

AGENDA

- Introduction and Timeline Reminders (5 min)
- Federal changes (10 min)
- OE Communications (15 min)
- Carrier Updates (5 min)
- System Changes and CAC Updates (15 min)
- Q&A (10 min)

OPEN ENROLLMENT TIMELINE

DATE	EVENT
10/15/2025	Anonymous shopping available on public-facing CoverME.gov website
10/21/2025 - 10/23/2025	Open Enrollment notices sent to consumers about OE start and end dates along with redetermination notices for next year. Notices should reach consumer mailboxes within 5 business days
11/1/2025	Open Enrollment begins. Renewal enrollments and enrollment notices present in accounts.
12/15/2025	Deadline to enroll for coverage starting 1/1/2026
1/15/2026	Deadline to enroll for coverage starting 2/1/2026

ASSISTER RECERTIFICATION TIMELINE

DATE	EVENT
9/3/2025	Assister training for 2026 certification began
10/31/2025	Deadline for Maine Enrollment Assistor Organizations (MEAO) to have at least one individual complete 2025 certification training
11/1/2025 - 11/29/2025	Grace period for MEAOs to ensure at least one individual is certified in 2025
12/1/2025	MEAOs who did not have at least one individual complete re-certification requirements will be in violation of MEAO agreement and will be removed from Find Local Help

- Training for 2025 is available through the CoverME.gov <u>Learning Management System</u>
 - If you have forgotten your password for your Learning Management System account, please use the "forgot password" option at login to reset it.

SILVER PLANS WITH COST SAVING REDUCTIONS

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Many consumers are eligible for out-of-pocket cost savings through the Marketplace

Consumers should consider all expenses, including premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket, before choosing the best plan for their budget.

Best practices when helping consumers who qualify for Cost Sharing Reductions (CSRs):

- Consumers ONLY get extra savings from CSRs by enrolling in a Silver plan.
- Most consumers with a projected annual household income between 100-200% FPL (\$15,650-\$31,300 for a single adult, \$21,150-\$42,300 for a couple, \$32,150-\$64,300 for a family of 4) should have access to low-premium Silver plans with additional savings from CSRs.
- Consumers are often drawn to lower premium Bronze plans when comparing plans. Sort and filter results to see extra savings with Silver plans.
- Always remind consumers about potential out-of-pocket costs of plans beyond monthly premiums, which may impact a consumer's overall expenses throughout the year.

IMPACT OF FEDERAL CHANGES ON OPEN ENROLLMENT 2026

Federal Changes to Health Insurance Marketplaces

June 25, 2025

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the Marketplace Integrity and Affordability Rule, setting new requirements for federal and state Health Insurance Marketplaces.

August 22, 2025 Stay on provisions of the CMS rule due to ruling in City of Columbus v. Kennedy

July 4, 2025

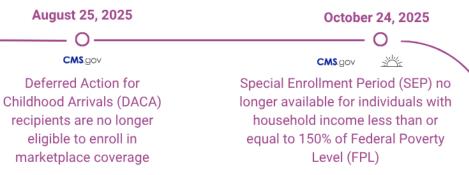
Congress passed the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (H.R. 1). Like the CMS Final Rule, H.R. 1 includes provisions to tighten eligibility and marketplace enrollment requirements.



Recent Federal Changes to Maine's Health Insurance Marketplace

Key: **Provision in CMS Marketplace** CMS.gov **Integrity and Affordability Final Rule** 2025 Implementation Provision in HR 1 (2025 2026 Implementation **Federal Budget Reconciliation Act)** 2027 Implementation **Provision sunsets December 31, 2026** 2028 Implementation **Enhanced Premium Tax Credits Expire**

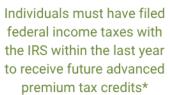














Those who have income below 100% FPL and are in the five-year Medicaid waiting period (due to immigration status) no longer eligible for premium tax credits



January 1, 2026

Premium tax credits no longer available for individuals enrolled in an SEP based on income and events not specified by HealthCare.gov



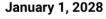
Individuals must pay back the full amount of excess premium tax credits received in the prior year (likely beginning in 2027 with credits received in 2026)



All bronze and catastrophic plans sold through the marketplace are HSA eligible.

