

CareLink Use and Reapplication FAQs

What providers accept CareLink?

A. CareLink is **only** accepted by providers at CCH facilities.

How do I make an appointment at a CCH facility?

A. To schedule an appointment with a Cook County Health physician, please call [312-864-0200](tel:312-864-0200).

How will the provider/facility know I have CareLink?

A. Once you are approved for CareLink, it is documented in the CCH system. When you make your appointment, let the scheduler know that you have CareLink. Also, when you arrive for the appointment, present your CareLink card to the registrar.

What will CareLink discount?

A. CareLink will discount any medical services provided at a CCH facility. CareLink also covers limited dental and vision (excludes glasses) services, however, prescriptions are not covered. The pharmacy at CCH will fill any CCH prescription for \$4 per prescription up to \$20.

I have been approved for a 50% or 30% discount through CareLink. How do I pay my portion?

A. Once you receive a bill for services, you can make your payment. You may either pay online, by phone, by mail or by making an in-person payment at one of our walk-in locations listed below. We currently accept payments online, in cash, check or money order. Please make any checks or money orders payable to Cook County Health.

Does CareLink expire?

A. Yes, participants must reapply for CareLink annually or it will expire.

When do I need to reapply?

A. The eligibility period is effective for up to 12 months from the initial approval. Renewal should happen in the 12th month.

Can I reapply for CareLink at any CCH facility?

A. Yes, CCH has Financial Counselors at each location who can help you reapply for CareLink.

What documents will I need to reapply for CareLink?

A. You will need the same documents you presented when you initially signed up for CareLink.

Identification

- Valid passport
- Green card

- Birth certificate
- Photo ID

Income

- Paycheck stubs
- Signed letter from job with contact information
- Paid in cash form

Proof of Cook County Address

- Utility bill i.e., gas, electric, water
- Telephone bill
- Bank Statement
- Letter from a church

When should I apply for CareLink?

A. You can apply before being seen at a Cook County Health (CCH) location or after you have been seen at a CCH facility.

Who is considered underinsured?

A. Individuals with certain private/employer sponsored insurance coverage may be eligible for CareLink if CCH is an in-network provider with their Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) or if the individual has a PPO or traditional “fee-for-service.” These individuals are considered “underinsured” and may apply for CareLink to receive a partial discount on total out-of-pocket costs, excluding co-pays, which are not covered by the individual’s private insurance (e.g., annual deductible or co-insurance). Individuals may also be considered underinsured if they are enrolled in a limited-benefit plan.

When do I find out if I have been approved for CareLink?

A. Eligibility is determined during your meeting with the Financial Counselor.

What happens if I lose my approval letter?

A. If you lose your approval letter, you can get a copy by going to see any Financial Counselor.

What providers accept CareLink?

A. CareLink is accepted by providers at any Cook County Health facility.

Is CareLink a government program?

A. No, CareLink is not a government program.

If I am eligible for Medicaid, but due to Public Charge, can I choose CareLink?

A. CareLink is a payer of last resort. Financial Counselors must explore potential eligibility for other funding program sources (e.g., Medicaid, etc.) prior to certifying individuals for eligibility. If an individual is eligible for another financial assistance program, the individual will be provided with appropriate application assistance prior to being assessed for CareLink eligibility.

Who is part of my family?

A. A family, for purposes of determining eligibility, consists of a person living alone or persons living together where one or more individuals have financial responsibility for the support of the others.

Can I apply online?

A. Currently, applications for CareLink must be completed in person with a Financial Counselor.

Can I apply at any CCH facility?

A. Yes, CCH has Financial Counselors at each location who can help you apply for CareLink and other forms of financial assistance.

Does CareLink cover dental, vision, and prescriptions?

A. CareLink covers limited dental and vision (excludes glasses) services however, prescriptions are not covered. The pharmacy at CCH will fill any CCH prescription for \$4 per prescription up to \$20.

Does CareLink offer transportation?

A. Transportation is provided to and from CCH medical appointments.

What is care coordination?

A. The goal of the service is to give you the support needed to improve their health. The care coordinator is a person who helps the patient work toward being healthy through frequent clinic visits and phone calls with the patient, their caregivers, and their doctors. They help to make healthcare easier to manage by doing the following:

- Keeping track of the patient's illnesses and medications
- Helping the patient to plan their doctor visits
- Helping the patient to set healthcare goals

Do I have to be a United States citizen to apply for CareLink?

A. No, you do not have to be a United States citizen, but you must be a resident of Cook County for at least 30 days prior to applying to CareLink.

I don't have flexibility with my schedule due to work, can my spouse apply for me?

A. Yes, your spouse can apply on your behalf if they have all the required documentation.

I am visiting the United States and will be returning to home when I am well. Am I eligible for CareLink?

A. No, you are not eligible for CareLink if you are in the country on a Visiting Visa B2.