

§ 155.305 Eligibility standards. Link to an amendment published at 90 FR 27221, June 25, 2025.

(a) *Eligibility for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange.* The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange if he or she meets the following requirements:

(1) *Citizenship, status as a national, or lawful presence.* Is a citizen or national of the United States, or is a non-citizen who is lawfully present in the United States, and is reasonably expected to be a citizen, national, or a non-citizen who is lawfully present for the entire period for which enrollment is sought;

(2) *Incarceration.* Is not incarcerated, other than incarceration pending the disposition of charges; and

(3) *Residency.* Meets the applicable residency standard identified in this paragraph (a)(3).

(i) For an individual who is age 21 and over, is not living in an institution as defined in 42 CFR 435.403(b), is capable of indicating intent, and is not receiving an optional State supplementary payment as addressed in 42 CFR 435.403(f), the service area of the Exchange of the individual is the service areas of the Exchange in which he or she is living and—

(A) Intends to reside, including without a fixed address; or

(B) Has entered with a job commitment or is seeking employment (whether or not currently employed).

(ii) For an individual who is under the age of 21, is not living in an institution as defined in 42 CFR 435.403(b), is not eligible for Medicaid based on receipt of assistance under title IV-E of the Social Security Act as addressed in 42 CFR 435.403(g), is not emancipated, is not receiving an optional State supplementary payment as addressed in 42 CFR 435.403(f), the Exchange service area of the individual—

(A) Is the service area of the Exchange in which he or she resides, including without a fixed address; or

(B) Is the service area of the Exchange of a parent or caretaker, established in accordance with paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section, with whom the individual resides.

(iii) *Other special circumstances.* In the case of an individual who is not described in paragraphs (a)(3)(i) or (ii) of this section, the Exchange must apply the residency requirements described in 42 CFR 435.403 with respect to the service area of the Exchange.

(iv) *Special rule for tax households with members in multiple Exchange service areas.* (A) Except as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(iv)(B) of this section if all of the members of a tax household are not within the same Exchange service area, in accordance with the applicable standards in paragraphs (a)(3)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this section, any member of the tax household may enroll in a QHP through any of the Exchanges for which one of the tax filers meets the residency standard.

(B) If both spouses in a tax household enroll in a QHP through the same Exchange, a tax dependent may only enroll in a QHP through that Exchange, or through the Exchange that services the area in which the dependent meets a residency standard described in paragraphs (a)(3)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this section.

(v) *Temporary absence.* The Exchange may not deny or terminate an individual's eligibility for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange if the individual meets the standards in paragraph (a)(3) of this section but for a temporary absence from the service area of the Exchange and intends to return when the purpose of the absence has been accomplished.

(b) *Eligibility for QHP enrollment periods.* The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for an enrollment period if he or she meets the criteria for an enrollment period, as specified in §§ 155.410 and 155.420.

(c) *Eligibility for Medicaid.* The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for Medicaid if he or she meets the non-financial eligibility criteria for Medicaid for populations whose eligibility is based on MAGI-based income, as certified by the Medicaid agency in accordance with 42 CFR 435.1200(b)(2), has a household income, as defined in 42 CFR 435.603(d), that is at or below the applicable Medicaid MAGI-based income standard as defined in 42 CFR 435.911(b)(1) and—

(1) Is a pregnant woman, as defined in the Medicaid State Plan in accordance with 42 CFR 435.4;

(2) Is under age 19;

(3) Is a parent or caretaker relative of a dependent child, as defined in the Medicaid State plan in accordance with 42 CFR 435.4; or

(4) Is not described in paragraph (c)(1), (2), or (3) of this section, is under age 65 and is not entitled to or enrolled for benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act, or enrolled for benefits under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

(d) *Eligibility for CHIP.* The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for CHIP if he or she meets the requirements of 42 CFR 457.310 through 457.320 and has a household income, as defined in 42 CFR 435.603(d), at or below the applicable CHIP MAGI-based income standard.

(e) *Eligibility for BHP.* If a BHP is operating in the service area of the Exchange, the Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for the BHP if he or she meets the requirements specified in section 1331(e) of the Affordable Care Act and regulations implementing that section.

