

Immigration Status and Eligibility for Medicaid Expansion

NCMEDICAID
FOR MORE PEOPLE

NC Medicaid now covers people ages 19 through 64 with higher incomes. You may be able to get health care coverage through Medicaid even if you did not qualify before. Medicaid pays for doctor visits, yearly check-ups, emergency care, dental care, mental health and more – at little or no cost to you.

As of December 1, 2023, most people can get health care coverage through NC Medicaid if:

- **You live in North Carolina**
- **You are ages 19 through 64**
- **You are a citizen ([some non-U.S. citizens](#) can also get health care coverage through Medicaid).**
- And if your **household monthly income** falls within the chart below:

Household Size	2025 Monthly Income*
Single Adults	\$1,800 or less
Family of 2	\$2,433 or less
Family of 3	\$3,065 or less
Family of 4	\$3,698 or less
Family of 5	\$4,340 or less

**Income limits are updated annually.*

Some non-U.S. citizens can get health coverage through Medicaid. To be eligible you must live in North Carolina and be a non-citizen with qualified immigration status. Many people in this category must wait five years before they can apply for Medicaid (although there are some exceptions, as explained below).

Qualified immigration status includes:

- Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR/Green Card Holder)
- Asylees
- Refugees
- Cuban/Haitian entrants
- Paroled into the U.S. for at least one year
- Conditional entrant granted before 1980
- Battered non-citizens, spouses, children or parents ("Battered" means someone who has experienced abuse from a family member.)
- Victims of trafficking and their spouse, child, sibling or parent or individuals with a pending application for a victim of trafficking visa
- Granted withholding of deportation (a specific situation like asylum)
- Noncitizen members of a federally recognized Indian tribe or American Indian born in Canada
- Citizens of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau who are living in one of the U.S. states or territories (referred to as Compact of Free Association or COFA migrants)

Some of the non-U.S. citizens on the list above do NOT have to wait 5 years to be eligible for Medicaid, including pregnant women, children under the age of 19, asylees, refugees, victims of trafficking, Cuban-Haitian Entrants, and people who now have LPR status and who were previously asylees, refugees, victims of trafficking, or Cuban-Haitian entrants. Also, all non-citizens from the list above who are connected to the military such as veterans, active-duty military (and their spouses and children) do not have to wait five years for Medicaid eligibility. All other non-citizens in the list above must wait five years from the time of receiving their qualified immigration status to be eligible for Medicaid.

If none of the qualified immigration statuses listed above apply to you:

If you are not a U.S. citizen or part of these immigration categories, but you would otherwise qualify for NC Medicaid, you may still apply to get emergency coverage that includes:

- **Payment for the costs of childbirth.** Get coverage for medical costs during labor and delivery. You can apply up to three months after birth.
- **Payment for emergency services.** Get coverage for the medical costs of treating an emergency, like a heart attack, stroke, or serious accident. You can apply up to three months after the emergency.

To get this emergency coverage, apply for NC Medicaid as normal — but you do not need to show documentation or answer questions about your immigration status.

Can my information be shared for immigration enforcement?

Medicaid does not report any information to law enforcement or Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Your information will be kept private and confidential. This includes information for your family members with different immigration statuses. Your information cannot be used for immigration enforcement purposes.

You only need to provide immigration status or Social Security numbers for family members who are applying for coverage. For instance, a parent who is not an eligible immigrant could apply on behalf of a child who is eligible. The parent would not need to provide their own immigration status. For more information on health insurance eligibility for immigrants, [read this brochure from the NC Justice Center](#).

Is applying or receiving Medicaid considered public charge?

No. Applying for or receiving Medicaid does not make someone a "public charge". It will not affect your immigration status or your immigration application. Only three benefits are considered negatively if you are submitting an immigration application: Supplementary Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid only if used for long-term hospitalization or nursing home care.

All other benefit and health programs are safe to use and have no impact on any immigration application you file. For more information on public charge, read this [informational flyer from the NC Justice Center](#).

Are undocumented immigrants eligible for Medicaid?

Undocumented immigrants are eligible for emergency Medicaid. However, undocumented immigrants are not eligible to enroll in federally funded health coverage including full Medicaid, CHIP, or Medicare, or to purchase coverage through the Health Care Marketplace (ACA). Undocumented immigrants are only potentially eligible for emergency Medicaid or labor and delivery services.

What are emergency Medicaid services and who is eligible?

Everyone is potentially eligible for emergency Medicaid if they meet the income and North Carolina state residence eligibility requirements (provide proof they live in North Carolina, such as photo ID with your address, a utility bill, a lease or documentation of employment). Undocumented non-U.S. citizens who do not qualify for full health coverage under Medicaid may be able to get coverage for emergency medical services. North Carolina has a state emergency medical review contractor who determines if the incident is a medical emergency and determines the dates that Medicaid could cover. The coverage is limited to certain dates, beginning with the date the medical emergency occurs and ending with the date the medical emergency is stabilized. For example, when someone is in a car accident and are taken to the ER or women who give birth and do not have insurance.

Who is eligible for Medicaid in a mixed immigration status household?

All applicants must meet state residence and income requirements. Parents can apply for themselves and/or their children.

- Parents who do not have a valid immigration status are eligible for emergency services only.
- Their children may be eligible for full Medicaid if they have a qualified immigration status. This is true even if their parents do not have qualified immigration status.

If only one family member is applying for insurance or assistance, only the applicant(s) must provide immigration status information or their social security number. Other family members who are not applying do not have to provide immigration information.

What information do undocumented parents have to provide if they have children who are eligible for Medicaid?

Parent(s) who apply for their eligible children need to give the names of all members in their household, their mailing address, any verification of any income, and proof of state residency from the parent(s) to determine the child's eligibility along with a signed application. Parents do not need to give immigration information or a social security

number for themselves if they are not applying for Medicaid for themselves. Medicaid does not report any information to law enforcement or ICE.

Can people with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) apply for Medicaid?

No, people with TPS cannot apply for full health coverage through Medicaid. However, they may be eligible for emergency Medicaid if they meet the income and North Carolina state residence eligibility requirements. Pregnant women and children under 19 with TPS are eligible to apply for Medicaid if they meet all other eligibility requirements and are not subject to the five-year wait period. People with TPS can apply for coverage and help paying for insurance under the Health Care Marketplace (ACA).

Can Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients get Medicaid?

No. Under rules issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), people with [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#) status are not considered lawfully present for purposes of health coverage eligibility. People with DACA are eligible for emergency Medicaid services when needed.

Are farmworkers with an H-2A visa eligible for Medicaid?

Farmworkers with a lawfully present status are potentially eligible if they are a pregnant woman or child under age 19. All other individuals are eligible to receive emergency Medicaid services. People with an H-2A visa can apply for coverage and help paying for insurance under the Health Care Marketplace.

Are nonimmigrant visa holders (including student, tourist, work, U visas and many more) eligible for Medicaid?

They are potentially eligible and exempt from the five-year bar if they are a pregnant woman or child under age 19. Nonpregnant adults who are 19 and older are only eligible for emergency Medicaid services. People applying only for emergency services are not required to provide documentation of immigration status. People with nonimmigrant visas who are residents of North Carolina can apply for coverage and help paying for insurance under the Health Care Marketplace.

Need help? Schedule a free enrollment appointment with an expert Navigator. Appointments can be scheduled online at ncnavigator.net/schedule-online or by phone at 1-855-733-3711. Navigators can help with both Health Care Marketplace and Medicaid applications, and services are available in 20+ languages.

For more information, visit
Medicaid.nc.gov/immigration.

