Testify today or fill out the patient story form
 - Make a video
 - Join us! We the Patients and the #EndMedicalDebt campaign

End Medical Debt - Virtual Campaign Forum

Virtual Meeting



📅 Time
Thursday, February 9
6:30 – 7:30pm EST

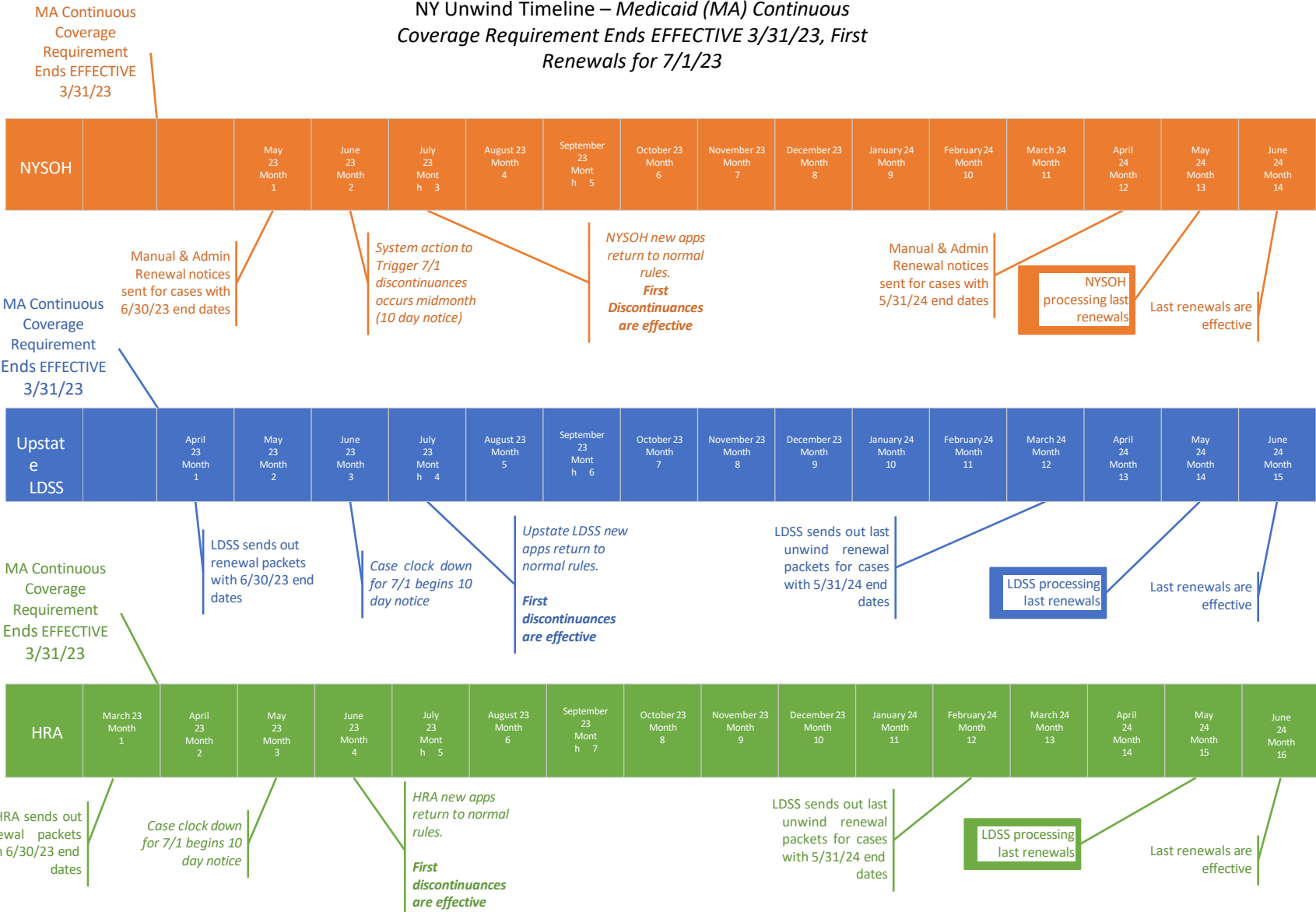
📍 Location
Virtual event
Join from anywhere

<https://www.mobilize.us/citizenactionny/event/543330/>

End of the Public Health Emergency

- **Public Health Emergency – Response to COVID pandemic**
 - Suspension of renewal requirements for public coverage, including Medicaid, Child Health Plus, Essential Plan
 - 9 million New Yorkers have this coverage
 - New York State has 1 year, beginning April 2023 to renew its public insurance enrollees
 - NYSOH notices will start in May 2023
 - Long Island (Upstate WMS) notices will start in April 2023
 - NYC notices will start in March 2023
 - Everyone will be renewed by June 2024

NY Unwind Timeline – Medicaid (MA) Continuous Coverage Requirement Ends EFFECTIVE 3/31/23, First Renewals for 7/1/23



* Documentation from recipients will be requested prior to July 1, 2023 but only for renewals effective July 1, 2023