



Date: August 14, 2026

DMS Operations Memo 26-29

To: Income Maintenance Supervisors
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff
FSET Agencies

Affected Programs:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☒ BadgerCare Plus | ☐ Caretaker Supplement |
| ☐ FoodShare | ☐ FoodShare Employment and Training |
| ☒ Medicaid | |
| ☒ SeniorCare | |

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Federally Required Health Care Eligibility Changes for Non-Citizens

CROSS-REFERENCE

- BadgerCare Plus Eligibility Handbook, [Sections 4.3.2.3 Reverification of Immigration Status, 4.3.2.4 Reasonable Opportunity Period for Verification of Immigration Status, 4.3.3.1 Qualifying Immigrants, 39.1 Emergency Services Introduction, and 41.1 BadgerCare Plus Prenatal Program](#)
- Medicaid Eligibility Handbook, [Sections 7.3.2.3 Reverification of Immigration Status, 7.3.2.4 Reasonable Opportunity Period for Verification of Immigration Status, 7.3.3.1 Qualifying Immigrants, and 34.1 Emergency Services](#)
- [One Big Beautiful Bill Act, H.R.1 Section 71109, 119th Cong. \(2025-2026\)](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 1, 2026

PURPOSE

This memo announces health care eligibility changes for non-citizens, as required by Section 71109 of One Big Beautiful Bill Act, H.R. 1 (2025). These federal changes limit adult eligibility for health care to the following groups: U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, lawful permanent residents, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Compact of Free Association citizens.

BACKGROUND

Certain non-citizens are eligible to receive health care benefits if they meet all other eligibility requirements and, in some cases, complete a five-year waiting period or meet additional conditions. These non-citizens are described as “qualified non-citizens” for federal public benefits purposes.

Section 71109 of H.R. 1 (2025) eliminates Wisconsin’s ability to claim Medicaid funding, which is known as federal financial participation (FFP), for many adult non-citizens currently eligible for health care. FFP may only be claimed for adults in the following groups: U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, lawful permanent residents, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Compact of Free Association citizens.

The Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 includes an option for states to provide health care coverage to children and pregnant people who are lawfully residing in the United States. Section 71109 of H.R. 1 (2025) did not change the ability for states to claim FFP for these lawfully residing pregnant people and children.

POLICY

Starting October 1, 2026, non-citizen adults with one of these immigration statuses are no longer eligible for the Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus programs listed below:

- Conditional Entrant
- Refugee or Special Immigrant
- Asylee
- Person Paroled for at Least One Year
- Person Granted Withholding of Removal
- VAWA Self-Petitioner
- Foreign-born Member of a Tribal Nation
- Trafficking Victim or their family
- Amerasians

These changes apply to the following Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus programs:

- BadgerCare Plus
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Medicaid
- SSI-Related Medicaid
- Special Status Medicaid
- Institutional Medicaid
- Home and Community Based Waiver Medicaid
- Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP)
- Katie Beckett Medicaid
- Wisconsin Well Woman Medicaid
- SeniorCare
- Medicare Savings Programs
- Family Planning Only Services
- Tuberculosis-Related Medicaid

The new non-citizen eligibility criteria apply to new health care applications on or after October 1, 2026. For households already receiving health care, these policies also apply starting October 1, 2026.

Lawfully present children younger than 19 years old, young adults under 21 years old who reside in an Institution for Mental Disease, and pregnant people, including those in the statuses listed above, remain eligible for health care benefits.

REVERIFICATION OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

Adult non-citizen members in an immigration status that will no longer be eligible for health care benefits as of October 1, 2026, will have their status reverified in the months immediately preceding October 2026.

This reverification ensures that members' current immigration status is used for health care eligibility as of October 1, 2026. If the member's immigration status cannot be verified by the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE), the member will be sent a request for documentation, and a reasonable opportunity period (ROP) will be applied. The member will continue to receive health care benefits for which they are eligible while the agency waits for the requested information to be provided according to existing ROP policy. The ROP also applies when SAVE cannot provide a response at initial verification, or an agency requests additional verification.

Pregnant members in impacted immigration statuses will have their status reverified at the end of their 12-month postpartum period, as part of their eligibility redetermination.

BACKDATED ELIGIBILITY

Adult non-citizens in impacted statuses may apply for backdated coverage for the months preceding October 2026. Current backdating eligibility rules apply.

Example: Mira, age 25, is a refugee. Mira applies for BadgerCare Plus on November 15, 2026. Mira meets all eligibility criteria for BadgerCare Plus except qualifying immigration status. Mira requests retroactive coverage for past months of August, September, and October. Because of Mira's status as a refugee, she is not eligible for BadgerCare Plus starting October 1, but she is eligible for the past months of August and September.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Eligibility for Emergency Services is not changed by H.R. 1 (2025). Non-citizens who are no longer in a qualifying status and experience a medical emergency may qualify for Emergency Services. They must apply for Emergency Services in order to receive this coverage.

BADGERCARE PLUS PRENATAL PROGRAM

Eligibility for the BadgerCare Plus Prenatal Program is not changed by H.R. 1 (2025).

CONTACTS

DHS CARES Problem Resolution Team