

Who can get coverage?

Healthy Start provides payment of health care costs for:

- pregnant women;
- newborns (a child born to a mother on Healthy Start or any other Medicaid category will be continuously eligible for his or her first 12 months regardless of income; however, parents must report the birth of the child to their economic support worker);
- children up to age six; and
- children age 6 to 19 (children in this category must meet stricter income eligibility requirements. For more coverage options for children in this age group see the BadgerCare fact sheet).

Are there income limits?

- Pregnant women and children under age 6 must have an income at or below 185% FPL.
- Children ages 6 to 19 must have an income at or below 100% FPL (see chart).

2002 Monthly FPL Chart <i>(May 2002–April 2003)</i>		
Family Size	100%	185%
2	\$ 995	\$ 1840
3	\$ 1251	\$ 2315
4	\$ 1508	\$ 2790
5	\$ 1765	\$ 3265
6	\$ 2021	\$ 3740

For pregnant women, the fetus is counted for the purpose of income eligibility. For example, a pregnant woman with no other children is a family of two and must have a monthly income at or below \$1,789.

Additional methods of income eligibility calculations exist that make these income guidelines more generous. For more information see the Medicaid Deductible and Family Fiscal Unit fact sheets.

There is no asset test for Healthy Start and eligibility may be backdated to include up to three months preceding the month of application.

Applying for coverage

Applicants must be prepared to provide information about his or her and the children's:

- monthly income;
- Social Security Number;
- date of birth; and
- verification of pregnancy (a woman must provide written verification, signed by a medical provider that includes the expected due date and the number of fetuses).

Steps for applying

- Complete the Family Medicaid/BadgerCare Application.

- Mail, fax or deliver the application (applications can be taken over the phone, but the date of eligibility will be determined based on when the signed application is received at the county human or social service department, not the date of the phone request).
- An individual or family can also apply in person at their county/tribal human or social service department, W-2 agency or Medicaid outstation site. Contact your local human or social service department for details.

Advocacy Tip: Always apply before the end of the month to gain the most benefits possible.

Waiver provisions for pregnant women and children

Pregnant women applying for Healthy Start will be asked to provide contact information for the baby’s father. There are specific circumstances under which the pregnant woman **does not** have to answer these questions.

- Coverage for a pregnant woman or child cannot be denied if the applicant does not provide the contact information for the absent parent to the county child support office. A pregnant woman will remain covered until the last day of the month 60 days after the birth of the baby. After the Healthy Start coverage ends, the woman will not be eligible for any other Medicaid program if she does not provide the contact information for the absent parent, however, **her child will remain eligible**.
- If the pregnant woman does not know where the father currently resides and does not have contact information for him, the pregnant woman cannot be penalized unless it is proven that the pregnant woman is not cooperating (such as concealing the father’s location).
- The pregnant woman cannot be penalized for not providing absent parent information if she does not know who is the father of the child.
- If there is an abusive relationship that physically or emotionally threatens the pregnant woman applying for Healthy Start or her children, a waiver can be requested so that the contact information for the absent parent does not have to be provided. A form will be sent to the pregnant woman from the child support office in her county. She must complete this form and return it, and a decision will be made as to whether or not the circumstances meet the waiver criteria. Documentation that will be accepted includes: police or hospital records, shelter records, a statement from a physician or nurse, counselor/social worker or member of the clergy, family member or friend, that documents the abusive relationship.

What services are covered?

Healthy Start pays for doctor visits, hospital costs, prescription drugs, delivery costs, medical, dental, vision and counseling services for pregnant women, newborns and children up to age 19. For pregnant women, Healthy Start coverage ends on the last day of the month 60 days after the birth of the baby.



For help with coverage questions, call 1-800-585-4222 statewide / 261-6939 in Madison
ABC for Health provides free health benefits counseling to families anywhere in Wisconsin. Benefits advocates will talk with you about health coverage options.