

# YOUR HEALTH MATTERS



A consumer guide to getting medical, dental and treatment services for justice-involved people

COLORADO  
**CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE  
REFORM  
COALITION**

# YOUR HEALTH MATTERS

More people in our state can now get Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program)! This includes people who are or were involved in the criminal justice system. This means more people can go see a doctor, dentist, or therapist. This guide has information to help you get the medical, dental and treatment services you need.

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**Amazingly easy to obtain benefits. Getting connected to the proper primary care provider helps direct you to doctors or facilities that accept Medicaid. Getting that direction helped get my medical needs addressed.**

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## About CCJRC



At the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC), we work to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety. We are people convicted of crime, survivors of crime, and the families and allies of both. Go to [ccjrc.org](http://ccjrc.org) to find out more and to get involved.

We want to make sure that people in the justice system know about Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program) and how to get care. Find out more at [takecarehealthmatters.org](http://takecarehealthmatters.org).

Let us know about your experiences. We know that some will be good and some not. Send comments to: [info@ccjrc.org](mailto:info@ccjrc.org) or call 303.825.0122.

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# UNDERSTANDING HEALTH FIRST COLORADO

If you have recently enrolled in Health First Colorado (Colorado’s Medicaid Program), congratulations! You now have health insurance, which is a big deal. You will be able to get health care services, including dental care and mental health treatment, in your community at little to no cost.

We at CCJRC believe that everyone has a right to health care. It is so important to feel healthy and to be able to see a doctor, dentist or therapist when you want or need to. Better access to health care can also help our society begin to treat mental health and drug use as a public health issue, not a criminal justice one.

## What is Health First Colorado?

Health First Colorado is our state public health insurance program. Each county oversees its own Health First Colorado program through its County Department of Human Services. The County Department of Human Services can help you apply for Health First Colorado. They can also answer questions or help you apply for other benefits like food stamps.

## How to get Health First Colorado

If you don’t already have Health First Colorado there are a few ways you can get enrolled.

online:  
[colorado.gov/peak](https://colorado.gov/peak)

by phone:  
**800.221.3943**

You can apply in person at your local County Department of Human Services or at most health care clinics. Once you have applied for Health First Colorado, you will get a Health First Colorado number. You will want your Health First Colorado number to make a doctor, behavioral health or dental appointment. You will also want to bring a photo I.D. to show to a health care provider, therapist or pharmacist. If you do not have your Health First Colorado number, don’t worry. You should still be able to get in to see a doctor.

## MYTH BUSTING

You DO NOT automatically have Health First Colorado for a year after release from prison. Whether you have Health First Colorado or not is based on how much money you make and your family size.

You should be mailed a package of information, which includes your Health First Colorado card, 7 to 10 days after you enroll. If you don’t get your Health First Colorado card in the mail or you lose it, you can go to [colorado.gov/peak](https://colorado.gov/peak) and print one or call your local County Department of Human Services.

Health First Colorado also has a mobile app, called PEAKHealth. You can access your card electronically by downloading the PEAKHealth App at the Apple iTunes Store or Google App Store.

## Who qualifies for Health First Colorado?

Whether you can get Health First Colorado is based on how much money you make and your family size. If you are a single adult you can earn up to about \$1350 a month and get Health First Colorado.

## 2018 income eligibility (estimates)

You have to contact your County Department of Human Services if you have any changes in your income. You also need to let your County Department of Human Services know if you move or have a new address. About once a month, the state will do a review to make sure you still qualify for Health First Colorado. You may be penalized if you do not report a change in income or address. You may also be fined if you use Health First Colorado but don’t qualify anymore.

family size	income level
1	\$1,350
2	\$1,825
3	\$2,300
4	\$2,800

*\* Pregnant women and children may be able to make more money and still be eligible for health care coverage*

If you earn too much money to get Health First Colorado, you may get financial help to buy private health insurance. If you need private health insurance, you can contact Connect for Health Colorado. Call 855.752.6749 or go to [connectforhealthco.com](http://connectforhealthco.com). They can also let you know if you are able to get financial assistance to help you buy health insurance.

People who are or were in the criminal justice system may qualify for Health First Colorado just like anyone else. The only exception is for people who are in jail or prison. People in jail or prison can only get Health First Colorado if they are put in the hospital for more than 24 hours.