November 1, 2026









Open enrollment shortened (reduces open enrollment to a maximum of 9-weeks)



Individuals who are otherwise eligible for Medicaid, but do not meet the community engagement requirements, are not eligible for premium tax credits for Marketplace coverage



Many lawfully present immigrants no longer eligible for premium tax credits



Individuals who receive APTC must actively verify household income and family size, immigration status, eligibility for coverage, and place of residence; eliminates annual autoreenrollment and conditional eligibility

^{* =} Provision is stayed pending resolution of City of Columbus v Kennedy

2025 Plan Year Changes

Effective August 25, 2025

- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients are no longer eligible for coverage through CoverME.gov
- Premium Payment Thresholds established by carriers selling plans within CoverME.gov must use the net percentage-based method (95% or higher), removing the gross-premium and fixed-dollar threshold method previously allowed in the 2026 release of the NBPP

Effective October 24, 2025

• Special Enrollment Period (SEP) removed for individuals with household incomes less than or equal to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), unless they qualify for another SEP category



Effective for Plans Beginning on and after January 1, 2026

- Lawfully present immigrants earning less than 100% FPL, including those waiting for Medicaid eligibility due to their immigration status, cannot receive APTC when enrolling in coverage through CoverME.gov
- Consumers must repay all excess APTC when filing taxes if their reported income is more than what was reported on their CoverME.gov application, eliminating the cap on premium tax credit repayment
- All Bronze and Catastrophic plans are HSA-eligible
- Enhanced Premium Tax Credits (EPTC) were *not included* in the Budget Reconciliation Bill and are set to *expire* December 31, 2025. See CoverME.gov <u>EPTC talking points for Partners</u>.

2026 Plan Year Rate Increases

Rates for Plan Year 2026 will increase by an average of 24.2% due to increased medical costs and federal policy changes

Carrier	Plan Type	Proposed Average	Final Average	Low	High	2025 Covered Lives
Anthem Health Plans of Maine	HMO/PPO	19%	23.5%	10.8%	46.5%	33,118
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care	НМО	20%	21.3%	-0.9%	28.9%	13,718
Maine Community Health Options	HMO/PPO	34.4%	26.5%	14.3%	32.7%	22,633
Taro Health (Mending Health)	НМО	19.1%	32.7%	30.8%	36.2%	1,106

- Anticipation of fewer low-risk enrollees in the marketplace for 2026, prompting rate increases to account for the risk of adverse selection
- Enhanced Premium Tax Credits (EPTCs) are set to expire at the end of 2025 without congressional intervention, further increasing consumer costs
- Majority of consumers will still qualify for Advance Premium Tax Credit's (APTC) lower level than 2025



OPEN ENROLLMENT 2026: MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Preparation for Consumers

- Starting 10/15, preview plans with the Plan Comparison Tool: The CoverME.gov Plan Comparison Tool is an easy way to find the best health plan that fits based on select criteria. It shows the plan benefits and costs, including savings, side-by-side, making it easy to look at all options.
- Estimate the change to 2026 savings using the KFF calculator: Use this unbiased online calculator to estimate what your monthly costs might be. The calculator will give a best estimate, not an exact price. You will see your actual 2026 costs when a personalized renewal notice in October.
- Speak with a certified broker or enrollment specialist: Free, local help is available. Understand your options and apply for coverage. Talk to an expert to make sure you're not leaving money on the table. Many offer virtual and in-person support. Visit CoverME.gov/localhelp.

COMMUNICATION TO CONSUMERS

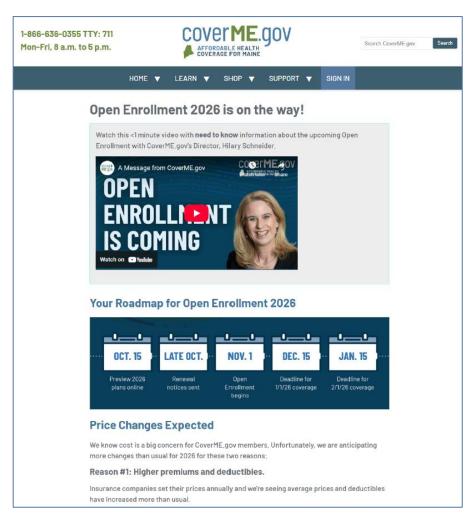
- Email first, postcard back up
- Landing zone, <u>CoverME.gov/2026</u>
- EPTC Expiration FAQ: https://www.coverme.gov/learn/financial-help/expiration-of-the-enhanced-premium-tax-credits



