

Medicaid Work or Community Engagement¹

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the new Medicaid Work or Community Engagement requirement?

New federal rules² will affect some adults ages 19 to 64 who apply for or renew Medicaid. Starting January 1, 2027, individuals must show that they work or do other community engagement activities for at least 80 hours in each required month. These activities can include going to school, being in a job training program, or doing community service.

Who Needs to Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

You need to meet the work or community engagement requirement if you:

- Are age 19-64;
- Are part of the Medicaid expansion³ adult group, meaning you qualify for Medicaid based **only** on your income
- Are not exempt.

Who Does *Not* Need to Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

You **do not** have to meet the work or community engagement requirement if, at any point during that month, you are one of the following:

- Former foster youth under the age of 26;
- Member of a federally recognized tribe (certain American Indian or Alaska Native individuals);
- Parent, guardian, or caregiver of:
 - A child age 13 or younger; or
 - A person of any age with a disability;

¹ The information in this fact sheet is subject to change pending guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or changes in federal or state law.

² Commonly known as H.R.1, Public Law 119-21, or the Working Families Tax Cut Act.

³ The Medicaid expansion population includes people under 65 with incomes who qualify for Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion. This group includes adults who may not have qualified for Medicaid in the past and generally have incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level.

- Veteran with a total disability rating;
- Receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Social Security Retirement (SSR) due to a confirmed disability;
- Entitled to or enrolled in Medicare Part A or Part B;
- Have a serious or complex medical condition or are medically frail, including a disability, mental health condition, or substance use disorder;
- Meeting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work requirements;
- Member of a household meeting, and is not exempt from, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) work requirements;
- Enrolled in a drug, alcohol or mental health treatment program;
- An inmate of a public institution now or in the past 3 months; or
- Pregnant or in the 12-month postpartum period.

When Do I Need to Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

Starting January 1, 2027, unless you are exempt, you must work or complete community engagement activities for at least 80 hours in each required month:

- If you are **applying** for Medicaid, you must show you met the work or community engagement requirement in the **month before application**.
 - Example: You are applying for Medicaid in February 2027. You must show that you met the requirement in January 2027 to qualify.
- If you are **already enrolled**, you must show at each **renewal** that you met the work or community engagement requirement in at least three **months during the six-month period** between renewals.
 - Example: Your renewal is due in September 2027. Your last renewal was in March 2027. You must show that you met the requirement in any three of the six months from April through September 2027.

How Do I Know If I Have to Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

Kentucky Medicaid will tell you if this requirement applies to you when you apply for Medicaid or when you renew your coverage.

- **If applying:** Your information will be reviewed. You will be told if you must meet the work or community engagement requirement and what other information is needed.
- **If renewing:** Your current information will be used first to evaluate your eligibility. If more information is needed, you will be told what to provide.

Some people may be exempt from this requirement because of their situation. If you think this requirement should not apply to you based on your situation, you can ask to be exempt. For more information about who can be exempt and how to ask, see “How Do I Ask to be Exempt from the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?”

How Do I Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

You can meet the requirement in a few different ways. Individuals can:

- Completing at least 80 hours per month of:
 - Work,
 - Job training or a work program,
 - Volunteering or community service,
 - Going to school part-time,
 - Any combination of the activities above that adds up to 80 hours; or
- Going to school at least half-time, including high school, college, or career and technical education; or
- Earning \$580 a month, or if your work is seasonal, earning an average of \$580 over the last 6 months.

How Do I Report Work or Community Engagement Activities?

Kentucky Medicaid will first check available information to see whether you meet the work or community engagement requirement. If Kentucky Medicaid is unable to confirm that you meet or are exempt from the work or community engagement requirement, you will be required to provide documentation when you apply for Medicaid and when you renew your coverage. You may also need to report if your circumstances change.

You should report the following:

- Type of activity (work, school, job training or community service)
- Number of hours for that month
- The name of your employer, school, program or community service organization

You may need to show proof (verification) of your hours. Examples include:

- Pay stubs or a letter from your employer
- School schedule or attendance record
- Signed letter from a job training program or community service organization

Kentucky Medicaid will also accept the following forms as documentation:

- For community service, job training programs or school enrollment, the **MACE-100 Verification of Community Engagement Non-Wage Activity** form may be used to report activities. For employment/wage verification, the **PAFS-700 Verification of Employment and Wages** form should be used.

Can I Self-Report That I Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

In 2027, individuals applying for or renewing coverage will be able to self-attest that they are completing work or community engagement activities (or are exempt from the requirement) if Kentucky Medicaid is unable to confirm compliance based on available information. You can self-attest as part of the application and renewal process.

In 2028 and beyond, most individuals **will not be able to self-attest** and will be required to submit documentation showing they are completing work or community engagement activities (or are exempt from the requirement) if Kentucky Medicaid is unable to confirm compliance using available information.

