

Arkansas Works Work and Community Engagement Requirement

Beginning June 1, some people between the ages of 30 and 49 who get their healthcare coverage through the Arkansas Works Medicaid program were required to report 80 hours of activities a month to keep their healthcare benefits. Those activities could be work, education, job search or training, and/or volunteer activities. The activities should be reported online from the first of any given month to the 5th of the next month.

As of July 8, about 62,000 AR Works enrollees were subject to the work requirement in August. Of those, 22,445 were required to report activities. Between July 8 and Sept. 9 – approximately 2,600 fewer people became subject to the requirement due to case closures unrelated to compliance or a change in circumstances, leaving 60,012 people subject.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do AR Works beneficiaries meet the work requirement?

The vast majority of people subject to the work requirement have already met the work requirement by either working the equivalent of 80 hours per month at minimum wage or having a recognized exemption from DHS. **Those working more than 80 hours a month and exempt from reporting their activities total 19,391.**

2. How many AR Works beneficiaries did not meet the work requirement?

The number of people who did not meet the work requirement for the third month in September was 4,353. That number is higher than what we want to see. Ultimately, we'd like to see everyone meeting the work requirement. There are resources available to help each AR Works enrollee successfully meet the work requirement.

3. How can an AR Works beneficiary be exempted from the work requirement?

There are a variety of exemptions recognized by DHS to account for an individual's life situations. Those are captured both in our systems and through people reporting them to DHS. In fact, since the work and community engagement requirement began, more than 6,200 enrollees have reported an exemption.

4. What if an AR Works beneficiary doesn't have access to the Internet?

For those without a computer or Internet access, DHS created the Registered Reporter process. Enrollees who cannot report themselves can call a registered reporter, and the registered reporter will log on and report for them. DHS has received authorizations for more than 200 registered reporters. All three insurance carriers that provide AR Works coverage have registered reporters available as well.

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Additionally, DHS also has mailed a list of Public Access locations to each AR Works beneficiary. A resource dashboard is available on DHS website. [Visit the link here](#), select “public computers.”

And finally, every DHS county office has at least one computer available where AR Works beneficiaries can report activities on the access.arkansas.gov website. DHS staff will help enrollees who come into the county offices.

5. What if an AR Works beneficiary has an unexpected or life-changing event that may make them exempt?

For life-changing events, unexpected circumstances that prevent someone from meeting the work requirement, individuals (or someone on their behalf) can seek a Good Cause Exemption. The request can be emailed to AWGoodCauseRequest@dhs.arkansas.gov. You can also make a request by calling your local county office. Good cause exemption requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. During the August reporting period, DHS granted 45 Good Cause Exemption requests.

6. What additional resources are available to Arkansans who want to meet the work requirement?

The Department of Workforce Services is available to offer people across the state free services for finding work, preparing for the workforce, and building their skillsets. They have met and served AR Works enrollees at every level of the career ladder – from those who need to obtain their GED to those who have a college degree and need to find the right job for their skill sets and goals.

7. What has DHS done to educate and inform AR Works beneficiaries of the work requirement?

Extensive outreach has been done to educate AR Works beneficiaries who are subject to the work and community engagement requirement about the new rules; how to meet the work requirement; and the resources available. Since April 2018, DHS and its partners’ outreach include:

- 59,803 letters have been mailed to AR Works beneficiaries
- 150,213 phone calls have been made to new and existing enrollees
- 77,005 emails have been sent to beneficiaries
- 20,000 educational postcards provided to doctors’ offices and emergency rooms
- 6,148 texts have been sent
- 79 Facebook posts shared graphics, videos, and information
- 74 tweets shared graphics, videos, and information
- 30 webinars or in-person trainings completed for stakeholders and advocacy groups

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8. What else has DHS done to assist AR Works beneficiaries to meet the work requirement?

The State has responded to concerns and issues as those have come to its attention. For example:

- Based on enrollee and advocate feedback, DHS expanded call center hours to mirror Access Arkansas hours for reporting activities.
- Given a state network issue, DHS allowed those who tried to report but could not access the website or successfully report through October 5, 2018, to seek a Good Cause Exemption detailing their activities.

9. What happens if someone has lost coverage under AR Works because they did not meet the work requirement?

For those who have lost coverage due to not meeting the work requirement, we're pointing them to resources they might need. DHS has mailed letters to enrollees with information on where to find free community clinics, Community Mental Health Centers, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and local health units. DHS also sent an additional flyer to those whose coverage has closed alerting them to resources in their areas.

Arkansas has a strong network of organizations that make it their mission to serve those with limited incomes and uninsured. If individuals' circumstances change, they may be eligible for other Medicaid categories.