Email Touch 1



Postcard Touch 1



Landing zone

Communication to Consumers for 0E 2026

- CoverME.gov Communication (August October)
 - Income End Dates of December 31st will impact Auto-Renewals and APTC
 - Prepare for Rate Changes and Account Updates
 - Account updates needed to re-enroll
 - > IRS consent needed
 - > Financial application missing information
 - > Transfer to MaineCare for eligibility determination
 - Encourage active shopping; age outs; silver CSR eligibility
 - Cancels; EPTC eligible, as appropriate

Communication to Consumers for 0E 2026 (cont.)

- Carrier Communication (Mid-Late October)
 - CMS required Plan Renewal Letter informing consumers of prices if current plan was renewed
- CoverME.gov Auto-Renewal Notice (October 21st-23rd)
 - Notice they are eligible for auto-reenrollment if they make no changes before December 15th
- CoverME.gov Redetermination Notice with Cost Estimates (November 1st)
 - Notice of Plan Year 2026 plan cost estimates, monthly premiums and APTC, based on current enrollment



OE 2026 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Comprehensive awareness campaign across traditional and digital tactics



Paid Digital Media

Banner ads
Paid search
YouTube video
Facebook/Instagram/TikTok



Radio

9 weeks

Broadcast, 20-22 stations Streaming audio – Spotify, iHeart



Television Ads Over 8-10 weeks

Broadcast Streaming Cable



Social Media Content

2 posts/week FB/Instagram



Out of home assets

Bus wraps & interior signage in 5 markets Bus shelter signage Maine Mariners & UMaine Sponsorships Pharmacy Point-of-Sale



Search Engine Optimization

Website tagging to improve results



Public Relations

Press Releases – 10/28
Press events
Radio interviews



Direct to Consumer

Email
Mailers
CAC Outbound Calls

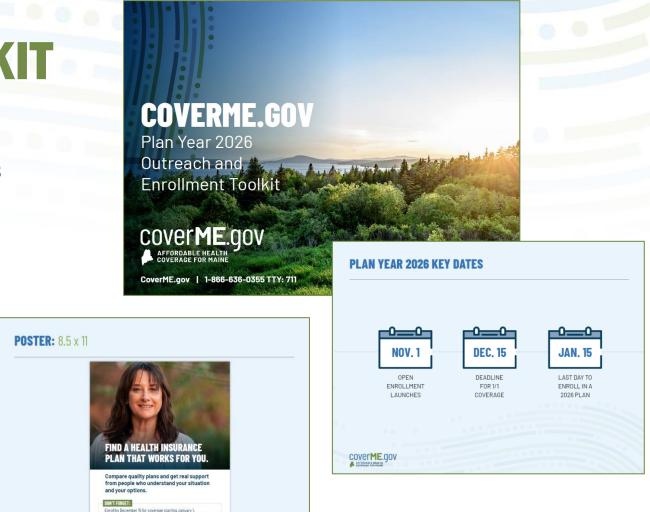






OE 2026 PARTNER TOOL KIT

- Resources include flyers, posters, social media posts, newsletter copy, and digital signage with several pieces translated into multiple non-English languages (Arabic, French, Lingala, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish)
 - English version available now
 - Translated version coming soon
- Includes Frequently Asked Questions to help answer consumer questions



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OE 2026 MARKETING & OUTREACH

- Continue to build CoverME.gov brand awareness
 - Adjusting creative concept from "A Plan that Fits, A Price that Works" to "A plan that fits. Support you can count on."
- Focus on recruiting new members <u>and</u> retaining current members
- Educate consumers about health insurance
 - ✓ Terminology
 - ✓ Plan options
 - √ Financial help
 - ✓ Pre-deductible coverage
- Highlight how and why to get help from enrollment experts and how to prepare for the conversation
- Target populations for outreach:
 - ✓ Agricultural and Fishing communities
 - ✓ Employees of small businesses that cannot afford coverage for employees.
 - ✓ Pre-retirees
 - ✓ Service industry workers (childcare, home health, direct care etc.)



