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How to Apply for Medicaid: Important COVID-19 Information

As of June 26, 2020

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) is working to help our current customers and anyone who needs help paying for healthcare.

While this information could change, this is what we can share with you right now. Please share this information with anyone you know who may need medical coverage at this time.

HFS is working with the federal government on new policies to make Medicaid application processing easier so that eligible Illinois residents, including those affected by COVID-19, can quickly get the health care they need.

IMPORTANT: If you are having symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, sore throat, cough, or trouble breathing, FIRST CALL your doctor or local health department or clinic and they will advise you on how to seek medical care.

If you need a doctor right now and don't already have a health plan or primary care provider call the Health Benefits Hotline at 1-800-226-0768 (TTY: 1-877-204-1012). If you need to find a COVID-19 testing site near you, you can search at this link:

<https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/testing-sites>.

If you have lost your job, have reduced hours, are furloughed, or lost your health insurance, you can apply for medical assistance for yourself and your family. You do not have to be affected by COVID-19 to apply. Even if you applied in the past and did not qualify then, if your situation has recently changed, you may now be eligible for Medicaid.

For most people, Medicaid provides no-cost access to doctor visits, hospital services, prescription drugs, mental health and substance use visits, and much more.

How To Apply for Medical Coverage:

- Applying online at www.ABE.illinois.gov may be the quickest.
- The ABE Customer Call Center at 1-800-843-6154 is also available but may be delayed.
- Keep track of your **Application Number!** You will use this to check the status of your application.
- Answer the questions the best you can and submit your application as soon as possible. Do not worry about uploading proof documents (such as pay stubs or proof of address) if you do not have them.

- You can also apply for SNAP (food stamps), TANF and cash assistance at www.ABE.illinois.gov or by calling the ABE Customer Call Center at 1-800-843-6154.
- You can check the status of your application, review your benefits, and report changes through **Manage My Case** on www.ABE.illinois.gov.
- Hospitals, physicians, and other medical providers should help patients apply for medical coverage. Organizations which can help with applications can be found here: https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/AllKids/akaa/Documents/akaa_search.pdf

For currently covered Medicaid clients:

- HFS and DHS offices are not open for walk-in customers, however **services are still available**.
- Use our website, www.ABE.illinois.gov, to manage your benefits through **Manage My Case**. If you have difficulties establishing a Managed My Case account, you can verify your identity using the form at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/onenetlibrary/12/documents/Forms/IL444-3610.pdf>
- You can call the ABE Customer Call Center at 1-800-843-6154 as well. **Please be patient with reaching the call center, as call volumes are high at this time.**
- If you have medical coverage and want to apply for SNAP or cash assistance, go to **Manage My Case** at www.ABE.illinois.gov and click on the blue "Add a Benefit" or call the ABE Customer Call Center at 1-800-843-6154.
- You can check your application status, review benefits, and report changes through **Manage My Case** on www.ABE.illinois.gov.
- During the emergency, we are temporarily suspending mailing renewal forms. For some customers, we can systematically renew their cases when we can electronically verify their eligibility. At the end of the emergency, we will have new guidance for renewals.

The HFS and DHS websites have many COVID-19 related Medicaid and other benefit program announcements, as well as notices to providers. These pages will be kept as up to date as possible.

- o HFS: <https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>
- o DHS: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=123118>

More information is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx> and through the COVID-19 Hotline, at 1-800-889-3931.