- Note that individuals who qualify as Medically Frail (see below for more details) will be able to self-attest to being Medically Frail, and therefore exempt from the requirement, one time beginning 2028.
- New enrollees will also be able to self-attest one time beginning 2028.

How Do I Ask to be Exempt from the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

Existing information will first be checked to see if you have a situation that exempts you from meeting the work or community engagement requirement. You can also tell us when applying for Medicaid, renewing your coverage or reporting a change.

Medically Frail:

If you cannot work or cannot complete other activities due to a serious medical condition, you may be considered **medically frail**. If you are determined to be medically frail **and** your condition makes you unable to work or complete community engagement activities, you are exempt from the work or community engagement requirement. The medically frail exemption must be reverified every 12 months.

When available, health care claims for the past 12 months will be reviewed to see if an enrolled member has a condition that may make them medically frail. Some conditions include blindness, physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or substance use or

disabling mental health disorder. A list of conditions by diagnosis code will be available on the Kentucky Medicaid work or community engagement webpage. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

If information isn't available, your situation changes, or you are new to Medicaid, you can use the **MACE-200 Verification of a Medical Condition Excuse form** to request to be exempt. The form requires a signature from a licensed health care provider. You may also provide a signed letter from a licensed health care provider on their letterhead that says you are medically frail (note that this is an attestation, not a full assessment or Social Security disability determination).

Short-Term Hardship:

You may qualify for a **short-term** hardship if you have a **temporary** situation, that is one of the following:

- Inpatient care: receiving inpatient services in a hospital or other facility during the month required to meet the requirement
- Natural disaster: living in a county that is under a federally declared emergency or disaster during the month required to meet the requirement
- High unemployment: living in a county that exceeds the federal threshold during the month required to meet the requirement
- Travel for care: required to travel more than 25 miles from your home for more than 1 week or 5 business days to receive specialized medical treatment for you or your dependent during the month required to meet the requirement

If you cannot work or cannot complete other activities due to one of the situations above, you may be eligible for a short-term hardship exemption. A short-term hardship only applies to the month in which the hardship impacts you. For example, if you are currently enrolled and have a hardship during one of the three months you are required to meet the work or community engagement requirement, you may still need to show you met the requirement in the other two months.

Under some circumstances, your case will be automatically updated based on information already available, such as when a federal emergency is declared or the unemployment rate changes in your county. For short-term hardships due to receiving certain kinds of care or traveling far for care, Kentucky Medicaid must first try to verify these situations using available information before requesting additional information from you. When the state is

able to identify a short-term hardship exemption, an individual will be informed via a notice.

You can also use the **MACE-300 Verification of a Short-Term Hardship** form to report a temporary situation that may exempt you from the requirement.

What Happens If I Do *Not* Meet the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

If you are a current Medicaid member and you do not meet the requirement, you will get a letter and have 30 days to show that you participated in work or community engagement or that the rule does not apply to you. You will keep your Medicaid coverage during those 30 days. If you cannot show that you met, or are exempt from, the requirement during the 30-day period and you do not qualify for Medicaid another way, you may lose your coverage at the end of the month following the 30-day period.

What Role do Managed Care Organizations Play in Work or Community Engagement Requirements?

MCOs will help you understand work or community engagement requirements by providing information, answering questions, and reminding members to keep their contact information up to date. They share state-approved educational materials, include work or community engagement requirement information in communications, and help connect you with resources through kynect.

MCOs can explain qualifying activities, exemptions, and reporting requirements, but they do not make eligibility decisions. You should visit kynect.ky.gov or call the kynect helpline at 1-855-459-6328 for eligibility or reporting questions. MCOs may also help identify people who could qualify for an exemption and direct them to the appropriate state process.

Can I Appeal the Eligibility Decision Related to Meeting the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

Yes, applicants and members can appeal eligibility decisions related to meeting the work or community engagement requirement. Individuals who wish to appeal should follow the appeal instructions in the Notice of Eligibility that they receive. For more information about how to appeal, visit the [CHFS Appeals and Complaints Branch webpage](#) or call kynect at 1-855-459-6328.

What Are the Next Steps I Should Take If I Lose My Coverage?

If you qualify for Medicaid but do not meet the work or community engagement requirement, you can still shop for health plans on the Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange. However, you may not receive financial help, such as premium tax credits, to pay for a plan. To learn more, visit the [Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange website](#).

Additionally, you can apply for Medicaid again if you can show that you met the work or community engagement requirement for **one month** before applying or have a reason why you do not have to meet the requirement. To learn more, visit the [Kentucky Medicaid and KCHIP Program webpage](#).

Where Is There More Information About the Work or Community Engagement Requirement?

More information about the work or community engagement requirement may be found on the [Medicaid Changes \(Enacted July 2025\)](#) webpage.

If you have a question, you can:

- Logging into the [Self-Service Portal](#)
- Calling kynect at 1-855-459-6328 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET
- Calling the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) at 1-855-306-8959 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- [Search for a kynector near you](#) to get help from a kynector
- [Find a DCBS office location](#) to get help in person