CARRIER UPDATES

CARRIER UPDATES

- Taro
 - Rebranded to Mending: When a consumer completes their enrollment for PY26, they will see the Mending logo and name when they make their plan selection.
 - Mending is also expanding their coverage area
- Harvard Pilgrim
 - No longer offering catastrophic plans
 - Northern Light Health moving from the Standard Network (tier 2) to the Preferred Network (tier 1), effective 1/1/26. This will impact the Maines Choice tiering and will also modify the access to certain counties, making coverage statewide.
 - A search on their public website won't show this update *until* 1/1/26. HP's public website currently displays Northern Light as standard network but for plan shopping on CoverME.gov for 2026 coverage, it will display as preferred network.

CARRIER UPDATES

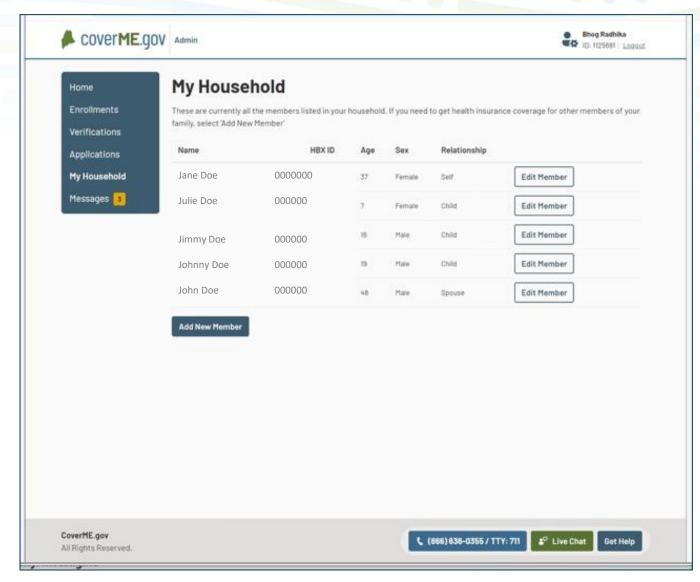
- Community Health Options
 - New Agreement with Northern Light Health includes:
 - Improved rates, less need for Prior Approval for in-patient treatment, and easier-to-understand bills for anyone on a Community Health Options plan using a Northern Light Health facility, effective immediately.
 - Preferred provider copays and coinsurance at all Northern Light Health providers and facilities for Community Health Options Members on HMO Tiered New England plans, beginning Jan. 1, 2026.
 - Newly proposed Bronze and Silver North Star plans offering savings on a range of services for individuals/families and small businesses in Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Hancock, Aroostook and Washington counties. These plans will be available during 2026 Open Enrollment for Jan. 1, 2026.
 - Specific plan changes are effective for Individual and Small Group plans beginning Jan. 1, 2026.



