

Changes to Marketplace Insurance in 2026



What are Marketplace health insurance plans?

- The health insurance Marketplace is an organization where individuals, families, and small businesses can purchase their own health insurance. This can be for people who do not receive health insurance coverage through their employer, who are self-employed, or who do not qualify for government insurance programs like Medicaid or Medicare. Health insurance Marketplaces are managed by the federal government or by individual states. Individuals, families, and small businesses can enroll in these Marketplace plans during a period called Open Enrollment. In 2026, Open Enrollment ends on January 15.
- Those covered by Marketplace insurance plans pay monthly premiums for their plan, as well as the out-of-pocket cost requirements of their associated plan. About 24 million people receive health insurance coverage through Marketplace plans.

What is a premium?

- A premium is the monthly cost of health insurance for each month of a plan year. A premium does not count out-of-pocket costs (also known as cost-sharing) like a deductible, copayment, or coinsurance associated with a specific plan.

What are enhanced premium tax credits?

- Tax credits reduce the monthly premium of healthcare exchange plans for some individuals and families. To qualify for a tax credit, the enrollees must have an income at least equal to the Federal Poverty Level, cannot access coverage through their employer that they can afford, are not eligible for government insurance programs (like Medicaid and Medicare), and are U.S. citizens.
- These tax credits were expanded in 2021 as part of the American Rescue Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also extended the credits to people with incomes above 400% of the Federal Poverty Level. The tax credit policy was extended through 2025 by the Inflation Reduction Act. In 2025, about 22 million people covered by Marketplace plans were eligible for these tax credits.

What's going on?

- People with incomes 400% or more of the Federal Poverty Level no longer receive them as of January 1, 2026, and premiums have increased for some people by as much as several thousand dollars per month.

This webinar has more information about Open Enrollment and how current policies are affecting the cost of health insurance.