

Applying for MaineCare: Ten Tips for Relative Caregivers



Relatives as Parents Program

MaineCare provides free or low-cost comprehensive healthcare benefits to children and families living in Maine.

1. When in doubt, apply!
2. Almost all children being cared for by relatives who are residents of Maine are eligible for MaineCare coverage. You do not need to have legal custody of the child.
3. Even if you or the child have other health insurance, you can still receive MaineCare. MaineCare may pay for services not covered by other insurance. DHHS may contact the child's parents to find out if they have insurance that could cover the child.
4. You will be asked to provide a certified copy of the child's birth certificate. If you need help obtaining the birth certificate or want to find out about using other documents instead, you can call the Citizenship and Identity Hotline at 1-800-701-1887.
5. You will also be asked for the Social Security Number of the child. If you do not know it, you can have a DHHS MaineCare worker contact the Social Security Administration to get it.
6. If you are a relative applying just for a child living with you, only *the child's* income is considered. You do not need to provide information about your income and assets.
7. You have the option of applying for yourself as well as the child. In this case, you will need to provide information about your income and assets. However, a family of three, for example, can have a monthly income of about \$2100 and everyone in the household may be able to get free MaineCare coverage. A family of three with an income around \$2800 may be able to get low-cost coverage. Many assets and some income is not counted.
8. A DHHS worker can send you an application and help you figure out how to get coverage for as many people in your household as possible. You can call them at 1-877-543-7669 statewide or contact your local DHHS office directly. If you are only going to apply for MaineCare, ask to fill out the shorter form that is for MaineCare only. If you would like to apply for Food Stamps or TANF also, fill out the longer form which can be used for all three programs.
9. Fill out as much as you can on the form and send it in. Coverage for MaineCare is based upon the date DHHS *first receives* your application. DHHS will contact you for any additional information or documentation. In some cases, you can get coverage for medical expenses incurred up to three months prior to your application date.
10. If you need help or have questions about your personal situation, you can call the Consumers for Affordable Health Care Helpline at 1-800-965-7476. It is free and any information you provide is confidential and will not be shared with DHHS without your permission. You can also look online at www.mejp.org/medicaid.htm for more information and MaineCare income guidelines.