ENROLLAPP CHANGES

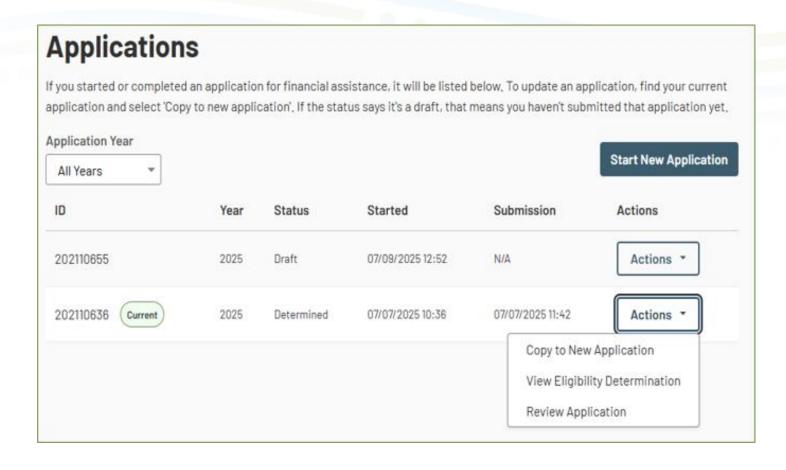
"MY HOUSEHOLD" PAGE WILL BE REMOVED

 Actions on this page will now be done through Applications



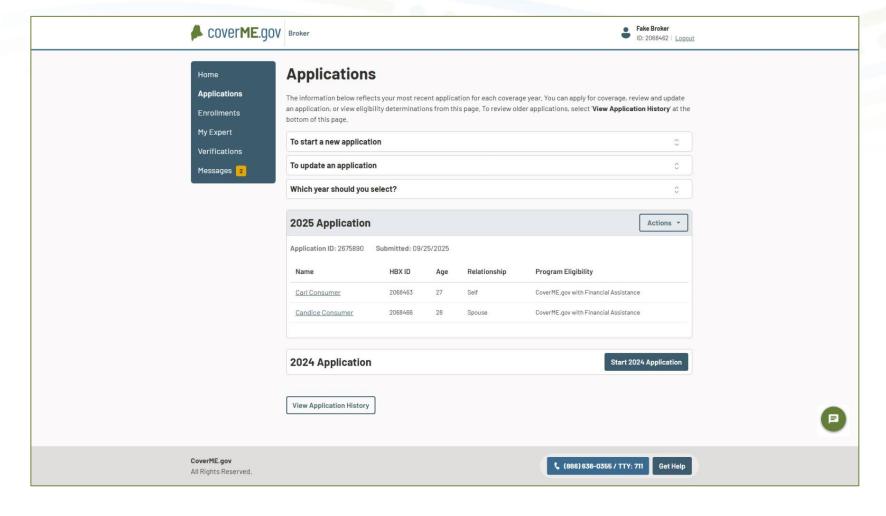
"APPLICATIONS" PAGE CHANGES

Old "Applications" page view



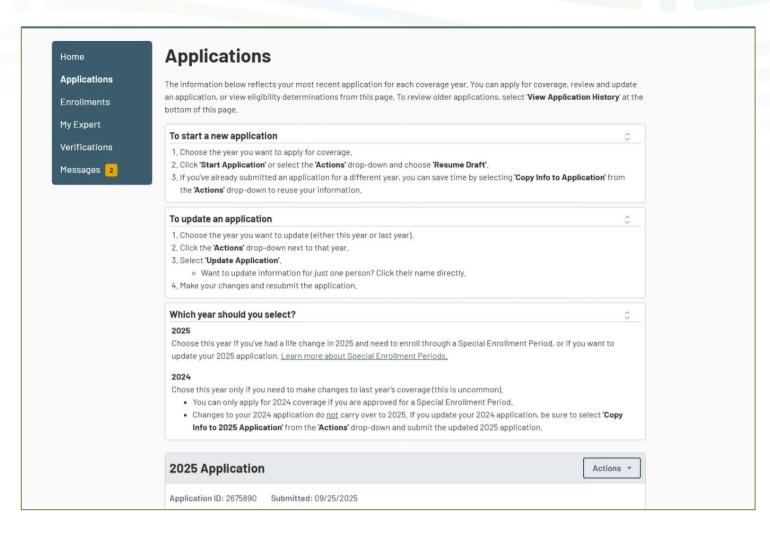
NEW "APPLICATIONS" PAGE

- Only displays current year and one year prior
- The entire application history can still be accessed by clicking "View Application History"



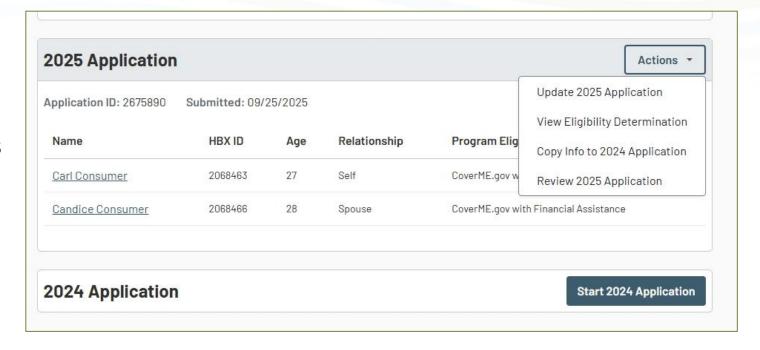
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

