IOWA | Health and Human Services

Iowa Health and Wellness Plan (IHAWP) Community Engagement Requirements Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

View our webpage: https://hhs.iowa.gov/ihawp-cer

What are Community Engagement Requirements (CER)?

Beginning December 1, 2026, certain Iowa Health and Wellness Plan members must meet monthly requirements to enroll and maintain coverage. These requirements are designed to encourage work and community involvement.

Who is subject to community engagement requirements?

Community engagement rules apply to certain adults aged 19 to 64 who are enrolled in the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan (IHAWP).

What activities count toward the requirement?

- **Work:** Work for 80 hours per month or earn at least $580 per month (based on federal minimum wage). Income from seasonal work may be averaged.
- **Job Training:** Take part in a qualifying job training or work program for 80 hours per month.
- **Education:** Enrolled in a high school, college, GED, or other career and technical program at least half-time.
- **Community Service:** Volunteer work for 80 hours per month

Can activities be combined?

Yes. Activities can be combined to reach 80 hours per month.

Note: New applicants must meet CER for the month prior to the month of their application. Current members must meet CER for at least two months since their last Medicaid application or renewal.

Who is excluded?

The following populations are excluded from the requirements:

- American Indians/Alaska Natives
- Those under 19 or over 64
- Individuals who are medically frail or otherwise have special medical needs
    - The state may require medical documentation for the medically frail exclusion.
- Pregnant or had a baby in the last 12 months while on Iowa Medicaid
- Caregivers of children under 14 or someone with a disability
- Participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program
- Participants in SNAP or FIP work programs
- Veterans rated as totally disabled
- Individuals currently or recently in jail or prison

What should I do now?

- **Update your contact information.** Make sure Iowa HHS has your current information (like address, phone number, and email address) so they can contact you about these eligibility changes. Call 1-877-347-5678 to update your information.
- **Check your mail and email.** Iowa HHS will send you a letter or email in the upcoming months if the eligibility changes apply to you.
- **Track your activities.** Keep track of, or gather documents for, any work, volunteer, job training, or school hours you complete each month. **Iowa HHS will contact *you* when this information is required.**

When do these rules take effect?

For new applicants: These requirements take effect on December 1, 2026, for individuals who apply on or after that date. Applicants must meet CER for the month prior to the month of their application.

For existing (current) members: IHAWP members who are active and scheduled for renewal on or after February 2027 must meet this requirement. Current members must meet CER for at least two months since their last Medicaid review.

Where can I find volunteer opportunities?

Participants can meet the community engagement requirements by completing approved volunteer hours. **Volunteer Iowa's *Get Connected*** platform provides an easy

way to find and sign up for local volunteer opportunities that qualify toward these requirements.

When will HHS need or ask for this information?

Iowa HHS will check records to see if you already meet the requirements or are excluded. If HHS needs more proof, they will send you a letter telling you what to send and how to send it.

How will I enter and report my CER information?

Iowa HHS will contact you if they need information about your Community Engagement activities. If you're contacted, you can use the **Community Engagement Portal (CEP)** to upload information, but you can also provide information by:

- Phone: 1-877-347-5678
- Fax: The fax number will be provided on the request for information.
- Or visit your **local HHS office**.

The CEP will **only** be available if you are required to submit your hours, and **only** during your application and renewal period. To learn how to report your hours in the CEP, **view this document** on the HHS website.

What if I don't meet the new Community Engagement Requirements?

If the new requirement applies to you and you don't meet it, your Medicaid coverage may be denied or discontinued.

If this happens:

- You can apply again at any time. Visit Iowa's Self Service Portal at **https://hhsservices.iowa.gov/apspssp/ssp.portal** to get started if you lose coverage.

- You might be able to get health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace®, but you might not qualify for financial help to lower your monthly premium. Visit **HealthCare.gov** to find or enroll in a health plan or call 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325).

What if I have questions?

- Call 1-877-347-5678 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Email us at **CEoutreach@hhs.iowa.gov**