Changes Coming to Apple Health (Medicaid)

Updated November 2, 2026. Information from the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA).

A new federal law, H.R. 1, is changing Apple Health (Medicaid) in Washington. Changes for some noncitizen adults began October 1, 2026, and work requirements for some adults begin January 1, 2027. Not every Apple Health member will be affected. People who qualify can still apply for Apple Health or renew their coverage.

Changes for noncitizen adults (October 2026)

Since October 1, 2026, some adult noncitizens no longer qualify for Apple Health. This includes some people who are:

- asylees or refugees
- conditional entrants
- people whose deportation or removal has been withheld
- victims of trafficking
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitioners
- certain parolees

People affected were sent a notice by mail or email. If you lost coverage, you may still qualify for other options, and help is available. A fact sheet with answers and resources is available in 15 languages at hca.wa.gov/apple-health-non-citizens.

Work requirements (starting January 1, 2027)

Starting January 1, 2027, some adults on Apple Health for Adults will need to meet **at least one** of these, or qualify for an exemption, to keep coverage:

- have at least $580 in monthly household income (seasonal workers can average $580 a month over six months)
- go to school at least half-time
- work, take part in a work program or job training, volunteer, or go to school for a total of at least 80 hours a month

Not everyone has to meet the work requirements. To find out if they apply to you, take the free, anonymous work requirements screening survey.

Who does not have to meet the work requirements

You do not need to meet the work requirements if you are:

- pregnant, or within 12 months after giving birth
- under age 19
- a current or former foster youth under age 26
- American Indian or Alaska Native, or part of certain Tribal populations

- a parent, caretaker, or guardian of a child under age 14
- in a household that gets SNAP (food assistance) or TANF (cash assistance)
- a parent, caretaker, or guardian of a person with a disability
- entitled to Medicare Part A or B
- incarcerated, or within 90 days after release
- medically frail (see below)
- in treatment for an alcohol or substance use disorder
- a disabled veteran with a 100% total disability
- facing a short-term hardship

The "medically frail" exemption

The work requirements do not apply to you if a medical condition limits your ability to work. This includes:

- a substance use disorder (SUD)
- a disabling mental disorder
- a physical, intellectual, or developmental disability that significantly affects daily living

Through 2027, HCA will accept your own statement that you are medically frail, with no extra proof needed. Starting January 2028, you will need to meet verification requirements. Learn more at hca.wa.gov/medically-frail.

Renewals every six months (starting January 1, 2027)

Apple Health for Adults coverage periods will change from 12 months to 6 months, starting with your first renewal in 2027. American Indian and Alaska Native people are not affected by this change.

Retroactive coverage changes (starting January 1, 2027)

Retroactive coverage pays for care you received before you applied. It has covered up to three months before your application. Starting January 1, 2027, it will cover:

- one month for Apple Health for Adults (ages 19 to 64)
- two months for all other Apple Health programs

Learn more in HCA's retroactive coverage fact sheet (PDF).

Kids under 19 can stay covered

Children under 19 can keep their Apple Health coverage if they still meet their own eligibility requirements, even if their parents lose eligibility because of noncitizen status or the new work requirements.

If you're the parent of a young adult (19 or older) on Apple Health, help them get ready: make sure their contact information is up to date and that they watch for official notices from HCA.

What to do now

1. **Make sure your address and contact information are correct**, so you get notices about changes and renewals. Update them at hca.wa.gov/report-a-change.
2. **Watch your mail and text messages** for notices from HCA.
3. **Take the work requirements screening survey** to see whether you need to take action to get or keep coverage.

Learn more

- Changes coming to Apple Health: hca.wa.gov/hr1-changes
- Work requirements: hca.wa.gov/ah-work-req
- Work requirements and renewals fact sheet (PDF)
- Retroactive coverage fact sheet (PDF)
- Noncitizen changes and fact sheet in 15 languages: hca.wa.gov/apple-health-non-citizens
- Medically frail exemption: hca.wa.gov/medically-frail
- Update your contact information: hca.wa.gov/report-a-change