

# Memorandum

**To:** Community assisters, community organizations, people working with immigrant communities in Oregon

**From:** Oregon Health Authority

**Date:** November 13, 2024

**Subject:** Marketplace coverage and Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Bridge now available to people with DACA status and pending asylum claims

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A new federal policy means more people now qualify for health coverage through OregonHealthCare.gov and the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) Bridge Basic Health Program, effective November 1.

This change affects:

- People who are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.
- Other groups with a non-citizen status, like:
- People with a pending application for asylum,
- Have a pending application for adjustment of status,
- Family unity beneficiaries, and
- People who have been granted certain types of employment authorization who did not previously qualify.

Federal data estimates there are nearly 7,900 people with DACA status in Oregon who can now qualify. OHP Plus is still available to everyone, regardless of immigration status.

## Legal challenges

There are currently two federal cases being heard that challenge the DACA program and the expansion of eligibility. While this means this change could be undone or

halted after benefits start, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Oregon are moving ahead so that people can apply now.

If courts block this rule or end DACA entirely, the Marketplace and Oregon would communicate benefit end dates to affected members. Members will not be penalized for getting health coverage through the new rule, even if they are later blocked. OHP Bridge and the Marketplace are not considered public charge and do not affect immigration status.

### **OHA remains committed to eliminating health inequities**

OHA Director Dr. Sejal Hathi, MD, MBA, reiterated last week, “Every change in federal administration presents potential disruptions to health care policy. And, like other health agencies across the country, OHA will continue to monitor, prepare for, and inform the public about potential federal changes that could impact the health of the people of Oregon.

OHA remains clear-eyed and committed to expanding opportunity, improving well-being, and eliminating health inequities for all Oregonians. Oregon’s health agency will continue to march at the vanguard of progressive policy, to champion affordable and quality care, and to safeguard essential health freedoms and benefits. There has been and will be no deviation from this mission.”

### **Marketplace enrollment open through January 15**

Open enrollment for 2025 coverage through OregonHealthCare.gov started November 1. People who are newly eligible can apply under a special enrollment period for coverage starting December 1, but must also enroll for 2025 for coverage continuing into the new year.

The Marketplace offers private health insurance and nearly 80 percent of enrollees get financial help, which can reduce monthly premiums and may help with out-of-pocket costs like copays and deductibles.

### **More people now qualify for free coverage through OHP Bridge**

OHP Bridge is a new benefit for adults with higher incomes than other OHP programs allow. OHP Bridge benefits are nearly the same as OHP. As of October, over 29,000 people are enrolled in OHP Bridge.

People can apply for OHP Plus and OHP Bridge year-round.

### **Where to get started**

A shopping tool allows people looking for coverage to preview coverage options, plans and savings available to them. Free, local help to find health coverage options is available via [OregonHealthCare.Gov/GetHelp](https://OregonHealthCare.Gov/GetHelp) in many languages.

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