

Health and Employment Counseling (HEC) Consumer Guide

What's Inside?

Part 1: Overview of HEC

- What is Health and Employment Counseling (HEC)?
- When should I apply for the Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP)?
- What is the definition of working?
- How do I enroll in HEC?

Part 2: Completing the Employment Plan

- Employment Planning
- Skills and Personality
- Skills Development
- Employment Barriers
- Barrier Resources
- Networking with Existing Community Resources
- Create a Plan

Part 3: Application Process

- Where to Send your Application
- What to Expect Next
- Your Responsibilities

Part 4: Frequently Asked Questions



Health and Employment Counseling is a nine-month pre-employment program for people with disabilities who are not employed but are looking for work as a way to meet the work requirement for the Medicaid Purchase Plan (MAPP).

MAPP allows people with disabilities who are employed or enrolled in HEC to get Medicaid coverage by paying a monthly premium based on income. People with low income may not have to pay a premium.

For more information about MAPP, see the fact sheet at dhs.wi.gov/library/P-10071.htm.

When should I apply for the Medicaid Purchase Plan?

Apply for MAPP before you start the HEC process. Contact your local agency to see whether you meet the eligibility requirements for MAPP.

Also, to participate in HEC and MAPP, you must be determined eligible for Medicaid based on disability. If you do not have a disability determination, your local agency can help start your application. A HEC application will not be processed without a disability determination.

Visit dhs.wi.gov/im-agency to find a local agency near you.

What is the definition of working?

“Working” is paid employment, self-employment, or employment in exchange for goods or services at least once per calendar month.

Some examples of types of work are:

- A job where you get wages from an employer.
- Self-employment that gives you income.
- In-kind work where you provide a service for someone in return for something of value, such as food, goods or services. Examples: doing yardwork in exchange for a meal or walking your friend’s dog in exchange for groceries.

If you are not doing one of these work activities at least monthly, you may instead meet the MAPP work requirement by enrolling in HEC. Contact your agency for more information about MAPP work requirements.

How do I enroll in HEC?

To enroll in HEC, you must complete a HEC application, which is a self-assessment to help you find work. This is also called your employment plan.

You may write the employment plan on your own or with help from someone else, such as a caseworker, benefits specialist, or vocational counselor. You may also submit an active employment plan that you’ve created with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) or the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program. The employment plan includes sections on benefits counseling, employment barriers, and community resources.

The plan should include your employment goals and how you plan to achieve them within nine months.

The employment plan helps you organize your employment goals and identify things that may stand in your way. You should keep a copy of your completed employment plan.

If you need a blank copy of the employment plan, go to dhs.wisconsin.gov/employment-skills/hec.htm. You can also contact your local agency or call 866-278-6440 to have one mailed to you.

Employment Planning

To start your employment plan, think about your goals:

- What kind of job do you want?
- What skills do you have?
- What skills do you need to be successful at the job you identified?
- What are the qualifications for the job?
- Would you qualify for this job in nine months or less?

You may also want to think about long-term career goals.

Remember, to stay enrolled in MAPP, you need to be working within nine months of being approved for HEC.

Skills and Personality

Skills are things you do well. Your personality includes the qualities that describe you.

List your positive qualities and what you do well—those things that you think will help you succeed at your chosen job.

Skills Development

Think of the skills you already have but may want to improve. Write down any skills you need to work on to help you become a stronger job applicant. Then, think about the steps you need to take over the next nine months to develop those skills.

For example, if you would like to work as a cashier, you may already be good at basic math and have a positive attitude. Before you apply for the job, you identify that you want to work on your money handling and customer service skills. Some steps you could take to improve could be shadowing an experienced cashier, taking online math quizzes, or role playing with friends to practice greeting customers, scanning items, and giving correct change.

Employment Barriers

What's standing in the way of getting a job that's right for you? Is your work history limited? Do you have reliable transportation? Do you need assistive technology? Are you lacking necessary skills? These are example of employment barriers.

Write down your employment barriers. Then, think about the steps you can take to overcome them.

Barrier Resources

Barrier resources are people or agencies that can help you move past whatever is holding you back. Resources could be friends or family who will give you a ride to work or your local library where you can use a computer.

List the names of the people on your barriers team, their telephone numbers, and what role they will take in helping you succeed. This section is to help you keep track of who is on your barriers team. The HEC program will not contact anyone you list in this section.

