Health care coverage in Washington State: Non-citizen eligibility

Read this only if you live in the state of Washington.
You can find all the fact sheets we link to here at WashingtonLawHelp.org.

Should I read this?

Read this to learn about medical programs available to non-citizens living in Washington State.

I am not a U.S. citizen. Am I eligible for Washington Apple Health?

Possibly. Washington Apple Health includes different programs, such as Medicaid and some state-funded programs. Each program has its own rules about who may be eligible.

Non-emergency Medicaid is the biggest Washington Apple Health program. It has the most restrictions on eligibility. Non-citizens must be in one of these “qualified” immigration statuses to be eligible for non-emergency Medicaid:

- Persons granted asylum
- Refugees
- Persons granted withholding of deportation or removal
- Cuban and Haitian Entrants
- Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- Conditional Entrants
- Certain survivors of domestic violence and their children and/or parents
- Certain survivors of trafficking and their family members

Note: Some qualified immigrants are not eligible for non-emergency Medicaid until they have had status for five years. This does not apply to
refugees, persons granted asylum, and other humanitarian entrants. There are also special exceptions for active duty military, veterans, and their families.

I have legal permission to be in the U.S., but I am not in a “qualified” status. Am I eligible for any Washington Apple Health programs?

Maybe. You may be eligible for:

- Coverage for immigrants who are over age 65 or disabled and very low income
- Coverage that is available to all non-citizens, regardless of immigration status, including:
  - Emergency Medicaid
  - Washington Apple Health for children (up to age 19)
  - Washington Apple Health for pregnant persons
  - COVID-19 vaccines, testing and treatment
  - Dialysis, cancer treatment, and treatment for benign life-threatening tumors
  - Long-term care (this has a waitlist)
- Qualified Health Plans. These are private insurance plans that you can apply for through Washington State’s Healthplanfinder. You may be able to get help paying for premiums and other costs through a tax credit or subsidies. Visit wahealthplanfinder.org to learn more.

You can also get care for a reduced fee at a community clinic, or buy private health insurance on your own.

I do not have legal permission to be in the U.S. Am I eligible for any programs?

Maybe. You may be eligible for:

- Emergency Medicaid
- Washington Apple Health for children (up to age 19)
• Washington Apple Health for pregnant persons

• COVID-19 vaccines, testing and treatment

• Dialysis, cancer treatment, and treatment for benign life-threatening tumors

• Long-term care (this has a waitlist)

You can also get care for a reduced fee at a community clinic, or buy private health insurance on your own.

 Read Help with Medical Bills for Immigrants without Legal Status to learn more.

My children do not have legal status in the U.S. Are they eligible for any medical coverage?

Yes. All children under age 19 in Washington State who meet other requirements (like being low income) can get Washington Apple Health. Children do not need to have legal immigration status to be eligible.

I do not have legal permission to be in the U.S. Can I use Healthplanfinder?

Yes. You can apply on Healthplanfinder to find out if you are eligible for any programs. Visit wahealthplanfinder.org to learn more.

Will the information on my application be shared with immigration enforcement officials?

No. It can only be used to decide if you are eligible for benefits. The law requires state agencies and people who help with medical applications to keep your information private. To learn more, read bit.ly/3MVdQjY.

You should always be truthful on your application and other eligibility forms. Ask for help if you are not sure what information the form is asking for.

You should also quickly report important changes, such as:

• changes to your income or the income of other family members in the home

• when a family member moves in or out of the home
Will I have to provide a social security number?

It depends. Both the on-line and paper application ask you for your social security number. If you do not have one, you can still fill out the application. Some programs do not require a social security number. You will have a chance to give other proof that you are eligible.

You may have to give other proof of income, like paystubs, for family members who do not have a valid social security number. The state may need this information to decide what benefits you or relatives may be eligible for.

- If you are eligible for a social security number and you want one, DSHS will help you apply for one.

I do not want medical coverage for myself. Can I apply just for my children?

Yes. You can apply just for your children or other family members.

If you choose not to apply for coverage for yourself, you will not have to give any information about your own immigration status. You will have to give other information, such as proof of household income.

I am on Washington Apple Health. Will that hurt my immigration case?

Most medical benefits are not counted in the “public charge” test and will not hurt your immigration case. The only exception is long-term care in an institution (like a nursing home) that is paid for by Medicaid or another government program. For more information, read Public Charge: What You Need to Know and talk to a lawyer. Contact info is below.

I am applying to become a U.S. citizen. Will getting medical assistance hurt me?

No. There is no public charge test when you are applying for citizenship. Getting medical assistance or other public benefits will not keep you from becoming a U.S. citizen.

- Read Public Charge: What You Need to Know to learn more.
Get Legal Help

- **Apply online** with CLEAR*Online - nwjustice.org/apply-online

- **Facing a legal issue in King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call 2-1-1 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) weekdays 8:00 am - 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.

- **Facing a legal issue outside of King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm or apply online at nwjustice.org/apply-online.

- **Facing Eviction**? Call 1-855-657-8387.

- **Facing Foreclosure**? Call 1-800-606-4819.

- **Seniors (age 60 and over)** with a legal issue outside of King County can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111.

*Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers* can call any of these numbers using the relay service of your choice.

*Interpreters provided.*

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