

New Medicaid community engagement requirements begin in 2027

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Starting January 1, 2027, new federal community engagement/work requirements will apply to certain Virginia Medicaid Expansion members and may affect their eligibility for coverage. For some Medicaid members, these changes may affect their eligibility or require additional documentation to maintain their Medicaid benefits. (dmas.virginia.gov)

Medicaid work requirement FAQ (Virginia)

Q. What's changing:

A. Starting January 1, 2027, a new federal law requires some adults enrolled in Virginia Medicaid Expansion coverage to meet a work/community engagement requirement (unless exempt) to qualify for or keep their health coverage. (dmas.virginia.gov)

Q. Who will be affected, and what are the new requirements?

A. These requirements apply to certain adults ages 19 to 64 enrolled in Virginia Medicaid Expansion (generally up to 138% FPL) who are not otherwise exempt. Members who are subject to the requirement must meet 80 hours per month through qualifying activities, including:

- Working, volunteering, or participating in work training/education programs.
- Having a monthly income at least equal to 80 hours/month at the federal minimum wage (\$7.25/hour). (dmas.virginia.gov)

Q. How will members be contacted?

A. Virginia Medicaid/DMAS will provide advance notice to impacted members. DMAS indicates Medicaid Expansion members are expected to receive an informational notice by the end of September 2026 about the new requirement and how to meet it or claim an exemption.

To make verification easier, Virginia Medicaid plans to use reliable information the state already has (data sources) when possible, so some members may not need to take additional action. For members whose eligibility cannot be determined using data sources, a manual process will be required, and Medicaid will send letters when the member needs to take action or provide information.

Members should keep their contact information up to date with Medicaid so they do not miss these important updates or requests for information.

Q. Is anyone exempt from these changes?

A. Yes. DMAS lists exemptions that include (not a complete list): (dmas.virginia.gov)

- Former foster care youth through age 25
- Members of federally recognized tribes
- Caregivers (parent/guardian/caretaker/relative/family caregiver) of a dependent child age 13 or younger, or a person with a disability
- Disabled veterans (including veterans with a 100% disability rating)
- Medically frail/special medical needs (including certain serious/complex medical conditions, disabling mental disorders, substance use disorders, and other qualifying impairments)
- Justice-involved people (incarcerated or released within the prior three months)
- Pregnant and postpartum people (postpartum protection described by DMAS as within 12 months after pregnancy ends)

Additional temporary exemptions may apply for short-term hardship or certain extenuating circumstances, such as:

- Members receiving care in hospitals, nursing facilities, psychiatric facilities, or other intensive care settings.
- Members living in a federally declared disaster area.
- Members living in counties with high unemployment (as defined/approved under the federal framework).
- Members or dependents who must travel away from home for medically necessary care for an extended period.

Q. What can be done now?

- **A.** Members should verify and/or update their mailing address, phone number, and email address with Virginia Medicaid using one of these methods:
- Online: <https://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov/>
- By phone: Call Cover Virginia at **855-242-8282 (TTY: 888-221-1590)**
- Local DSS: Call or visit your local Department of Social Services (DSS) <https://coverva.dmas.virginia.gov/>.

Q. How can care providers help?

- Remind members that these changes will not begin until January 1, 2027.
- Encourage members to keep their contact information up to date with Virginia Medicaid, so they don't miss notices.

For further questions, please refer to Virginia DMAS information on the federal work requirements and member resources at dmas.virginia.gov or contact Cover VA at **855-242-8282**.