

# What is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a medical assistance program that helps pay for some or all medical bills for many people who cannot afford health care such as hospital and doctor bills, prescriptions, medical equipment, rides to and from doctor visits and more. The program also assists people age 65 or over or with a disability with the costs of a nursing home, home and community-based health services and other medical expenses. Eligibility is determined by several factors, which may include your age, whether you are pregnant, have a disability, your income and assets; and whether you are a U.S. citizen or lawfully present. The South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid program is administered by the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) and pays medical bills with state and federal tax money.



## Medicaid is not Medicare.

While both Medicaid and Medicare provide health care assistance, they differ in how they work and who is eligible. Medicare is a federal health insurance program primarily for seniors. It provides services for all people age 65 and over or for individuals who have received Social Security disability benefits for a minimum of 24 months. It is run by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the federal government. Medicaid is primarily for low income families and is managed by both the state and federal governments. An individual can have both Medicare and Medicaid.

# What services are covered by Medicaid?

Healthy Connections Medicaid covers certain medically necessary services. Some of the services you can get are listed below. Your managed care organization (MCO) may offer extra services in their plan.

- Alcohol and drug abuse services
- Ambulance
- Audiology
- Autism spectrum disorder services
- Behavioral health services
- Dental
- Doctor office visits
- Family planning
- Home and community-based long-term care services
- Home health
- Hospital inpatient, outpatient and emergency room services
- Intermediate care facility services
- Inpatient psychiatric care
- Lab and x-ray services
- Medical equipment
- Nursing facility coverage
- Occupational and physical therapy
- Prescription medications
- Speech-language therapy
- Targeted case management
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Vision care
- Well-adult care
- Well-child care – Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment



# Healthy Connections Medicaid

Our mission is to purchase the most health for our citizens in need at the least possible cost to the taxpayer.

# How do I qualify?

When you apply to Healthy Connections Medicaid for health coverage, we consider many things to see if you may be eligible. Your personal situation is an important part of the eligibility determination. You might be eligible if:

- You are pregnant or think you may be pregnant
- You are or have a child or teenager age 18 or under
- You or your child is in foster care or adopted or you have been in foster care and are under the age of 26
- You have been diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer
- You are blind
- You have a disability or disabilities
- You need nursing home care
- You are age 65 or over
- You have very low or no income

The amount of income you can have can be different based on which eligibility category you are in and how many people are in your family. For some of the groups, there is also a limit on the value of what you own and your eligibility may be affected if you have given something away.

# How do I apply?

## Apply Online

To apply online through our secure website, visit [apply.scdhhs.gov](http://apply.scdhhs.gov) and click "Apply Now."

The online application process is the easiest way to apply. If you cannot complete your Healthy Connections online application in one

sitting, the application allows you to save your work and return to it at a later time. You will be sent to a confirmation screen when your application is successfully submitted.

## Apply in Person

You may apply in person at your county office. A listing of county office locations is available on our website at [scdhhs.gov](http://scdhhs.gov). In addition, you may apply in person at federally qualified rural health centers and at most hospitals.

## Telephone Applications

You may apply by telephone through the Healthy Connections Medicaid Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820. The telephone application process will take approximately 45 minutes. It will be beneficial to have information on-hand, such as earned and unearned income, Social Security number and date of birth for each household member who is applying.

## Apply By Mail

If you would prefer to mail your application, request a copy at your county office or download it from [scdhhs.gov](http://scdhhs.gov). It is called Healthy Connections Medicaid application (Form 3400).

Mail the completed Healthy Connections Medicaid application to:  
SCDHHS  
Central Mail  
PO Box 100101  
Columbia, SC 29202-3101

After the initial review, Healthy Connections Medicaid staff will determine what additional forms are needed and will provide them to you.

# What happens after I am enrolled?

## Choosing a Health Plan

Once you are enrolled in health coverage through Healthy Connections, you might be required to select a health plan (some eligibility groups cannot enroll in a plan). A health plan is a group of doctors (or clinics) that may also include hospitals and other medical staff. Health plans offer the same benefits as regular Medicaid, but also offer extra services that may help you and your family get better care. Some plans offer vision and dental care, and all plans help with managing diseases, like diabetes and high blood pressure. They also have a nurse help line you can call any time with health care questions.

If you are eligible to participate in a health plan you will soon receive an enrollment packet in the mail from South Carolina Healthy Connections Choices. This packet contains a letter, health plan comparison chart for the county you live in, information on how to choose a plan and a return envelope. For assistance in making your health plan choice, call 1-877-552-4642 (toll-free) Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. or you can ask your doctor for assistance.