Networking With Existing Community Resources

Use this section of the employment plan to write down the resources you are working with or plan to contact to pursue your employment goals. Write down a name of each resource (individual or organization), their phone number, and the date you plan to contact them.

Examples: Aging and Disability Resource Centers (findmyadrc.com) and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/job-seekers/) which is part of the Department of Workforce Development (dwd.wisconsin.gov).

This section is to help you keep track of your resources and their contact information all in one place. The HEC program will not contact any of the resources you list in this section.

Create a Plan

Your plan of action will help you find and keep a job. In this section, you will write down the steps you need to take, the deadlines for each step, and who you need to talk to or work with to achieve employment.

For example, to learn more about your job goal, you may want to set up a meeting with someone in a job like the one you want to ask questions and get advice. You may need to take a class or figure out how to get to and from work.

Benefits Counseling

The HEC program encourages you to connect with a work incentives benefits specialist before you start to work. To find a work incentives benefit specialist, go to dhs.wi.gov/benefit-specialists/work-incentives.htm.

A benefits specialist can review your current benefits and answer your questions, such as:

- Will my benefits be affected when I start a job and increase my earnings?
- How will MAPP affect my other benefits?
- Will higher assets in MAPP decrease or eliminate any other benefits?
- Are any work incentives available?

Part 3: Application Process

Where to Send Your Application

Submit your signed, completed application one of these ways.



Mobile App

Take a photo of all the pages of the form and submit them using the MyACCESS mobile app



Online

Scan all pages of the form to the ACCESS website. You can do this through your ACCESS account, which you can log in to at access.wi.gov.



Fax

- If you live in **Milwaukee County**, fax the form to 888-409-1979.
- If you do **not** live in Milwaukee County, fax the form to 855-293-1822



Mail

- If you live in **Milwaukee County**:
MDPU
6055 N. 64th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53218
- If you do **not** live in Milwaukee County:
CDPU
PO Box 5234
Janesville, WI 53547



In Person

Take the form to your agency. Find your agency contact at dhs.wi.gov/im-agency.

What to Expect Next

Once you submit the completed application, a decision will be made in 10 business days. If your application is approved, you will receive a letter from the HEC program coordinator.

The HEC program coordinator will share your HEC enrollment information with your local agency. If you meet the eligibility requirements for MAPP, then your enrollment will be complete, and you will be able to use your Medicaid benefits.

If your application is not approved, you will receive a letter explaining why. The HEC program coordinator will share the decision letter with your local agency. Your local agency will then determine your eligibility for MAPP, but you may need to meet the work requirement.

Your Responsibilities

After you receive an approval letter from the HEC program coordinator, you have nine months to put your plan into action and start working in exchange for money or goods or services.

You are responsible for using the resources you identified in your employment plan to achieve your employment goals. At the time your HEC enrollment ends, you must meet the work requirement to continue getting Medicaid coverage through MAPP.

When you start working, you must report it to your local agency and the HEC program coordinator.

How long can I be enrolled in HEC?

You can be enrolled in the HEC program for up to nine months. At the end of nine months, your HEC enrollment will end, and you must meet the work requirement to continue to receive your Medicaid coverage through MAPP. The nine-month enrollment period begins on the first of the month your application was submitted.

Important dates, including the start and end dates of your HEC enrollment period, will be included in the approval letter.

If you feel like you are making progress but might not be employed by the end of your nine-month HEC enrollment period, you may apply for one three-month extension. You must apply before the end of your HEC enrollment period to be approved for an extension and prevent any gaps in your MAPP coverage.

You may enroll in HEC twice within a five-year period. There must be at least six months between the end of your first and the start of your second enrollment.

Why is HEC enrollment limited to nine months?

MAPP is a program for people who are working. HEC is for people who need some time to find work but who are able to do so within nine months.

How do I get a disability determination?

If you have not been determined eligible for Medicaid based on disability, you can apply for a disability determination through your local agency. Visit dhs.wi.gov/im-agency to find a local agency near you.

It sometimes takes a few months to obtain the determination, so the sooner you start the paperwork, the sooner you can participate in HEC and MAPP. A HEC application will not be processed until after a disability determination is made.

What should I do when I start working?

When you start working during your HEC period, report this to your local agency and the HEC program coordinator right away.

Use the HEC Employment Report form to tell the HEC program coordinator about your job. Go to dhs.wi.gov/employment-skills/hec.htm to download the form, then follow the instructions to complete and submit it. You can also contact your local agency or call 866-278-6440 to have the form mailed to you.



HEC questions?
Call 866-278-6440