

Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If you have Rhode Island Medicaid experience and want to share your suggestions for how to improve it, the BAC is for you!

What is the Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC)?

The BAC is a group of 10-15 people who meet to share their Medicaid experiences with each other and Medicaid staff to suggest ways to improve Medicaid.

Why should I join the BAC?

If you have Rhode Island Medicaid experience and want to be involved in making positive change in an advisory role, the BAC is for you! If you're selected to join the BAC, you will:

- be able to share your ideas, concerns, and experiences directly with RI Medicaid to help make a difference to the program and its policies.
- provide input that can help us uncover gaps with the program or its services and identify real solutions that can improve the member experience.
- and receive a stipend for your time and experience.

Who can apply to become a BAC member? And where do I find the application if I'm interested?

You can apply to be a BAC member if you are:

- enrolled in Medicaid currently or in the past.
- a family member of someone enrolled in Medicaid.
- a paid or unpaid caregiver of someone enrolled in Medicaid.

To apply to the BAC, you can visit the BAC Application page on our website. There you'll have the option to download a fillable pdf application version to complete and mail it in. You'll also have the option to apply by filling out an application online.

Will BAC members get paid, if so, will that impact my benefits?

Yes, we value your knowledge and time as a member of the BAC. You'll get a \$75 stipend for each meeting you attend. You can get your stipend as a:

- paper check mailed directly to your address.
- or a check deposited directly to your bank accounts as an electronic funds transfer (EFT).

Please Note: This stipend may impact your eligibility for Medicaid and other means tested programs. Stipends are considered taxable income, and it is your responsibility to report all compensation when you file your taxes.

You can review the [Federal Poverty Level \(FPL\) Guidelines and Eligibility Information webpage](#) for details. It will help you find out if this stipend would put your income over the amount used to determine your Medicaid eligibility or other benefits you may receive that are impacted by your income, like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

You can also choose to not receive a stipend or to have the amount reduced.

Can I be a BAC member if I am already a member of any other advisory councils?

Yes, you can still be on the BAC if you also participate in other advisory groups with your health plan, your provider, or any other group.

What kinds of topics will BAC members discuss in meetings?

BAC members can advise Rhode Island Medicaid on issues about and opportunities for the program. You can work with Medicaid staff in an advisory role to discuss a wide range of topics. For example, you can share ideas about how Medicaid can better communicate with members. Or provide input about other ways you feel Medicaid can improve the health of members.

Other areas you can advise on include:

- additions and changes to services.
- coordination of care.
- access to services.
- eligibility, enrollment, and renewal processes.
- cultural awareness, language access, and health equity in the Medicaid program.

Why is Rhode Island Medicaid interested in learning about my experiences?

As a member of Rhode Island Medicaid, your voice matters. We want to hear about your experiences with the program because we believe you can help us improve Medicaid.

How many meetings will I need to attend, and where will they take place?

The BAC meets four times a year in person, virtually, or in mixed formats. You can also call in using a telephone. You are required to attend all meetings unless you have an unavoidable conflict.

We care about your needs and can make reasonable accommodations for you to participate fully in the BAC. For example, language interpretation (including American Sign Language (ASL)), material translation, closed captioning, or other necessary help. Let us know about your needs as soon as possible.

What if I can't make a meeting?

As a BAC member you're required to attend all meetings unless you have an unavoidable conflict. If you must miss a meeting, you'll need to contact the BAC administrator at least two days in advance to the meeting. There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. For specific information about absences, you can read the BAC Bylaws.

How much time would I need to commit to the BAC?

The BAC is expected to meet four times per year, which is once every quarter (once every three months). In addition, a select number of BAC members will also represent the BAC at Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings, which will also take place four times a year. BAC members who are also part of the MAC will attend a total number of eight (8) meetings per year. Most meetings are expected to last about two hours and may require some additional preparation time between meetings. BAC members will have a choice to join meetings in-person, by phone, or by computer (such as through Zoom or Teams). BAC members can decide how they prefer to join meetings.

What if I don't have a computer or internet access?

If you don't have a computer or internet access, you can join BAC meetings by phone or in person.

If I need help with accessibility, including language, will it be available?

We can make reasonable accommodations for you to participate fully in the BAC. For example, language interpretation (including American Sign Language (ASL)), material translation, closed captioning, or other necessary help. Let us know about your needs as soon as possible.

How will Rhode Island Medicaid staff support BAC members?

Rhode Island Medicaid staff will provide support to BAC members by assisting with all planning and preparation for meetings, including setting agendas, taking meeting minutes that include actions taken at the meetings, suggested recommendations, and the responses given by the State.

Tell me more about the Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC)? Are BAC members required to participate in MAC meetings?

The Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC) is a group of up to 25 people who represent advocates, clinical providers and administrators, community partners, and state, local or community-based organizations. The MAC is focused on clinical issues such as delivery of care, new therapies, and diagnostic testing. The MAC must also include representatives from the Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) as follows:

- from the period of July 9, 2025-July 9, 2026, 10% of the MAC membership will include BAC members.

- from the period of July 10, 2026-July 10, 2027, 20% of the MAC membership will include BAC members.
- and thereafter 25% of MAC members must come from the BAC.

As a BAC member you can apply to join the MAC. The MAC meets four times a year, and if you're selected to join, attendance is also required. Visit the MAC page for more information about the MAC.

Will I be identified as a BAC member anywhere publicly? And will the information I share at BAC meetings be made public?

Although a list of BAC members and BAC meeting minutes are going to be posted publicly to the Rhode Island Medicaid / Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) website, it's your choice if your name is included or not. As a BAC member you decide if you want your name removed from the membership list and the meeting notes that will be posted publicly.

Will my Medicaid benefits or services be impacted if I share negative experiences or feedback?

No, not at all. As a reminder, BAC members choose whether meetings are open or closed to the public. As a BAC member you decide if you want your name removed from the membership list and the meeting notes that will be posted publicly.

Any information you share as a member of the BAC will not have any effect on your Rhode Island Medicaid benefits, eligibility, or services.

Will the information in my BAC application be protected?

Yes, your information is protected. You can read the Rhode Island [Notice of Privacy Practices](#) to learn more about how Rhode Island can use and disclose your information. You can find the Notice of Privacy Practices at <https://eohhs.ri.gov/reference-center/forms-applications>. Please note, that the BAC Application may be subject to public disclosure as required by law. If your application is requested as part of a public records request, Rhode Island Medicaid will remove from it your name and any information we think can be used to identify you.