Issue 36, November 2026

Montana Healthcare Programs
MESSENGER

Grievance Portal

DPHHS has a new, secure online portal where you can share a concern or file a complaint (called a grievance) about your Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). The portal will be available on the HCBS and Access Rule Webpages, both links will take you to the same portal: Montana Medicaid Access Rule (Home) and Home and Community Based Services

Key dates:

- Dec. 1, 2026: Soft launch.
- Jan. 1, 2027: The portal officially opens.

What Is HCBS?
HCBS are services that help you live safely at home or in your community instead of a nursing home. HCBS does not include regular medical care, like doctor visits, ER trips, surgery, lab tests, or prescriptions. Learn more at Home and Community Based Services

What Can I Report?

- Your Person-Centered Plan: If you feel your voice isn't being heard or your goals aren't being included
- Service Planning and Delivery: If you are not receiving your approved services, or if there is a problem with how they are being delivered
- HCBS Settings Requirements: If you feel your rights to privacy, dignity, respect, or independence are not being supported where you live or receive services

If you need additional information, please check the Access Rule webpage for upcoming webinars, updated guidance, and information: Montana Medicaid Access Rule (Home)

Thank you for helping us make Montana Medicaid services better.

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Living your Life, Your Way: The Olmstead Plan for Montana

Everyone wants to live a full life in their own community. We want to be close to friends, family, and the things we enjoy. For many Montanans with disabilities, Montana's Olmstead Plan helps make this possible.

Community Over Institutions
The Olmstead Plan is based on a 1999 Supreme Court decision. This decision says that people with disabilities can get services in the most integrated place that meets their needs. This follows the ideas in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Olmstead Plan helps people with disabilities get care at home or in their community. This lets them take part in cultural and community activities. It supports people with disabilities so they can learn, feel empowered, and spend time with others. The Plan protects people's freedom to choose where they want to live.

The Supreme Court decision says that people with disabilities must be allowed to get state-funded services in the community instead of an institution when:

- It is what the person wants.
- The person's care team agrees that their needs can be met.
- It is a fair and reasonable option compared to how others receive services.

Strengthening Community Living in Montana
As part of the Olmstead planning work, the Department of Public Health and Human Services asked for feedback. This helped the state learn what people need to live in the most community-based settings possible. The goal is to build a system that truly listens to Montana communities.

The first step was gathering information from many groups, including:

- People with disabilities living in the community or in group settings,
- Family members and caregivers, and
- Advocacy groups from across the state.

This feedback helped create a statewide plan based on real experiences, needs, and preferences of the people who use these services.

For more information and to see the full Olmstead Plan for Montana, visit the Olmstead webpage.

Address Social Needs of People with Chronic Disease

Have you or someone in your family visited a clinic recently and answered questions about non-medical needs? Many clinics now ask these questions because your overall well-being is about more than just medicine.

Things like having a safe place to live, reliable rides, and healthy food make a big difference in how you feel. When you fill out a short, private questionnaire, your care team learns what you need outside the clinic.

Sharing this information helps them connect you to local programs that can help, such as:

- **Food support**: Local food pantries and Montana WIC for moms, babies, and young kids.
- **Housing and utility help**: Programs that help pay for rent or home heating (LIHEAP).
- **Transportation**: Options to help you get where you need to go.

For more information and resources, you can reach out to your clinic or visit Montana Healthcare Programs.

Food Assistance for Montanans 60 and Older

Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) has a program called the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). This program helps older adults with low incomes get healthy food each month.

What is CSFP?
CSFP gives a monthly box of food to Montana residents who are 60 or older and have a low income. The food is healthy and helps people get the nutrition they need.

How to Apply
People age 60 and older can apply by contacting their local office. To find an office and get contact information, visit the CSFP website or call (406) 447-4262.

CSFP is a great way for older adults in Montana to get extra food support.

What are ABA Services?

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a type of therapy that uses positive rewards to help kids learn new skills. It can help kids with autism or other developmental needs build social, communication, and learning skills.

To get ABA services, a person must have Montana Medicaid. Kids under 18 who have a serious emotional disturbance may qualify. People up to age 20 may also qualify if they have:

- Autism;
- Serious emotional disturbance; and
- Are in an accredited secondary school, or meet the rules for the Developmental Disabilities Program.

To see if you can get ABA services, visit or go to the Home | OMMS MT Portal. There, you can look for a Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA). The BCBA will help you:

- Start services,
- Complete the assessment, and
- Make a treatment plan.

ABA providers can find manuals, forms, and other helpful information and resources at the Applied Behavior Analysis Services page.

Stay Steady on Your Feet

In Montana, **one in three adults age 65 and older** fall each year. The good news is that many falls can be prevented.

Here are a few simple ways to lower your risk:

- Stay active with exercises that improve your strength, balance, and flexibility.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications. Some medicines may increase your risk of falling.
- Have your vision and hearing checked every year.
- Make your home safer by removing tripping hazards, adding better lighting, and installing grab bars where needed.

You can also take the free **Falls Free CheckUp**. This short online test helps you learn about your risk of falling and how you can stay safe.

Join a free or low-cost falls prevention class in your community, such as Stay Active & Independent for Life (SAIL), Stepping On, or Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention. These fun classes can help improve your strength, balance, and confidence so you can stay active and independent.

To learn more, visit **Falls Prevention** or call **(844) 684-5848**.

Key Contacts

Montana Health Care Programs/Medicaid/HMK *Plus* Member Help Line
For questions regarding benefits or Passport to Health:
(800)362-8312
MT Health Care Programs

Montana Relay Service
For the deaf or hard of hearing:
(800) 253-4091 or 711

Montana Public Assistance Help Line
For eligibility questions:
(888) 706-1535
MT PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Transportation Center
For questions regarding travel or approval:
(800) 292-7114.
Call before you travel, or you may not be reimbursed.