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What you need to know about changes to the Oregon Health Plan

Audience: Education Agency Administrators and School Board Members

In Oregon, 1.4 million people rely on the Oregon Health Plan (OHP), our state Medicaid program, for health coverage. OHP currently covers more than half of all children in our state and high percentages of kids in rural areas. Based on what we know today, new federal rules (called House Resolution 1, or HR1, and also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act or the Working Families Tax Cut Act) will move Oregon away from the protections we've built to keep health care within reach. In the face of these federal shifts, Oregon is planning ahead, communicating openly, and doing everything possible to protect access to care. Our goals are to keep eligible people covered and make health care accessible for everyone, regardless of income.

The School-based Health Services (SBHS) Medicaid program allows education agencies to receive Medicaid reimbursement for health services provided to students and activities related to the administration of health services, such as coordination of care and assistance with OHP enrollment. Oregon Health Authority (OHA) collaborates with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to administer this program. Changes to OHP based on HR1 do not directly impact this program or the ability of education agencies to bill Medicaid for eligible services. We recently expanded the services eligible for reimbursement and the providers that can provide eligible services. In addition, OHA received federal grant funds to implement SBHS Medicaid program expansion, which includes supporting education agencies to participate in Medicaid billing. School Medicaid billing continues to be a potential source of resources for education agencies and we encourage participation.

School-based Health Centers (SBHCs) are another important access point for students across the state. State certified SBHCs must offer both medical and behavioral health services to students, regardless of their ability to pay. SBHCs are operated by safety net providers, such as Federally Qualified Health Centers and Community Mental Health Programs. These health care providers will be directly impacted by HR1, which may in turn affect their ability to sustain operations in the long term. At the same time, demand for care at these SBHC clinics may increase if students lose access to other providers due to changes to their insurance status. OHA will be monitoring how changes to the Medicaid program may impact SBHC-sponsoring entities and the ability of students to access SBHC services.

Currently, OHP-enrolled children are continuously covered until their 6th birthday. After their 6th birthday, enrolled members are covered for two years at a time regardless of age, without the need to renew. Starting in late 2027, it will be necessary for children to renew every year, and many adults will need to renew every 6 months. This may cause a disruption in enrollment, and education agencies will need to ensure enrollment when billing Medicaid.

Starting in 2027, some adults ages 19 to 64 will also need to meet work or activity rules when they apply or renew to qualify for health coverage for themselves. These rules will not affect coverage for children and youth under age 19. People can also be exempt for many reasons, including taking care of a child under 14 years old, or taking care of someone who has a serious health condition or disability (of any age). People subject to work or activity rules who are enrolled in high school or GED programs, or higher education at least half time will also meet the rules.

Federal rules require additional changes to coverage for certain non-citizens. In Oregon, people can qualify for full OHP benefits regardless of immigration status through a category of OHP called “Healthier Oregon,” which for children is also known as “Cover All Kids.” Federal changes require that Healthier Oregon members shift from enrollment with a coordinated care organization (CCO) to OHP Open Card by January 1, 2027. Open Card (also known as fee-for-service or FFS) covers the same OHP benefits, but the network of health care providers may be different.

What you can do

- Spread the word! Use social graphics and content from OHA to encourage OHP members to keep their contact information updated so we can reach them: <https://OHP.Oregon.gov/Toolkit>. Additional resources will be added in August and September.
- Tell us how federal changes are impacting your community and what you need from OHA to navigate these changes at feedback@odhsoha.oregon.gov.
- Stay informed about the opportunities for training and technical assistance related to the [School-Based Health Services Medicaid program](#).

How to stay informed

In the meantime, if people have questions or are looking to stay informed, they can:

- Visit the OHP changes web page: OHP.Oregon.gov/HR1
- If people need help with a renewal or have questions, they can get help at an Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) office (<https://ODHSoffices.Oregon.gov>), call the ONE Customer Service Center at 1-800-699-9075, or visit <https://Benefits.Oregon.gov>. People can also find community partners in their local area that can help at <https://OregonHealthCare.gov/GetHelp>.
- Attend OHA’s [Oregon Health Update office hours](#)
- Subscribe to OHA’s newsletter tinyurl.com/OHAnewsletter
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