

Program Name: Health Safety Net (HSN)

Formerly known as Uncompensated Care Pool or “Free Care”

Agency: Health Care Finance & Policy branch of EOHHS; Managed by the Massachusetts Office of Medicaid

Description: The Health Safety Net pays for certain medically necessary services provided to qualified low-income patients at Massachusetts community health centers (CHCs) and acute care hospitals. The HSN also pays CHCs and acute care hospitals for medical hardship expenses (when qualifying medical expenses exceed a specified percentage of a family's income), and for some types of bad debt.

Website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/health-safety-net-for-patients>

Eligibility:

- One must first apply for MassHealth and ConnectorCare, and will only receive HSN if income eligible but do not meet other requirements for those programs. Coverage is fully subsidized for otherwise uninsured individuals/families with income below 200% FPL (single person=\$24,120; family of 4=\$49,200); partially subsidized for those up to 400% FPL (single person=\$48,240; family of 4=\$98,400), or higher if one's medical bills dramatically exceed income.

The Health Safety Net (HSN) is available to uninsured and underinsured Massachusetts residents whose family income is under a certain percentage of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL):

- Massachusetts residents with income between 0-150% of the FPL may be eligible for the Health Safety Net.
- Massachusetts residents with income above 150% and equal to, or less than 300% FPL may be eligible for the Health Safety Net with a deductible.

The HSN can act as a secondary payer for eligible individuals enrolled in:

- private insurance,
- student health insurance,
- Medicare,
- certain MassHealth programs,
- Qualified Health Plan, or
- ConnectorCare (for the first 90 days)

Limitations:

- HSN coverage lasts for up to 1 year. Homeless residents and immigrants qualify for services. HSN has a limited number of community health centers, hospitals, dental services and pharmacies in its network. See mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/insurance/more-programs/health-safety-net/for-patients.html for a list of approved providers.

- **Immigrants:** Must be a resident of Massachusetts; immigration status does not matter. HSN is the health care program of last resort for undocumented immigrants.

Amount:

- HSN pays part or all of the cost for medically necessary services at specific community health centers and hospitals. The biggest providers of this care in the Boston area are Boston Medical Center and Cambridge Health Alliance.

How to Apply: Get a paper application by calling MassHealth at 1-800-841-2900 or meet with counselors at local hospital or community health center for help with the application. For more information, call the Health Safety Net Customer Service Center at 1-877-910-2100 or email hsnhelpdesk@state.ma.us.

Linked Services? Common application for MassHealth, ConnectorCare and Health Safety Net.

Right to appeal? Yes, legal notice from MassHealth denying HSN application will include appeal information. Appeal must be filed within 30 days of receipt of determination notice.

Retroactive? Yes, if person can prove they qualified for HSN at least 10 days prior to application.