 Added instruction for consumers through dropdown windows



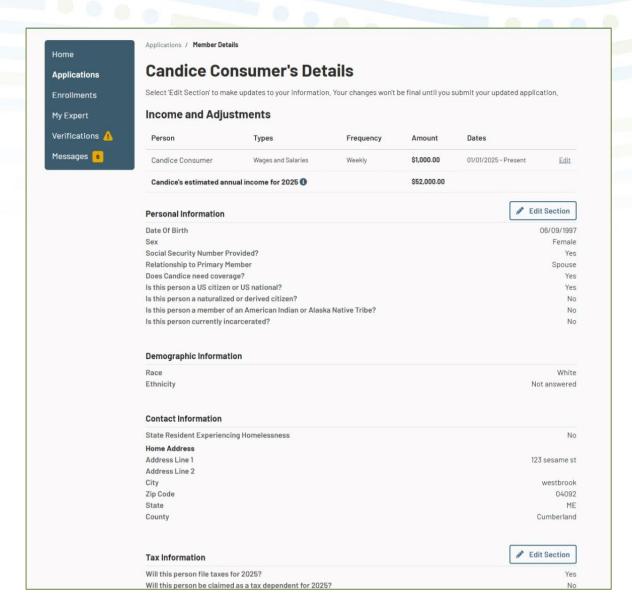
ACTIONS

- Click "actions" drop down to:
 - Copy information to new application
 - Resume drafts
 - View eligibility determinations
 - Review or update current application



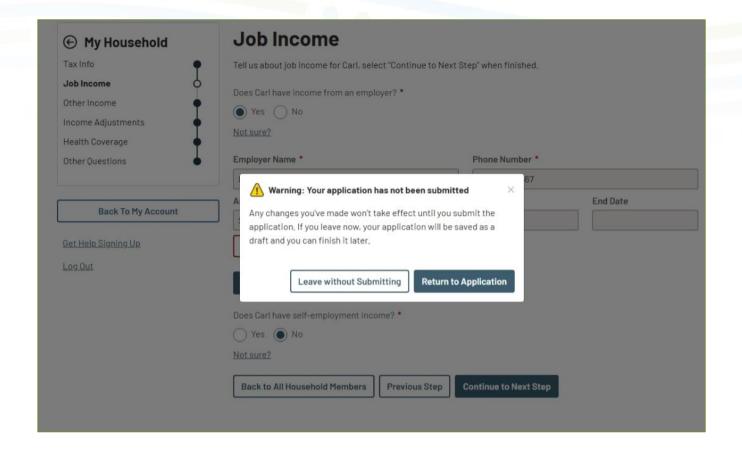
EDIT INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

- Clicking on an individual consumer's name will bring you a view with only their information
- You can edit individual consumer's information here, such as contact preferences or updated income information
- Note: consumers must submit this new application for changes to save



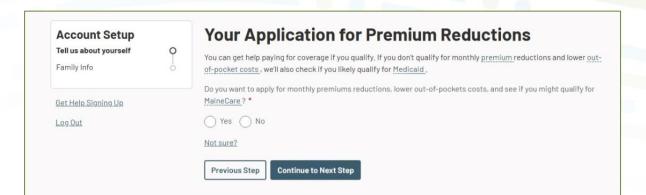
SUBMISSION WARNING

Consumers will see this warning screen if they try to navigate away from the application without submitting their changes

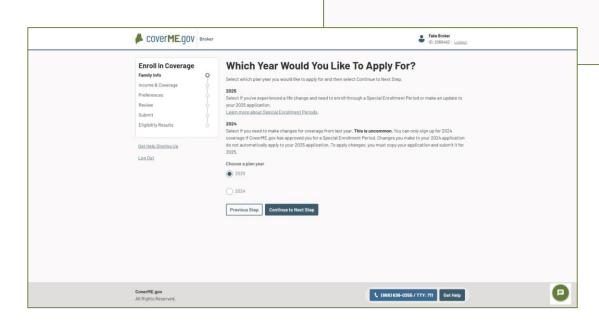


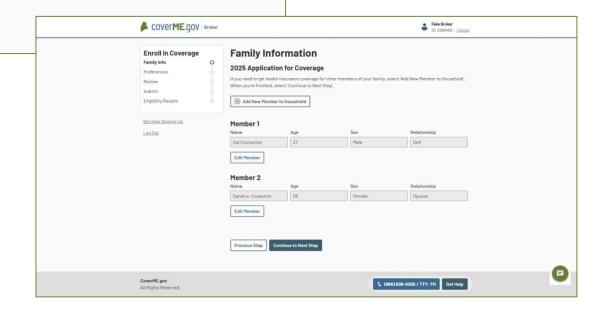
TWO APPLICATION FLOWS

If consumers select
"yes," they are directed
to the full application,
which includes income
information



