



Get Ready: Helping Survivors Obtain and Maintain Medicaid Healthcare

Domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) advocates and programs can play a crucial role in helping survivors navigate the Medicaid work and community engagement requirements needed to keep their health insurance. Below are suggestions on ways DV/SA program staff can directly help survivors they serve before and after the work and community engagement requirements go into effect on January 1, 2027. We've grouped the suggestions by month to make it a bit easier to learn and manage, but please don't worry if the month has passed; this will be valuable and necessary work.

October 2026

1. Learn the Basics:

Get a sense of the basic rules in your state about Medicaid work and community engagement requirements and what survivors will need to do to apply for and keep their health insurance. For example:

- What counts as work, community service, work programs, and educational programs?
- Who is affected (e.g., adults ages 18–64) and who is exempt (e.g., many parents; people with disabilities)?

Remember, you don't need to be an expert. You just need a working knowledge of what the work and community engagement requirements are and who might need to document their work and other activities to keep their health insurance.

2. Attend a Webinar:

FUTURES will be offering a webinar on October 30 at 9:00AM (PST)/12:00PM (EST) that will cover the basics of the work and community engagement requirements and provide insights from a non-profit leader who is helping clients navigate the requirements. Sign up [here](#) to register for the online event.

3. Identify Community Partners:

Now is the time to start identifying potential partners -- employers, work programs, volunteer/ service programs -- where survivors can meet the work and community engagement requirements.

November 2026

1. Educate Your Clients:

Educate survivors about the changes coming to Medicaid health insurance, including the work and community engagement requirements, categories of individuals that are exempt from the requirements, and the importance of responding promptly to notices and requests from the Medicaid agency in their state. Encourage clients to go to their State Medicaid agencies' [website](#) to learn more about the changes. Urge clients to obtain medications and medical assistance now and over the next few months.

2. Talk About Safety and Confidentiality:

Talk to your clients about the safety and confidentiality of providing information to Medicaid. For example, Medicaid will be relying on a lot of data matching, including joint tax filing, address matching, etc. Survivors need to know who is accessing their information and any potential risks.

3. Help Survivors Ensure They Can Receive Mail/Notices:

State Medicaid agencies are required to conduct member outreach through regular mail (or, if elected by an individual, an electronic format) and one or more additional forms. These additional forms can be telephone, text message, email, or other common electronic means. If a survivor prefers to receive notices by mail and does not have a permanent address, could you help by setting up a P.O. Box or some type of process for receipt of Medicaid mail?

December 2026

1. Find a Policy Expert:

You don't need to be an expert—but you should know who can help your clients navigate the changing health insurance landscape. This could be someone at a community health center or hospital; local health care advocates or legal aid programs may also fill this role. Build this relationship now so you have somewhere to turn to when policy questions come up.

2. Find an Enrollment Expert:

Your clients will likely have questions about work and community engagement requirements, and you'll need to know who to ask. Building a relationship with a local enrollment assister or navigator can provide enrollment support and make it easier for clients to maintain their Medicaid health insurance.

January 2027

1. Consider Providing Volunteer Opportunities:

Are there volunteer opportunities within your program to support survivors who need Medicaid healthcare?

2. Help With Documentation of Work:

Are there ways that you could assist survivors with documentation to verify their compliance with work and community engagement requirements if they engage in unpaid work or volunteer service while in shelter?

On-Going Suggestions

1. Document the Trends:

Much is still unknown about how work and community engagement requirements will play out in practice. Prepare to be a "trend spotter" by paying close attention to what your clients are experiencing—and let us know what you find.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Protecting Survivors' Access to Healthcare Under H.R.1: State Strategies and Recommendations](#)
- [Work and Community Engagement Activities Under H.R.1](#)
- [Medicaid Work and Community Engagement Compliance Checklist](#)
- [Working with State Medicaid Agencies to Protect Survivors' Health Care](#)

Futures Without Violence launched its **Survivor Health Access Project** in the fall of 2025 to help educate survivors, DV/SA program staff, and policymakers about changes resulting from the passage of H.R. 1. This series highlights **how the changes to Medicaid will impact survivors of violence**, and **what program staff and policymakers can do** to help ensure that survivors understand and can demonstrate compliance with the new standards.

.....

This document is for educational and informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

For questions and to share feedback related to this paper, contact Karen A. Herrling, Senior Policy Advisor at kherrling@futureswithoutviolence.org.