

Premium Health Insurance Payment (PHIP) Frequently Asked Questions

What is PHIP?

PHIP is the Private Health Insurance Premium benefit program. If you qualify, PHIP pays what it costs you to get health insurance. MaineCare would become your secondary insurance and cover any co-pays and deductibles from your private plan.

How does PHIP benefit me and my family?

PHIP has a number of features that may benefit you:

- Other health plans may cover services that MaineCare does not.
- The plan that PHIP pays for may cover some family members who don't qualify for MaineCare.

For example:

Ms. X has three children. She is not on MaineCare, but the children are enrolled in MaineCare. Ms. X has health insurance available through her employer, but can not afford to pay for it.

If MaineCare Services finds that it is less expensive to pay for the employer's health for her and her children. MaineCare will pay for that plan, even though Ms. X is not on MaineCare. (MaineCare will pay for the plan after Ms. X enrolls herself and children in it.)

How does the program benefit the State of Maine?

PHIP shares health care costs with private insurance companies. Since the private insurance pays first, MaineCare only pays for your out of pocket costs. This keeps state costs lower, and provides better service.

Do I lose my MaineCare coverage if I enroll in PHIP?

No. You will still have MaineCare.

How do I qualify?

To qualify for PHIP you or someone in your household must:

1. Be enrolled in MaineCare.
2. Have access to insurance that MaineCare considers cost effective.

What does “cost effective” mean?

“Cost effective” means that the state will save money if you and your household sign up for the other insurance available.

If I don’t get PHIP, will I lose MaineCare?

No. You will still have MaineCare, even if you can’t get PHIP benefits.

What if my private health insurance doesn’t cover everything that MaineCare does?

If your insurance doesn’t cover a service that is normally covered under MaineCare, MaineCare may still pay. (You will need to follow the rules of the private plan, to maximize how much they pay.)

My private health insurance has high deductibles, am I better off staying on MaineCare?

If you follow MaineCare and your private insurance rules, MaineCare will pay for your out-of-pocket expenses, such as deductibles and co-pays.

Will I have to pay any out-of-pocket costs?

You may have to pay out-of- pocket costs if:

- The person who received the service is on the private insurance, but not on MaineCare.
- Your MaineCare benefit includes a co-pay.
- The service is covered by the insurance, but not covered by MaineCare.
- You did not follow your insurance rules in receiving the service.

For MaineCare members, the doctor will tell you that you will have to pay a part of the bill, before you receive the service.

What do you mean “follow insurance rules”?

Insurance plans have many different rules. You may have to see certain doctors or be referred to specialists. You need to follow these rules for MaineCare to pay for out-of-pocket costs. You also have to follow MaineCare rules.

Aren't insurance rules confusing?

Yes, they certainly can be. Your insurance company will give you a phone number to call if you have questions about your plan. If you have questions about MaineCare, or about how MaineCare works with your insurance, please call us at the number below, and we'll be happy to help you.

How is payment made?

If your insurance is sponsored through your employer, your employer will take your insurance costs right from your pay. Other plans may require you to send your payment in once a month. In either case, we will send you a check each month for what you paid.

Do I have to get the insurance through an employer?

No. You can apply for PHIP with any health insurance.

I have more questions. Who can I call?

You can call us at:

Toll Free: 1-800-572-3839

TTY for the deaf or hard of hearing: 1-800-423-4331

When you call, please ask for the PHIP (pronounced "fip") unit.

Or you can write us at:

Third Party Liability Unit, PHIP Benefit
MaineCare Services
Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0011