

To: Nebraska Medicaid Managed Care Plans
From: Jeremy Brunssen, Interim Director 
Date: September 3, 2026
Re: Upcoming Changes to Medicaid Eligibility for Noncitizens

This health plan advisory is being issued to notify the Nebraska Medicaid managed care plans of upcoming changes to Nebraska Medicaid eligibility for noncitizens, **effective October 1, 2026**.

Background Information

Starting October 1, 2026, federal rules change who is eligible for federal Medicaid coverage based on their immigration status. These changes come from Section 71109 of HR1 (also known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”). As a result, some noncitizens who currently qualify for Medicaid won’t be eligible for full Nebraska Medicaid benefits after September 30, 2026.

Impacted Groups

The changes apply to both new applicants and current Medicaid members. People who apply on or after October 1, 2026, will be subject to these new eligibility requirements. Also, current Medicaid members who no longer qualify because of their immigration status may lose Medicaid coverage on October 1, 2026, even if their renewal date is later.

People who meet all other eligibility requirements **will still qualify** for Medicaid as of October 1 if they are in one of these categories:

- **Green card holders** (also known as lawful permanent residents) who:
 - Have met the five-year bar;
 - Have enough work history (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**

Beginning October 1, 2026, people who **don’t** have a green card (lawful permanent resident status) **may no longer qualify** for Medicaid if they are in one of these categories:

- 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.

Lawfully present pregnant women and children who are part of these groups will still qualify for Medicaid, if they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Resources

For more information on the changes to Medicaid eligibility, visit <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Medicaid-Eligibility-for-Noncitizens.aspx>.