

Immigrants, Their Children and Medicaid

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Are non-U.S. citizens eligible for Medicaid?

Certain immigrants are eligible for Medicaid. Eligibility for Medicaid depends on the date you arrived in the United States.

- If you arrived before August 22, 1996 Medicaid may be provided as long as the other eligibility guidelines are met.
- If you arrived on or after August 22, 1996 Medicaid cannot be provided unless you meet certain exceptions.

What are the exceptions for people who arrived after August 22, 1996?

Refugees, those who have been granted asylum, those granted status as victims of severe forms of trafficking, and those whose deportation is being withheld may be eligible for Medicaid coverage.

Permanent residents who have worked 40 quarters under the Social Security Act and Veterans or those in military active duty status (includes spouse and dependents).

Does Medicaid report non-U.S. citizens to the US Citizenship & Immigration Service (USCIS)?

No. The Medicaid program does not report citizenship information to the INS.

If I am not a citizen but my children are citizens, can they get Medicaid?

Yes, because the children are U.S. citizens, they can get Medicaid if they meet the eligibility requirements.

If I am a non-U.S. citizen and I apply for my U.S. born children, do I have to prove my citizen status?

No. You are not required to provide proof of your citizenship status if you are only applying for Medicaid for your U.S. born children.

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Do I need a social security number if I am a non-U.S. citizen and I am applying for my child who is a citizen?

No. If you are applying for Medicaid for your U.S. born child, you do not have to give your social security number. However, your child's social security number must be provided or you must show proof that you have applied for a number for your child.

Is my sponsor required to supply their income information if I am applying for Medicaid for my children and myself?

As a non-U.S. citizen, your sponsor's income is used to determine only your Medicaid eligibility. A sponsor's income is not used when determining Medicaid eligibility for children born in the U.S.; only the parent's income is used in this case.

What is Refugee Medical Assistance?

The Refugee Medical Assistance program is for those who are classified as refugees by the USCIS and are not eligible for any other type of Medicaid. Refugee Assistance is good only for the first 8 months after an individual arrives in the U.S.

What is Alien Emergency Medical Assistance (AEMA)?

Non-U.S. citizens who are not eligible for Medicaid may be eligible for AEMA. AEMA will only pay for medical costs for an emergency medical condition (e.g., cost of childbirth, labor and delivery). Applicants are not required to provide a social security number or documentation of immigration status.

Interpretation Services

A person who has difficulty speaking or understanding English, or who is hearing impaired and is not able to communicate effectively with county job and family services staff, has the right to an interpreter.

The cost of the interpreter will be paid by the county department of job and family services. The county office must provide an interpreter to you if you need one.

Individuals may bring an interpreter with them, such as a bilingual friend or relative. However, friends and relatives who are not trained interpreters may not be able to accurately and completely translate some things the agency says. Minor children should never be used as an interpreter.