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On or before June 30, 2026, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) will submit the following Montana Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA), effective July 1, 2026, for Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approval.

Subject: Montana Medicaid State Plan Amendment – Medicaid Expansion Community Engagement Requirements

Proposed Effective Date: July 1, 2026

DPHHS will be implementing community engagement requirements for Medicaid Expansion participants. Medicaid Expansion is also known as the Montana Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Program. Participation in Medicaid Expansion will require meeting community engagement requirements. These requirements apply to all Medicaid Expansion participants who do not meet the criteria for an exclusion. Participants must continue meeting the community engagement requirements throughout coverage.

The proposed amendment ensures that Montana will meet community engagement requirements mandated by the federal bill known as “One Big Beautiful Bill” or “H.R.1.” This bill was signed into law on July 4, 2025.

Proposed Community Engagement Requirements

Required Hours

Participants must complete 80 hours each month of approved activities, unless they qualify for an exclusion.

Qualifying activities include:

- Working at a job,
- Community service or volunteering,
- Workforce training or job readiness programs through the State of Montana,
- Internships or registered apprenticeships, or
- Going to school (college or vocational school).

Verification

Participants must prove they are meeting this requirement. Examples of proof may include:

- Pay stubs from their job,
- Official letters from their school, or
- Signed volunteer logs showing their hours.

Completion of community engagement activities may be verified through:

- Data matching with other state programs, and/or
- Self-reporting online, by phone, by mail, or in person using approved methods.

Community Engagement Exclusions

Participants may be excluded if they are:

- American Indian/Alaska Native,
- Children age 18 or younger,
- Adults age 65 or older,
- Pregnant and postpartum individuals (up to 12 months),
- Former Foster Youth,
- Parents or caregivers of children under age 14,
- Parents/caregivers of persons with disabilities,
- Veterans with disabilities rated as total,
- People who are medically frail,
- People enrolled in treatment programs for substance use disorder,
- Individuals currently incarcerated or recently released, or
- Individuals eligible for Medicare.

Communication

Three months before implementation, DPHHS will notify current Medicaid Expansion participants who are subject to community engagement requirements. The notification will explain the community engagement requirements and how to submit documentation of compliance or an exclusion.

DPHHS will notify a participant who is not in compliance with the community engagement requirements that they have 30 days to come into compliance. The notice will also advise that failure to comply within the 30-day period may result in loss of Medicaid coverage.

Fiscal Impact

As part of program design, the Department has created efficiencies that minimize the fiscal impact of implementing community engagement requirements.

DPHHS is committed to an extensive public process. We invite your comments and questions on the Medicaid expansion Community Engagement Requirements SPA emailed or postmarked through **June 27, 2026**. You may direct comments to the Medicaid State Plan Amendment and Waiver Coordinator at (406) 444-2584 or dphhscomments@mt.gov or the Director's Office, PO Box 4210, Helena, MT 59620.