

Oregon's 2022-2027 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver and the Future of OHP

What is a Medicaid waiver?

Medicaid is a state and federal program. A state must apply for a Medicaid waiver when it wants to make changes from normal federal guidelines. The Oregon Health Plan (OHP), Oregon's Medicaid program, delivers health care to people who have low incomes. A state can ask to waive certain regulations for greater flexibility around the following and more:

- Who is eligible for Medicaid
- What benefits they receive
- How health care is delivered to Medicaid members

The purpose of the waiver renewal (known as the [1115 Demonstration](#)) is to transform our state's Medicaid program to better serve our members. On September 28, 2022, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services provided Oregon final decisions on allowed changes to the Oregon Health Plan. Most changes will begin in 2024, some will begin in 2023.

Goals of the 2022 – 2027 Waiver

Addressing health equity is the primary focus of Oregon's waiver. It will seek to build on Oregon's history of innovation in health care, and make progress towards our main goals:

- Creating a more equitable, culturally- and linguistically-responsive health care system
- Ensuring people can maintain their health coverage
- Improving health outcomes by addressing social needs that impact health
- Ensuring smart, flexible spending for health equity

What's Changing in the 2022 – 2027 Waiver

Enrollment

Continuous OHP enrollment for kids, from birth until their sixth birthday. This means kids will have health care coverage until they turn six and can keep seeing the same health care providers for longer, which results in better health outcomes.

Two-year continuous OHP enrollment for people age six and up even if their eligibility status changes. Many people who lose OHP health insurance are only ineligible for a short time and then rejoin OHP. This "on and off" OHP results in poorer health outcomes.

What this means for OHP members

OHP members will get to stay covered longer. Right now, members need to re-enroll every year, and they lose coverage if something changes in their eligibility (like a change in income). In the new waiver, members won't have to re-enroll as often, and temporary changes in eligibility won't make them lose OHP.

Social Needs

Services will be provided for individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet. When people go through major life transitions, like losing housing or being impacted by

extreme weather, they often lose access to their health care providers, leading to worse health outcomes.

To help members keep their coverage, stay in touch with their health care providers, and stay healthy, Oregon wants to provide social supports to members as they experience these types of events in a package of services known as health-related social needs.

Depending on the nature of the transition, parts of the health-related social needs package may include services related to:

Housing

Housing supports may include one or more of the following components:

- Rental assistance or temporary housing (e.g., rental payments, deposits, utility assistance) for up to 6 months
- Home modifications (e.g., ramps, handrails, environmental remediation)
- Pre-tenancy and tenancy support services (e.g., housing application, moving support, eviction prevention)
- Housing-focused navigation and/or case manager

Food assistance

Nutrition supports may include one or more of the following components:

- Links to community-based food resources (e.g., application support for SNAP and WIC)
- Nutrition and cooking education
- Fruit and vegetable prescriptions (for up to 6 months, also known as VeggieRX) and healthy food boxes/meals
- Medically tailored meal delivery

Protection from climate events

Supports may include one or more of the following components:

- Payment for devices that maintain healthy temperatures and clean air, including air conditioners, heaters, air filters and generators to operate devices when power outages occur

Who may be eligible for health-related social needs services

The groups who may be eligible for these services under the waiver are as follows:

- Youth with special health care needs ages 19 - 26
- Youth who are child welfare involved, including leaving foster care at age 18
- People who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness
- Older adults who have both Medicaid and Medicare health insurance
- People being released from custody
- People at risk of extreme weather events due to climate change

What this means for OHP members

OHP members who are facing life certain life challenges will have housing and nutrition services available to them to stay healthy at times in their lives when they are experiencing a greater need.

For more information on the Oregon 2022-2027 1115 Medicaid Waiver, visit:

oregon.gov/1115waiverrenewal