

Public Health Insurance for Immigrants

Immigrants to the United States living in Massachusetts can get public health insurance. There are many types of insurance programs. A person's choices may depend on his or her immigrant status. Just like citizens, immigrants must meet certain income and other requirements.

This sheet has facts about public health insurance programs that many immigrants can get. There is also a list of phone numbers and a website to learn more.

Qualified Immigrants

Qualified immigrants can get the same health insurance benefits as citizens. You are a qualified immigrant if you:

- Have been a legal permanent resident for 5 years, or more
- Have had parole status for 5 years, or more
- Are a legal permanent resident or had parole granted in the past 5 years and have lived in the United States since before August 22, 1996
- Are a refugee or have political asylum or withholding of deportation status
- Are a victim of severe forms of trafficking
- Are a victim of domestic violence
- Are a member of the US military or a veteran or your spouse or parent is a member of the military or a veteran

Some immigrants from Haiti, Cuba, and other groups may also be able to get public health insurance as qualified immigrants.

Special Status or PRUCOL Immigrants

- You are a special status immigrant if you have been a legal permanent resident or had parole status for 5 years, or less.
- Your status is called PRUCOL (Person Residing in the US Under Color of Law) if the US government knows you are living in this country and does not plan to make you leave. You can find out if you are PRUCOL by calling the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition at 617-350-5480 x208.

Here are some MassHealth benefits people can get if they have Special Status or PRUCOL status:

- **MassHealth Essential plus MassHealth Limited** is available for adults with a family income under 100% of the federal poverty level who are also disabled and have not had a job in one year. It is also for seniors (age 65, or older) with family income under 100% of the federal poverty level.
- **MassHealth Family Assistance** is available for children (age 18, or younger) whose family income is under 200% of the federal poverty level.
- **MassHealth CommonHealth** is available for disabled children (age 18 or younger).

Commonwealth Care is available for qualified, special status, or PRUCOL immigrants whose family income is under 300% of the federal poverty level.

People living in Massachusetts without immigration papers

You may be able to get public health services even if you do not have immigration papers.

Options include:

- **MassHealth Limited** is for children, parents, pregnant women, disabled people, and elderly people with low incomes.
- **Uncompensated Care Pool (Free Care)** is for people with low incomes.
- **Children's Medical Security Plan** is for children (age 18 or younger) whose family has a low income.
- **Healthy Start Program** is for pregnant women with low incomes.

How to apply for public health insurance

- Get a MassHealth application (also called "Medical Benefit Request form" or MBR). You can get this application from at a health center or hospital or by calling MassHealth at 1-888-665-9993. It's available in English or Spanish.
- Complete (fill out) the MassHealth application. You can get help by calling the Health Care For All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232.
- Include proof of your income and copies of all papers showing your immigration status. Of note, you may be able to get certain types of public health insurance even if you do not have these papers. Mail the complete application along with your immigration papers to MassHealth at:

MassHealth Enrollment Center
Central Processing Unit
P.O. Box 290794
Charlestown, MA
02129-0214

- MassHealth will mail you a notice about which health insurance program you can get.

You do NOT hurt your immigration status when you apply for public health insurance.

You will not become a public charge by applying for public health insurance. MassHealth does not share any information with immigration officials. You will not have extra problems if you do not have immigration papers.

Have questions, need help, or want to learn more?

- Call the Health Care For All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232
- Call the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition at 617-350-5480 x208
- Call MassHealth at 1-888-665-9993
- Visit MassHealth online at <http://mass.gov/masshealth>.

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