(f) *Eligibility for advance payments of the premium tax credit—(1) In general.* The Exchange must determine a tax filer eligible for advance payments of the premium tax credit if the Exchange determines that—

(i) He or she is expected to have a household income that will qualify the tax filer as an applicable taxpayer according to 26 CFR 1.36B-2(b) for the benefit year for which coverage is requested; and

(ii) One or more applicants for whom the tax filer expects to claim a personal exemption deduction on his or her tax return for the benefit year, including the tax filer and his or her spouse

---

(A) Meets the requirements for eligibility for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange, as specified in paragraph (a) of this section; and

(B) Is not eligible for minimum essential coverage for the full calendar month for which advance payments of the premium tax credit would be paid, with the exception of coverage in the individual market, in accordance with 26 CFR 1.36B-2(a)(2) and (c).

(2) *Special rule for non-citizens who are lawfully present and who are ineligible for Medicaid by reason of immigration status.* The Exchange must determine a tax filer eligible for advance payments of the premium tax credit if the Exchange determines that—

(i) He or she meets the requirements specified in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, except for paragraph (f)(1)(i);

(ii) He or she is expected to have a household income, as defined in 26 CFR 1.36B-1(e) of less than 100 percent of the FPL for the benefit year for which coverage is requested; and

(iii) One or more applicants for whom the tax filer expects to claim a personal exemption deduction on his or her tax return for the benefit year, including the tax filer and his or her spouse, is a non-citizen who is lawfully present and ineligible for Medicaid by reason of immigration status, in accordance with 26 CFR 1.36B-2(b)(5).

(3) *Enrollment required.* The Exchange may provide advance payments of the premium tax credit on behalf of a tax filer only if one or more applicants for whom the tax filer attests that he or she expects to claim a personal exemption deduction for the benefit year, including the tax filer and his or her spouse, is enrolled in a QHP that is not a catastrophic plan, through the Exchange.

(4) *Compliance with filing requirement.* The Exchange may not determine a tax filer eligible for advance payments of the premium tax credit (APTC) if HHS notifies the Exchange as part of the process described in § 155.320(c)(3) that APTC payments were made on behalf of either the tax filer or spouse, if the tax filer is a married couple, for two consecutive years for which tax data would be utilized for verification of household income and family size in accordance with § 155.320(c)(1)(i), and the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse did not comply with the requirement to file an income tax return for that year and for the previous year as required by 26 U.S.C. 6011, 6012, and in 26 CFR chapter I, and reconcile APTC for that period.

(i) If HHS notifies the Exchange as part of the process described in § 155.320(c)(3) that APTC payments were made on behalf of either the tax filer or spouse, if the tax filer is a married couple, for 1 year for which tax data would be utilized for verification of household income and family size in accordance with § 155.320(c)(1)(i), and the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse did not comply with the requirement to file an income tax return for that year as required by 26 U.S.C. 6011, 6012, and their implementing regulations and reconcile APTC for that period (“file and reconcile”), the Exchange must:

(A) Send a notification to the tax filer, consistent with the standards applicable to the protection of Federal Tax Information, that informs the tax filer that the Exchange has determined that the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse, if the tax filer is married, has failed to file and reconcile, and educate the tax filer of the need to file and reconcile or risk being determined ineligible for APTC if they fail to file and reconcile for a second consecutive tax year; or

(B) Send a notification to either the tax filer or their enrollee, that informs the tax filer or enrollee that they may be at risk of being determined ineligible for APTC in the future. These notices must educate tax filers or their enrollees on the requirement to file and reconcile, while not directly stating that the IRS indicates the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse, if the tax filer is married, has failed to file and reconcile.

(ii) If HHS notifies the Exchange as part of the process described in § 155.320(c)(3) that APTC payments were made on behalf of either the tax filer or their spouse, if the tax filer is a married couple, for 2 consecutive tax years for which tax data would be utilized for verification of household income and family size in accordance with § 155.320(c)(1)(i), and the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse did not comply with the requirement to file an income tax return for both years as required by 26 U.S.C. 6011, 6012, and their implementing regulations and reconcile APTC for that period (“file and reconcile”), the Exchange must:

(A) Send a direct notification to the tax filer, consistent with the standards applicable to the protection of Federal Tax Information, that explicitly informs the tax filer that the Exchange has determined that the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse, if the tax filer is married, has failed to file their Federal income taxes and reconcile APTC, and educate the tax filer of the need to file and reconcile or risk being determined ineligible for APTC after 2 consecutive years of failing to file and reconcile; or

(B) Send an indirect notification to either the tax filer or their enrollee, that informs the tax filer or enrollee that they may be at risk of being determined ineligible for APTC after 2 years of failing to file and reconcile. These notices must educate tax filers or their enrollees on the requirement to file and reconcile, while not directly stating that the Internal Revenue Service indicates the tax filer or the tax filer's spouse, if the tax filer is married, has failed to file and reconcile.

