

COFA Islander Health Care

Substitute Senate Bill 5683 creates a premium assistance program for Compact of Free Association (COFA) citizens. COFA citizens include individuals from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

The Health Care Authority (HCA) will cover the premium cost of a silver level Qualified Health Plan and out-of-pocket expenses for eligible individuals starting with January 2019 coverage. Individuals will be able to apply starting this open enrollment November 1, 2018.

Who is eligible?

COFA citizens who have income less than 133% of the federal poverty level and are:

- Washington residents
- Enrolled into a silver level Qualified Health Plan
- Ineligible for other federal or state medical assistance programs.

Advisory Committee

HCA is establishing an advisory committee made up of COFA citizens and insurers to advise on program development for open enrollment starting November 1, 2018. The group will be responsible for advising HCA on a variety of decision points throughout implementation.

Outreach Campaign

With guidance from the advisory committee, HCA and partners will develop a culturally and linguistically accessible outreach campaign to launch by September 1, 2018. The goal of the outreach campaign is to:

- Tell people how to apply for coverage online through Washington Healthplanfinder, in-person and by phone or mail;
- Tell people how to find program and application assistance in their community;
- Provide guidance for using coverage;
- Describe how out-of-pocket expenses will be paid by the program;

While this program is in the early stages of development, HCA is committed to finding the best possible ways to ensure that applicants face minimal barriers in accessing the program. For example, HCA is exploring ways to avoid program recipients having to pay for any portion of a service out of pocket.

Look for more information to come!

If you would like more information or would like to get involved, please contact us at COFAQuestions@hca.wa.gov.

