



## Protect and Prepare

Investing in protecting Medicaid and meeting new requirements of the Federal Medicaid system to preserve access to care

With the passage and upcoming implementation of the various provisions of HR 1 at the Federal level, Oregon's Legislature is tasked with determining how to best enable the service network to meet new demands and requirements for consumer eligibility.

**Protecting** access for individuals who are seeking access to help from Medicaid and to maintain eligibility for Medicaid services and supports will require investment by the Legislature. This will be critical for the eligibility staff who work with these individuals. Protecting funding allocated for Medicaid eligibility, case management and adult protective services within the Medicaid Area Agencies must be a priority in budget decisions – impacting Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Clatsop, Yamhill, Tillamook, Linn, Benton, Lincoln and Lane counties.

**Prepare.** Proposals under consideration for eligibility staff that are being considered by the Legislature include an increase in eligibility staff to meet the new requirements for Medicaid. This includes a **recommendation to add 24 positions in eligibility for Medicaid Area Agencies**, serving Multnomah, Marion, Polk, Clatsop, Yamhill, Tillamook, Linn, Benton, Lincoln and Lane counties.

Serving close to 60% of the state caseload in long term services and supports and providing Medicaid access for other programs including SNAP, the Oregon Health Plan, ERDC and other programs. Medicaid Area Agencies provide eligibility for ALL Medicaid services, not only long-term services and support. Increasing eligibility staff for the increasing caseload but also the new requirements from Federal regulatory changes is necessary during the 2026 Legislative session. **O4AD supports the inclusion of these new positions to meet the Federally required mandates for Medicaid eligibility.**

Concurrently, caseloads continue to grow. Oregon is a rapidly aging state with Oregonians age 60+ representing 27% of the population while children represent 21%. More than 287,000 adults ages 50 and older utilize Medicaid.

More Oregonians continue to seek critical services and supports. The increased caseload needs and the workload demands for case managers, eligibility workers and adult protective services must be addressed at this time..

Oregon's legislature must protect services and prepare for changes in Medicaid during the 2026 Legislative session to maintain the **independence, dignity, choice** and **safety** of Oregon's' older adults and people with disabilities.