DC Healthcare Alliance FAQs

What is DC Healthcare Alliance?

The DC Healthcare Alliance Program ("DC Healthcare Alliance") is a locally funded program designed to provide medical assistance to DC residents who are not eligible for Medicaid. The Alliance program serves low-income District residents who have no other health insurance and are not eligible for either Medicaid or Medicare. To be eligible for the DC Healthcare Alliance, you must be a resident of the District of Columbia, meet financial eligibility requirements, and not have any other health or medical coverage.

Who is eligible for the DC Healthcare Alliance?

Starting October 1, 2025, the DC Healthcare Alliance program will no longer enroll new applicants (those not currently enrolled in the program or in a renewal period) aged 26 or older into the program. A new applicant is an individual who is not currently receiving DC Healthcare Alliance but would like to apply for the program. Children (aged 0-20), Adults 21 to 25 years old, and pregnant women can still apply and be evaluated for benefits through the DC Healthcare Alliance program or other health coverage

You may be eligible for DC Healthcare Alliance (before October 1, 2025) if you:

1. Are twenty-six (26) and older;
2. Are a District resident;
3. Have income at or below 210% of the federal poverty level ("FPL");
4. DO NOT have health insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid.

Category	DC Health Care Alliance Program
Threshold in FPL	210% + 5% disregard*
1 person household, monthly	$2,806
2 person household, monthly	$3,790
3 person household, monthly	$4,775
4 person household, monthly	$5,762
5 person household, monthly	$6,747
6 person household, monthly	$7,731
7 person household, monthly	$8,718
8 person household, monthly	$9,703

Figures compiled using 2025 FPL numbers as of January 15, 2025 distributed by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

* 5% income disregard is included

What's the difference between the DC Healthcare Alliance and Medicaid?

The DC Healthcare Alliance is a locally funded program, while Medicaid is a federally funded program.

How do I know if my insurance is DC Alliance or Medicaid?
Take a close look at your health insurance card. There will be a reference to "DC Healthcare Alliance" if that is your insurance type. See the following examples of DC Healthcare Alliance cards:





I don't have insurance and I'm undocumented, can I still apply for the DC Healthcare Alliance?
Yes, undocumented immigrants residing in Washington, DC can apply for the DC Healthcare Alliance. However, starting October 1, 2025, new registrations will NOT be permitted for individuals over 26. Youth under 26 will be able to register if they meet the new requirements. If you qualify and haven't enrolled in DC Healthcare Alliance, we urge you to do it before October 1. Mary's Center can help you with the application.

Can I add my family members to my DC Healthcare Alliance insurance coverage?
Yes, families can be covered under the DC Healthcare Alliance program. The program covers individuals, including parents, caretaker relatives, and children under 26 years old. Families can apply together for the program, and the program may cover a range of healthcare services, including doctor visits, dental care, vision care, prescription drugs, and more.

How does age make a difference in eligibility and benefits?
Payments will shift from Managed Care to Fee-for-Service reimbursement, and services for those 21 and older will be limited to primary care, hospital, emergency transportation, and prescriptions (dental and behavioral health will no longer be covered for over 21-year-olds).

Children under 21 will retain broader services, including dental and behavioral health, with coverage transitioning from the Immigrant Children Program to Alliance. Income eligibility thresholds will also change over time: Anyone 21 years or older who makes above 138% FPL as of October 1, 2025, will be removed from Alliance.

Income eligibility is set at 138 % of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for individuals aged 26 and older who enroll between **October 1, 2025**, and **September 30, 2026.**

Category	**DC Health Care Alliance Program** Monthly Income
Threshold in FPL	138%
1 person household, monthly	$1,800
2-person household, monthly	$2,432
3-person household, monthly	$3,065
4-person household, monthly	$3,697
5-person household, monthly	$4,330
6-person household, monthly	$4,962
7-person household, monthly	$5,595
8-person household, monthly	$6,227

Will there be a health plan option for people who won't be eligible for Alliance anymore?
Yes, there are alternative health coverage options for DC residents with immigration status who are no longer eligible for the DC Healthcare Alliance program. Residents can explore DC Health Link plans, including the Basic Health Plan, which offers financial assistance through premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions, making them more affordable even if not eligible for Medicaid.

What is the Basic Health Plan?
A Basic Health Program (BHP) is an optional health benefits coverage program for low-income individuals, primarily those who are not eligible for Medicaid or Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) but would otherwise be eligible for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Currently, there has not been approval of funding for the BHP, but when funded, the DC Health Link's Benefits Health Exchange will manage those plans.