(5) *Calculation of advance payments of the premium tax credit.* The Exchange must calculate advance payments of the premium tax credit in accordance with 26 CFR 1.36B-3 and § 155.340(i) of this subpart.

(6) *Collection of Social Security numbers.* The Exchange must require an application filer to provide the Social Security number of a tax filer who is not an applicant only if an applicant attests that the tax filer has a Social Security number and filed a tax return for the year for which tax data would be utilized for verification of household income and family size.

(g) *Eligibility for cost-sharing reductions—(1) Eligibility criteria.* (i) The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for cost-sharing reductions if he or she—

(A) Meets the requirements for eligibility for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange, as specified in paragraph (a) of this section;

(B) Meets the requirements for advance payments of the premium tax credit, as specified in paragraph (f) of this section; and

(C) Is expected to have a household income that does not exceed 250 percent of the FPL, for the benefit year for which coverage is requested.

(ii) The Exchange may only provide cost-sharing reductions to an enrollee who is not an Indian if he or she is enrolled through the Exchange in a silver-level QHP, as defined by section 1302(d)(1)(B) of the Affordable Care Act.

(2) *Eligibility categories.* The Exchange must use the following eligibility categories for cost-sharing reductions when making eligibility determinations under this section—

(i) An individual who is expected to have a household income greater than or equal to 100 percent of the FPL and less than or equal to 150 percent of the FPL for the benefit year for which coverage is requested, or for an individual who is eligible for advance payments of the premium tax credit under paragraph (f)(2) of this section, a household income less than 100 percent of the FPL for the benefit year for which coverage is requested;

(ii) An individual is expected to have a household income greater than 150 percent of the FPL and less than or equal to 200 percent of the FPL for the benefit year for which coverage is requested; and

(iii) An individual who is expected to have a household income greater than 200 percent of the FPL and less than or equal to 250 percent of the FPL for the benefit year for which coverage is requested.

(3) *Special rule for family policies.* To the extent that an enrollment in a QHP in the individual market offered through an Exchange under a single policy covers two or more individuals who, if they were to enroll in separate individual policies would be eligible for different cost sharing, the Exchange must deem the individuals under such policy to be collectively eligible only for the category of eligibility last listed below for which all the individuals covered by the policy would be eligible:

(i) Individuals not eligible for changes to cost sharing;

(ii) Individuals described in § 155.350(b) (the special cost-sharing rule for Indians regardless of income);

(iii) Individuals described in paragraph (g)(2)(iii) of this section;

(iv) Individuals described in paragraph (g)(2)(ii) of this section;

(v) Individuals described in paragraph (g)(2)(i) of this section; and

(vi) Individuals described in § 155.350(a) (the cost-sharing rule for Indians with household incomes under 300 percent of the FPL).

(4) For the purposes of paragraph (g) of this section, “household income” means household income as defined in section 36B(d)(2) of the Code.

(h) *Eligibility for enrollment through the Exchange in a QHP that is a catastrophic plan.* The Exchange must determine an applicant eligible for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange in a QHP that is a catastrophic plan as defined by section 1302(e) of the Affordable Care Act, if he or she has met the requirements for eligibility for enrollment in a QHP through the Exchange, in accordance with § 155.305(a), and either—

(1) Has not attained the age of 30 before the beginning of the plan year; or

(2) Has a certification in effect for any plan year that he or she is exempt from the requirement to maintain minimum essential coverage under section 5000A of the Code by reason of—

(i) Section 5000A(e)(1) of the Code (relating to individuals without affordable coverage); or

(ii) Section 5000A(e)(5) of the Code (relating to individuals with hardships).

[77 FR 18444, Mar. 27, 2012, as amended at 78 FR 15533, Mar. 11, 2013; 78 FR 42315, July 15, 2013; 87 FR 27388, May 6, 2022; 88 FR 25918, Apr. 27, 2023; 89 FR 26421, Apr. 15, 2024; 90 FR 4540, Jan. 15, 2025]