



# New Medicaid eligibility rule

## **What has changed?**

The U.S. Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) requires all individuals applying or recertifying for certain Medicaid-funded programs – who state that they are U.S. citizens – to prove their citizenship by providing specified documents.

## **When does this change go into effect?**

Oregon will begin implementing this new requirement Sept. 1, 2006.





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**Are all Medicaid programs affected by the DRA?**

No. Only those Medicaid programs that require recipients to be citizens are affected.

**Does the new law change who is eligible to receive Medicaid benefits?**

No. What has changed are the processes and documents required to prove citizenship.





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**Are there any exemptions to the requirement to prove citizenship?**

People already eligible for Medicare or Supplemental Security Income have already documented their citizenship and will not be asked for further proof.

**Are any other exemptions being considered?**

Oregon has joined with other states in suggesting additional exemptions. The federal response is not expected for several months.



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**Does the new law affect non-citizens?**

No. Only citizens are affected.

**Do non-citizens need to provide documents?**

Yes. Non-citizens will be asked to show proof of legal immigration status, as always has been required.

**What about people who are not citizens and do not have legal immigration status?**

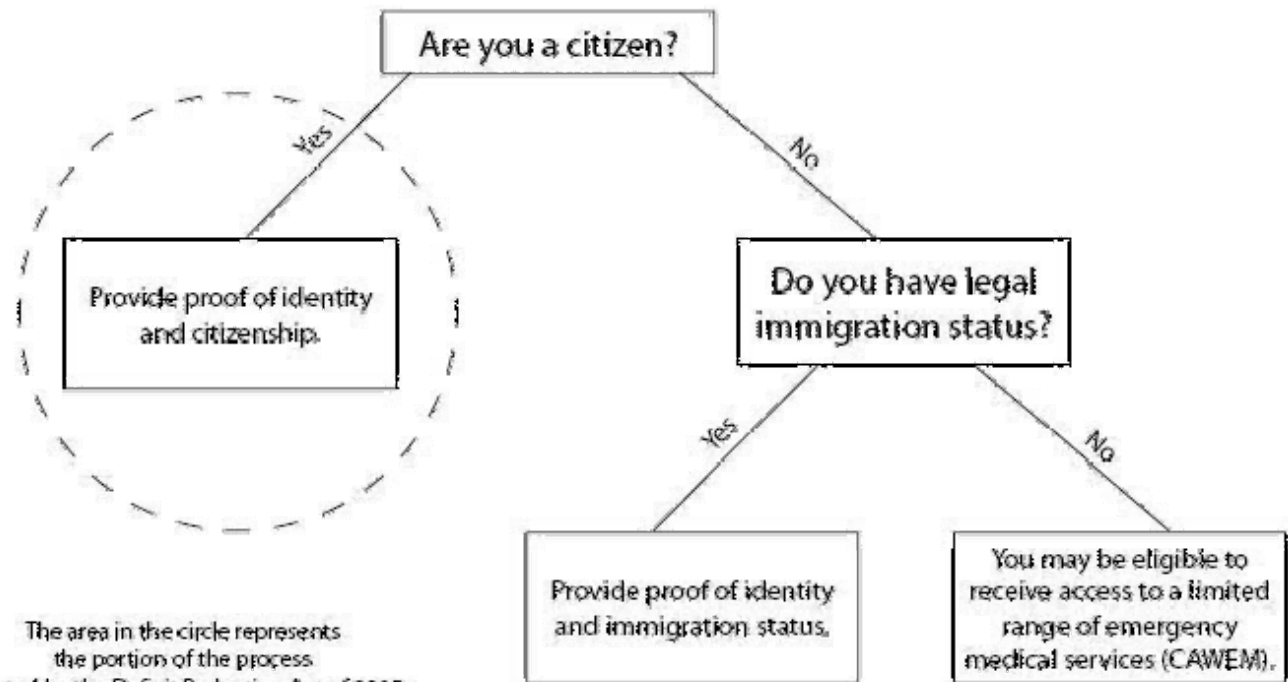
The new law does not affect the Citizen/Alien Waived Emergency Medical program (CAWEM), which delivers emergency-only medical services to non-citizens.





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## Medicaid eligibility flow chart



The area in the circle represents the portion of the process affected by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. All other steps of the application process remain unchanged. Individuals affected by the DRA are those who state they are citizens.



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### **How many Oregonians receive Medicaid services?**

More than 500,000 Oregonians receive assistance through Medicaid-funded programs. The largest categories of Medicaid recipients are:

- Persons on the Oregon Health Plan;
- Seniors and people with disabilities in long-term care; and
- Persons using family planning services through county health departments and other providers.

Approximately 43,000 individuals apply for Oregon Health Plan assistance each year.





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**How many people in Oregon may be unable to prove their citizenship?**

DHS estimates that as many as 3,000 Medicaid-eligible recipients in Oregon may not be able to find and provide proof of citizenship, including:

- People who are physically disabled;
- People who experience mental illness;
- Homeless individuals;
- Infants and children in foster care; and
- Others who may simply lack the \$15-\$20 needed to obtain embossed copies of their birth certificates from other states.



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### **Will DHS help these people?**

DHS will conduct one-on-one checks against Oregon's vital records for individuals born in Oregon. Oregon's birth records, which go back to 1903, are available electronically from 1920. For people born out-of-state, DHS will provide contact information and, under specified hardship conditions, will provide financial assistance to help individuals purchase embossed birth certificates.





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**Do people have any kind of grace period for proving their citizenship?**

People applying for Medicaid for the first time will be expected to produce the required documents before receiving benefits.

People who are re-enrolling will be given what the federal government terms “a reasonable opportunity,” usually 45 to 90 days, to produce documents before losing benefits.



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### **What kinds of documents are acceptable for proving citizenship and identity?**

Documents that prove both citizenship and identity include passports, certificates of naturalization and certificates of U.S. citizenship.

### **What kinds of documents are acceptable for proving citizenship?**

Documents that prove citizenship, but not identity, include birth certificates, hospital records, official U.S. military records, and certain medical, insurance and nursing-facility admission records that are at least five years old.





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### **What kinds of documents are acceptable for proving identity?**

Documents that prove identity include a driver license or DMV-issued identification card, U.S. military I.D. card, or a school I.D. card that includes a photo.





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### **Will DHS require original documents?**

The federal government requires original documents. If an applicant does not want to part with an original document, he or she may take it to a local DHS office to be recorded and forwarded to eligibility workers. Any original documents sent in the mail will be copied and returned to the sender.





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**How many ineligible non-citizens are receiving Medicaid benefits in Oregon?**

Based on federal estimates at the national level, as many as 350 people in Oregon could be receiving benefits illegally.

**How much will it cost Oregon to implement this new law?**

DHS will track both the start-up and on-going expenses of implementing this new law. The states expect the federal government to provide 50 percent match for administrative expenses.





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### **Where can people get more information?**

For questions about self-sufficiency programs, call Karen House at 503-945-6254.

For questions about programs serving seniors and people with disabilities, call Genevieve Sundet at 503-945-5990.

For questions about the Family Planning (FPEP) program, call Rian Frachele at 971-673-0364.

DHS clients may call the Client Advisory Services Unit toll-free at 1-800-273-0557.

You also may check the DHS Web site at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/citizen-medicaid.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/citizen-medicaid.shtml).