In DC, a basic health plan, also known as an Essential Plan, is a type of health insurance coverage that offers affordable, accessible care. These plans cover essential services like primary care, specialists, urgent care, and generic medications without deductibles.

What if I don't qualify for either the DC Healthcare Alliance or the Basic Health Plan?
If you don't qualify for the DC Healthcare Alliance or Basic Health Plan, you can explore other options for accessing low-cost or subsidized healthcare coverage. At Mary's Center, you may be able access our health services through our sliding fee scale. Please reach out to make an appointment.

What happens to DC Healthcare Alliance on October 1, 2025?

The DC Healthcare Alliance and Immigrant Children's programs are changing on October 1, 2025. To make sure that you don't miss any important information, look for mail from the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) and log into your account at districtdirect.dc.gov for notices. Beginning October 1, 2025, the DC Healthcare Alliance (Alliance) and the Immigrant Children's Program (ICP) becomes one program - the DC Healthcare Alliance program. Changes will impact who is eligible, how services are received, and what services or benefits are provided. The changes are aligned with the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Support Act of 2025 (Bill 26-260).

What happens If I miss the October 1, 2025, deadline to apply for DC Healthcare Alliance?
If that deadline is approved, adults 26 and over who have missed the October 1, 2025-deadline to apply for DC Healthcare Alliance, will not be considered for admission and their health coverage options will be terminated.

I have DC Healthcare Alliance, and it ends before October 1, 2025, will I be able to renew?
Yes, you will be able to renew your Alliance coverage, even if it ends before October 1, 2025.

Are there going to be any changes to the DC Healthcare Alliance renewal process?

Annual recertification will continue, and enrollees can continue to complete the process online.

What are the requirements to apply for or renew DC Healthcare Alliance?
To apply for or renew DC Healthcare Alliance, you must be a DC resident, not have other health insurance (including Medicaid and Medicare), and meet specific income requirements. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen to be eligible. You can reach out to Mary's Center for assistance with applying or renewal. To make an appointment, call 844-796-2797.

What can I do now to address this?

- Check your mail and your District Direct account at districtdirect.dc.gov. DHCF sent a notice on the DC Healthcare Alliance program changes in early August – this notice tells you what is changing. If your Alliance coverage ends on October 1, 2025, DHCF sent you a termination notice the first week of September 2025. You may check your status using the District Direct website or app.
- Renew your DC Healthcare Alliance on time. If you still have DC Healthcare Alliance coverage, know your renewal date and renew on time. You will receive a notice from DHCF when it is time to renew. You can renew online through District Direct – you do not have to go in person to renew your DC Healthcare Alliance.
- Update your contact information. Log in to District Direct to update your contact information. All notices are sent by mail. If DHCF does not have the proper contact information, you will not receive important notices about your coverage.

Will I receive a notice or letter about these changes if I am an existing Alliance or Immigrant Children's Program recipient?

Yes. An informational notice/letter was sent the last week of July from the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF). If you have a District Direct account, you can view your notice there.

What are my health care options if I lose DC Healthcare Alliance as of September 30, 2025?

Immigration Status	Additional Coverage Options
• Undocumented (*not lawfully present in the US*)	• Emergency Medicaid • CHIP if Pregnant under 324% FPL
• Lawfully Present (***have **not** met the 5-year bar***)	• Medicaid Programs: o Medicaid if Pregnant under 21 • DC Heath Link
• Lawfully Present (*have met the 5-year bar*)	• DC Health Link • Medicaid under another category if eligible.
• Naturalized	• DC Health Link • Medicaid under another category if eligible.

***5-year bar is the waiting period for lawful permanent residents (LPR) or green card holders before they can receive Medicaid coverage.*

Will residents eligible for Emergency Medicaid be able to enroll in the Basic Health Plan (Healthy DC Plan)?

It depends. If the applicant is undocumented, no. If the applicant has a qualifying immigration status but it doesn't qualify them for Medicaid, yes. Individuals who are lawfully present and under 100% FPL are not eligible to enroll in the Healthy DC Plan.

If I am currently receiving DC Healthcare Alliance for Children (formerly Immigrant Children's Program/ICP) will I lose coverage once I turn 21?

No. However, Alliance for Adults has a lower income threshold than Alliance for Children. Additional eligibility changes may impact coverage beginning October 1, 2026.