



# MEDICAID EXPANSION WORK REQUIREMENTS

Published April 2026

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Top Tips

#### **1. Do you have Medicaid expansion health insurance?**

Find out if you are on Medicaid Expansion coverage by calling DHHS at [\(855\) 632-7633](tel:(855)632-7633).

#### **2. Work requirements are starting for Medicaid expansion only.**

If you have Medicaid Expansion, you may need to meet new work requirements starting May 1, 2026. More details below about how to meet the requirements.

#### **3. Submit any requested information to DHHS by the deadline.**

There are many reasons why you may not need to meet the requirements (called "exemptions") - filling out a declaration form as completely as possible will help DHHS know whether you meet the requirements or have an exemption.

#### **4. If you lose coverage or are denied coverage, reach out for help.**

See contact information at the end of this form.

### Does this apply to me?

#### **Q: Who do the work requirements apply to?**

A: Work requirements only apply to individuals enrolled in Medicaid expansion.

#### **Q: What is Medicaid expansion?**

A: Medicaid expansion is a specific category of Medicaid that provides health coverage to 70,000 Nebraskans between the ages of 19-64 who have income up to 138% of the federal poverty level and do not qualify for any other category of Medicaid. The amount of income a person can have and be eligible for Medicaid expansion depends on the size of the household. In 2026, the income limit is about \$22,000/year for an individual.

#### **Q: Do the work requirements apply to other Medicaid enrollees not in the expansion category?**

A: No. The work requirements only apply to those eligible for Medicaid under the Medicaid expansion category.

#### **Q: What are examples of other categories of Medicaid that do not have to meet the work requirements?**

A: There are many different categories of Medicaid. Some categories are based on disability, pregnancy, or being a very low-income parent/caretaker. However, it is still possible for you to have Medicaid expansion coverage even if you have a disability, are pregnant, or are a parent/caretaker, so it is important to know what category of Medicaid coverage you actually have.

#### **Q: How do I know if I am in the Medicaid expansion category?**

A: Many people do not know what category of Medicaid coverage they have. The only way to know for sure whether you are in the Medicaid expansion category and are subject to the work requirements is to call DHHS. At this time, there is no way to check to see whether you have expansion coverage in your online portal or on Medicaid notices. Call DHHS at [\(855\) 632-7633](tel:(855)632-7633).

**Q: Does everyone with Medicaid expansion have to meet the work requirements?**

A: No. You may not have to meet the work requirements if you are:

- Pregnant, under the age of 26 and aged out of foster care, a member of a federally recognized Native American tribe, an Urban Indian, a California Indian, or people who receive services through the Indian Health Service (IHS), a parent/guardian of a child under 14 or a person with disabilities, are medically frail (including blindness or disability, substance use disorder, disabling mental health conditions, serious or complex health conditions, or have a serious physical, intellectual, or developmental disability), are a veteran with a total disability rating, some people in households that get supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), in a qualified drug or alcohol treatment program, or currently incarcerated or were incarcerated within the last 90 days.
- Other exemptions, sometimes called “short-term hardship exemptions” include situations like being hospitalized or in a nursing facility, traveling outside of your county for health care for yourself or a dependent, or being in a county with high unemployment or a federal emergency. Other exemptions also apply.

**Q: What can I do to help make sure DHHS knows enough about me to see if any exemptions apply?**

A: The best way to make sure DHHS has all the information about any exemption that could apply to you is to fill out all optional questions on your application or renewal declaration forms. Make sure DHHS knows about any circumstance that may exempt you from the work requirements.

**Q: How do I meet requirements?**

A: If you must meet the work requirements, you generally must complete at least 80 hours of qualifying activities in any qualifying month (but not every month, see more details below). This may include full or part-time work, self-employment, a work program, school (at least half-time), or volunteering, among other things. Alternatively, if you have income of at least \$580 in any qualifying month, you are deemed to have met the work requirements regardless of how many hours you worked.

**When do work requirements start?**

**Q: When do new applicants have to start meeting work requirements?**

A: Starting May 1, applicants who would qualify for the Medicaid expansion category must meet or prove an exemption to work requirements in a qualifying month.

**Q: When do existing enrollees have to start meeting work requirements?**

A: Starting May 1, DHHS will begin to assess current Medicaid expansion enrollees with renewals due on or after July 31, 2026 to see if they meet or can prove an exemption to work requirements in any qualifying month. During this time, DHHS may contact you for more information.

**Q: What is a qualifying month?**

A: See the table below. A qualifying month can be different depending on whether you are a new applicant or completing your renewal. It can also be different depending on whether you are meeting the requirements or qualify for certain types of exemptions (see above for descriptions of “mandatory” and “short-term hardship” exemptions).

	Activities & Exemptions	Starting Date	Qualifying Months
New applicants	Qualifying activities or short-term hardship exemptions	May 1, 2026	Month before month of application Example: If applying in May 2026, need qualifying activities or short-term hardship in April
	Other exemptions (not short-term hardship)	May 1, 2026	Month of application or the month before Example: If applying in May 2026, exemption in April or May
Enrollees	Any activities or exemptions	For Medicaid renewals due on or after July 31, 2026, DHHS will start to check your case on May 1, 2026	Any one month in your renewal period. In 2026, renewals are usually every 12 months (i.e., if your renewal is due July 31, 2026: DHHS will be checking whether you have any one month with qualifying activities or an exemption since your last renewal which was probably July 31, 2025). Starting in 2027, renewals will be every 6 months.

## Why are work requirements happening?

### Q: Why are there now Medicaid expansion work requirements?

A: Under a new law passed by Congress and signed by President Trump in the summer of 2025, known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill," Nebraska Medicaid expansion enrollees will have to meet work requirements or prove an exemption to get coverage. Governor Pillen and Nebraska DHHS are starting these requirements 8 months early.

## Where can I go for help?

### Q: Where can I get more information?

- Appleseed Website: <https://neappleseed.org/medicaidwr>
- Nebraska Medicaid Website: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/WorkRequirements.aspx>

### Q: Where do I get local help?

- For general information, referrals and/or help navigating questions or issues with the process contact Nebraska Appleseed Community Assistance Line [neappleseed.org/gethelp](https://neappleseed.org/gethelp).
- For free assistance with Medicaid applications or existing coverage contact an assister at a local community health center: <https://howtogetcare.org/find-a-navigator/>
- For legal assistance appealing an eligibility determination:
  - Legal Aid of Nebraska [legalaidofnebraska.org](https://legalaidofnebraska.org) or 1-877-250-2016
  - [nefindalawyer.com](https://nefindalawyer.com)
  - [ne.freelegalanswers.org](https://ne.freelegalanswers.org)

**\*The guidance for the work requirements is incomplete. Please check the resource list above frequently to make sure this information is still accurate.**

**\*The information provided in this document is not legal advice. All content is for general informational purposes only.**