

Community Engagement Requirements

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Health and
Human Services



What are Community Engagement Requirements?

Starting December 1, 2026, certain members enrolled in the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan (IHAWP) must meet monthly Community Engagement Requirements to enroll in and maintain their health coverage.

These requirements are intended to encourage employment, education, job training, volunteer service, and other forms of community involvement.

While some states refer to these as "work requirements," Iowa uses the term **Community Engagement Requirements**.

Exclusions

Some people on the IHAWP program do not have to complete community engagement activities:

- ▶ You are pregnant or had a baby in the last 12 months while on Iowa Medicaid
- ▶ You care for a child under 14 or someone with a disability
- ▶ You are or were recently in jail or prison
- ▶ You are in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- ▶ You have a disability, are medically frail, or have a serious medical condition
- ▶ You already meet work requirements for SNAP or FIP
- ▶ You are a veteran with a total disability rating
- ▶ You are an American Indian or Alaska Native

Qualifying Activities



Work

Paid employment for 80+ hours per month or earn at least \$580 per month (based on federal minimum wage)*



Job Training

Enroll in a qualifying job training or work program for 80+ hours per month



Education

Attend a college or career / technical education program at least half-time



Community Service

Volunteer work for 80+ hours per month

*Seasonal Workers: Income is averaged over six months

Combination: A mix of the activities listed above totaling 80+ hours per month

Important Community Engagement Requirements (CER) Dates

July through November 2026

- ▶ A CMS outreach campaign that includes text messages and emails will be conducted.
- ▶ HHS mailing outreach letter to Iowa Health and Wellness Plan (IHAWP) members.

December 1, 2026

- ▶ Community engagement requirements effective in Iowa.
- ▶ Individuals who apply on or after December 1, 2026, must meet CER to be eligible for IHAWP.

February 2027

- ▶ First renewal cohort for active Iowa members who must meet CER to be eligible at renewal.

Ellie, the HHS virtual assistant, can help members determine if CER applies to them by visiting the [Self-Service Portal](#).



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Definitions

- ▶ **Applicable Individual:** A person applying for or receiving IHAWP who is subject to Community Engagement Requirements (CER).
- ▶ **Specified Excluded Individual:** A person applying for or receiving IHAWP but is not subject to CER. A specified excluded individual does not need to meet a qualifying activity.
- ▶ **Lookback Period:** The number of months an applicable individual must demonstrate compliance with CER.

Additional Policy Information

► **Lookback Period**

- Application – the month before the month of application
- Renewal – at least two months since the last renewal or application

► 30-Day Notice of Non-Compliance

► **Community Engagement Portal (CEP)** - Portal applicants and members will access to submit verification to demonstrate exclusion from or compliance with CER

Questions



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