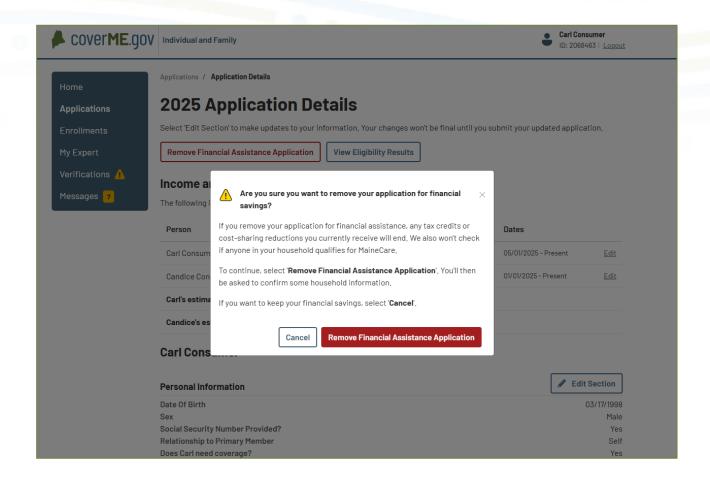
If consumers select "No," they are directed to a shorter QHP application flow, and will now receive QHP-only eligibility letters





REMOVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Consumers can remove financial assistance from their application
- They will receive this warning if they select "remove Financial Assistance Application"



OTHER SYSTEM UPDATES

- 14-character password requirement was rolled out to admin users on August 7, 2025
- Consumers with "text" communications preference will receive a text when a message or notice is posted to the consumer's CoverME.gov secure messages
- Consumers can reset their CoverME.gov password via their mobile device

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE CENTER - OE HOURS

CAC Hours:

- Standard Operating Hours Starting November 1st:
 - Monday-Friday 8am-8pm

Expanded hours:

- Saturday, November 1, 8am-8pm
- Saturday, November 8, 15, 22, 9am-1pm
- Saturday, December 6, 9am-1pm
- Saturday December 13-Monday, December 15, 8am-10pm
- Saturday, January 10-Sunday January 11, 9am-1pm
- Monday, January 12-Thursday, January 15, 8am-10pm

Make all efforts to call before deadline days: Hold times on deadline days can exceed one hour.

- Virtual hold will generally be offered until 7pm Monday-Friday from Nov. 1-Jan. 15
 - This saves your place in line. You will receive a call back from a CSR when it is your turn.
 - Will be available on high call volume days, including the Saturdays the call center is open.
 - We will make every effort to call you back the same day. Call backs may occur after posted operating hours.
 - On deadline days, you may not receive a call back until the following day.
- The CAC is closed on all State of Maine Holidays



CONSUMER ASSISTANCE CENTER

- Pathway to reach a representative specifically trained to handle broker and navigator issues:
 - Press 1 to enter the Broker/Maine Enrollment Assister menu
 - If you are calling to help someone apply or enroll,
 press 1
 - If you need technical help, such as a password reset,
 press 2
 - This option will tell you where to go online for a password reset. Pressing 1 will repeat the message, pressing 2 will route you to a CSR
 - If you need help with your certification courses or Learning Management System, press 3



CONSUMER ASSISTANCE CENTER

High Volume Call Days Triage System

- Will be in use the weeks of Dec $10^{th}-15^{th}$ and Jan $10^{th}-15^{th}$
 - Authenticate yourself and the account with CSR, providing your information and reason for call
 - Receive a case number (keep this readily available)
 - Enter the BMEA queue to speak with a specially trained representative
 - No reverification needed if same individuals are on the phone who talked to the first CSR
 - If you speak with the first representative and disconnect the call without selecting the virtual hold, you will receive a call back within 5 business days, and the case will be treated like it would have been on the high-volume day

CONNECTING WITH COVERME.GOV

Consumer Assistance Center

- Quickest and most effective way to resolve broker and consumer issues
- Encouraged as a first point of contact

Email sbmassisters.dhhs@maine.gov

- Best for general questions or issues which could not be resolved through the CAC
- Include case number and general explanation of the problem
- Please <u>do not</u> send PII via this email: use HBXID <u>only</u> to identify consumers

