

Open Enrollment for Health Insurance Market Begins

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin

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State officials announce the launch of “From Confused to Covered” campaign to educate Wisconsinites on health care options.

MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers, together with Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Dept. of Health Services (DHS) Sec. Andrea Palm, Commissioner of Insurance Mark Afable, and other state and local officials and stakeholders, announced Friday the launch of open enrollment for the health insurance market.

Open enrollment runs from November 1 to December 15 for individuals purchasing health insurance on the individual market. Wisconsin residents should visit [GetCovered.WI.gov](https://www.getcovered.wi.gov) to learn about their health insurance options or they can receive free help signing up for health insurance by calling or texting 2-1-1 to get connected with a local enrollment expert.



“Every person should have access to quality, affordable healthcare, and that starts by making sure folks know there are options for low-cost or free health insurance right here in our state,” said Gov. Evers. “I’ve said all along that healthcare should not be a privilege afforded just to the healthy and the wealthy, so that’s why we’re encouraging folks to get enrolled and get covered today.”

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“Enrolling in health insurance doesn’t have to be confusing,” said DHS Sec. Palm. “Everyone in Wisconsin can call or text 2-1-1 to get help from an expert. When they do, they’ll get connected with people like those helping Milwaukee residents here at the Outreach Community Health Center. Whether you’re eligible for BadgerCare Plus or need to enroll in a private plan on [HealthCare.gov](#), we’re here to help you get access to the healthcare you deserve.”

“We need to do everything we can to help people to get the quality, affordable healthcare coverage they need. Thanks to strong leadership from Governor Evers and the investments his administration is making, Wisconsinites across our state will have more choices and more affordable rates for quality health insurance plans this year,” said U.S. Sen. Baldwin. “Governor Evers is providing funding for more health insurance navigators and conducting an awareness campaign in the state, so that families in Wisconsin will have the information they need to sign up for quality, comprehensive coverage that includes essential health services. I am in full support of this open enrollment effort to get people covered with the healthcare they need at a price they can afford.”

“Compared to 2015, last year there were more than 8,600 fewer people enrolling in health insurance on the marketplace in Milwaukee and that’s a trend in the wrong direction,” Lt. Gov. Barnes said. “Nearly 68,000 people in Milwaukee County are uninsured — but we can change that. Today, and throughout the open enrollment period, we’re encouraging everyone in Milwaukee and throughout Wisconsin to apply for coverage. Together, we can create a healthier Wisconsin where everyone, regardless of ZIP code, has the opportunity to thrive.”

According to the Wisconsin 2018 Family Health Survey, an estimated 7 percent of Wisconsin residents were without health insurance for part or all of the past year. This represents approximately 402,000 Wisconsinites. In 2018, more than 28,000 Milwaukee County residents selected a health insurance plan on the marketplace during open enrollment according to the Milwaukee Enrollment Network, and more than 25 percent of those were new enrollees. Yet, there was a 15 percent decline in enrollment on the marketplace from the previous year.

DHS launched a campaign to educate Wisconsin residents on their enrollment options today called “Get Covered Wisconsin.” The campaign includes Public Service Announcements, a social media campaign, and a new website to help Wisconsinites learn about their health insurance options and connect them with free help, either in-person or over the phone. DHS partnered with Covering Wisconsin and the United Way of Wisconsin to train all 211 regional contact centers to ensure residents get the help they need.

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“I want to thank Gov. Evers, Sen. Baldwin, and all the state and local leaders that are here today to mark the beginning of open enrollment,” said Outreach Health Center CEO Connie Palmer. “Our goal is to serve the health and wellness needs of the folks right here in our community. That work happens every single day throughout the year. But being surrounded by our community and state leaders, I know we have more support than ever in getting our community covered.”

“There are more insurance options today than in the last few years,” said Insurance Commissioner Afable. “We’re encouraging everyone who has considered the marketplace in the past to take another look. You might find a better plan to fit your needs with different coverage options or even lower rates.”



There are also more than 200,000 Wisconsin residents currently insured by high-quality plans through [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov). Open enrollment is the opportunity for them to shop around to make sure they are getting the best coverage to meet their needs. Wisconsin insurance rates for 2020 are 3.2 percent lower on a weighted average than 2019 rates and there are also more options for insurance plans on the individual market than in previous years.

Open enrollment is also ongoing for Medicare. Medicare open enrollment runs from October 15 through December 7.

Open enrollment events are being held across Wisconsin to help residents get access to coverage that will fit their needs. A list of open enrollment events can be found at [GetCovered.WI.gov](https://www.wisconsin.gov/getcovered).