

Medicaid Eligibility for Noncitizens Frequently Asked Questions

H.R.1 became federal law on July 4, 2025. It made changes to the Nebraska Medicaid program, including changes to Medicaid eligibility for noncitizens. This frequently asked questions document (FAQ) explains the new eligibility requirements for noncitizens.

Q: What is changing?

Beginning on October 1, 2026, federal law changes which noncitizens are eligible for full Medicaid coverage. As a result, some noncitizens who currently qualify for Medicaid will no longer be eligible for full Medicaid benefits after September 30, 2026.

Q: Who are the eligible noncitizens who still qualify for Medicaid as of October 1, 2026?

If you meet all other eligibility requirements (such as income requirements), you will still qualify for Medicaid as of October 1 if you have one of these immigration statuses:

- **Lawful permanent residents**, also known as green card holders who:
 - Have met the five-year bar;
 - Can be credited with 40 working quarters; or
 - Are exempt from meeting the five-year bar.
- **Cuban and Haitian entrants**
- **Compact of Free Association (COFA) migrants**, including individuals from Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau
- Lawfully present non-citizens who are:
 - **Pregnant**, or
 - **Under the age of 19**

Q: Who are the noncitizens who could no longer qualify for Medicaid as of October 1, 2026?

Beginning October 1, 2026, you **may no longer qualify** for Medicaid if you are in one of these groups* and don't have a lawful permanent resident status:

- Victims of domestic violence, applying under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
- Parolees
- Refugees

- Asylees
- Victims of trafficking and their spouse, child, sibling, or parents
- Individuals with conditional entry
- Veterans or active-duty military and spouses or unmarried dependents who also have a qualified non-citizen status
- People whose deportation is being withheld
- Native Americans born outside of the United States

* This is not an exhaustive list. Other immigration categories may be impacted by the new eligibility requirements.

Pregnant women and children who are part of the listed groups will continue to qualify for Medicaid, if they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Q: When does this change begin?

The change to Medicaid eligibility for noncitizens begins on October 1, 2026. This applies to new applicants and current Medicaid members.

For new applicants: This means that if you apply on or after October 1, 2026, you will be subject to these new eligibility requirements.

For existing Medicaid members: This means that if you have Medicaid and you no longer qualify because of your immigration status, you may lose your Medicaid coverage on October 1, 2026, even if your renewal date is later.

Q: How do I know if this change affects me?

Your eligibility for Medicaid may be impacted if you **are not** a:

- U.S. citizen or national;
- Lawful Permanent Resident;
- Cuban or Haitian Entrant;
- COFA migrant; or
- Lawfully present pregnant woman or child.

For more information on how to check your immigration status, visit: <https://www.usa.gov/immigration-case-status>.

Nebraska Medicaid will review your eligibility based on information we already have available. If we need more information from you, we will send you a notice explaining what documents or information you need to send us.

Do not assume you are no longer eligible unless you receive an official notice from Nebraska Medicaid. You can also log into <https://iserve.nebraska.gov/> to see if you have any notifications from DHHS.

Q: Does this change affect me if I only qualify for Medicare Part B premium help?

Yes, this change affects individuals who are enrolled in Medicaid and/or Medicare Part B premium assistance.

Q: What is the 5-year bar?

Certain qualified noncitizens who lawfully enter the United States must wait five years after receiving a qualified immigration status before they are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, unless they meet certain exceptions.

Q: Do I need to meet the 5-year bar?

Certain noncitizen groups do not need to meet the 5-year bar to get Medicaid coverage, once they become lawful permanent residents.

The noncitizens who are exempt and **do not need** to meet the 5-year bar after becoming lawful permanent residents are:

- Asylees
- Refugees
- Certified victims of trafficking and their spouse, child, sibling, or parents
- Veterans or active-duty military and spouses or unmarried dependents,
- Amerasian immigrants
- Iraqi and Afghani special immigrants
- Certain Ukrainian or Afghan parolees
- People whose deportation is being withheld
- Certain Native Americans born abroad

Pregnant women and children under 19 do not have to meet the 5-year bar.

Q: If I have applied for lawful permanent residence but my application is pending, can I be eligible for Medicaid?

No, you cannot be eligible for Medicaid until your lawful permanent residence application is processed and you've been granted a green card or Lawful Permanent Residence status.

Q: Can I get other medical assistance from DHHS if I lose my Medicaid coverage?

If you no longer qualify for Medicaid because of your immigration status, you may qualify for another program.

599 CHIP

If you are pregnant and do not have a Medicaid-eligible immigration status, your unborn baby may qualify for coverage through 599 CHIP. This program covers prenatal and pregnancy-related services, as well as labor and delivery. To qualify, you cannot have other health coverage.

Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP)

To be eligible for RRP, you must reside in the U.S. legally, have moved to the U.S. within the past eight months, and must have an eligible immigration status, such as:

- Refugee;
- Amerasian;

- Asylee;
- Cuban and Haitian Entrant;
- Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrant;
- Certain Afghan Humanitarian Parolee;
- Certain Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee;
- Victim of Human Trafficking; or
- Eligible Unaccompanied Alien Child.

Emergency Medical Services Assistance (EMSA)

EMSA may help pay for emergency medical care if you meet all Medicaid eligibility rules except the citizenship or immigration requirement and you have a medical emergency. EMSA only covers emergency services. DHHS will review your application to see if emergency services can be covered.

Q: If I might be affected, what should I do now before October 1, 2026?

Make sure Nebraska Medicaid has your current mailing address and phone number and respond to any requests for information.

If you or someone in your household is a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National, or has a Medicaid-eligible noncitizen status, you may need to send DHHS updated documents that show that person's current status. You may also submit an electronic change report or contact the customer service center to provide your most current immigration information.

Schedule all medical, dental, and behavioral health appointments and refill prescriptions now. Do not wait until October.

Q: How can I contact DHHS?

If DHHS asks for information or if you need to report a change that affects your Medicaid eligibility, you can do so in the following ways:

- **Online:** at <https://iserve.nebraska.gov/>
- **By mail:** P.O. Box 2992 Omaha, NE 68103-2992
- **By phone:**
 - Phone Number: (855) 632-7633
 - Lincoln Phone Number: (402) 473-7000
 - Omaha Phone Number: (402) 595-1178
 - TTY Number: (402) 471-7256
 - Fax: (402) 742-2351
- **In person:** at a local DHHS office <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Public-Assistance-Offices.aspx>