Qualify for Health First Colorado	Do not qualify for Health First Colorado*
bond	in jail
diversion	in prison
probation	on work release from jail
parole	<i>*may be eligible for hospital stays more than 24 hours</i>
halfway house (res + non-res)	
off paper	

Sometimes you will lose Health First Colorado if you are in jail or prison for more than 30 days. If this happens, you may need to reapply for Health First Colorado upon release. If you want to check if you still have Health First Colorado you can contact your County Department of Human Services.



**If you get a higher paying job, make sure you still qualify for Health First Colorado before you use it. You can be fined and required to pay medical bills out of pocket if you use Health First Colorado and do not qualify.**

## Regional Organizations

As a Health First Colorado member, you will have a primary care provider that belongs to one of seven regional organizations in Colorado. The regional organization you belong to will depend on who your primary care provider is. The regional organizations will help you get the health care services you need.

Once you have Health First Colorado, we suggest you call your regional organization to get connected to a Care Coordinator. You will find the phone numbers for the regional organizations on page 6 of this booklet. Care Coordinators can help you find a dentist, therapist and help make a doctor's appointment. They can also answer questions about your health care. Each regional organization has a Care Coordinator who works specifically with people involved in the criminal justice system.

If you aren't sure which Health First Colorado regional organization you are in, call Health First Colorado Enrollment at 303-839-2120 or toll free at 888-367-6557.

**A primary care provider is the same thing as a doctor.**



## Regional Organization Contacts

Region 1	Archuleta, Delta, Dolores, Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Jackson, La Plata, Larimer, Mesa, Moffat, Montezuma, Montrose, Ouray, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Routt, San Juan, San Miguel, Summit
	Rocky Mountain Health Plans 888-282-8801 • <a href="http://rmhpcommunity.org">rmhpcommunity.org</a>
Region 2	Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, Yuma
	Northeast Health Partners 888-502-4189 • <a href="http://northeasthealthpartners.org">northeasthealthpartners.org</a>
Region 3	Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert
	Colorado Access 303-368-0037 • 855-267-2095 • <a href="http://coaccess.com">coaccess.com</a>
Region 4	Alamosa, Baca, Bent, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Crowley, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Kiowa, Lake, Las Animas, Mineral, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo, Rio Grande, Saguache
	Health Colorado Inc. 888-502-4185 • <a href="http://healthcoloradorae.com">healthcoloradorae.com</a>
Region 5	Denver
	Colorado Access 303-368-0038 • 855-384-7926 • <a href="http://coaccess.com">coaccess.com</a>
Region 6	Boulder, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Jefferson
	Colorado Community Health Alliance 303-256-1717 • 855-627-4685 • <a href="http://cchacares.com">cchacares.com</a>
Region 7	El Paso, Park, Teller
	Colorado Community Health Alliance 719-598-1540 • 855-627-4685 • <a href="http://cchacares.com">cchacares.com</a>

People who live in Adams, Arapahoe, Denver or Jefferson County have another option if they want to get health care at Denver Health Medical Center. Their program is called Denver Health Medicaid Choice. This program is separate from the regional organizations. You can find out more information about Denver Health Medicaid Choice by calling them directly at 303-602-2116.



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I always put my health on the back burner. Because I've needed this hip replacement for 3 or 4 years. Now I've finally got it done. Now I'm almost totally recovered. I also had all my dental work done. They've (Medicaid) paid for all my co-pays on my medicines. Yeah, Medicaid has been a life saver.

”

## GETTING MEDICAL CARE

Health First Colorado pays for medical care. The following list includes many services but not all. If you have questions about your health care you can always talk with your primary care provider. You can also talk with the Care Coordinator at your regional organization.

Health First Colorado will pay for the cost of the health care service you get but you may be asked to pay a small amount, called a co-pay. Co-pays usually cost around \$2-\$6. Talk with your doctor if you can't afford the co-pay. They still may be able to provide you with the health care service you need.

Health First Colorado members also have access to a 24-hour nurse-advice hotline where you can speak to a nurse about questions or concerns you may have regarding your health: 800-283-3221.

### Medical benefits

Here are most of the services Health First Colorado will pay for:

- annual physical exam
- immunizations and vaccines (ex: flu shot)
- primary care doctor visit
- specialist care (ex: cardiologist, urologist)
- home health care
- telemedicine
- emergency room visits
- urgent care visits
- ambulance services and transportation
- outpatient surgery
- outpatient hospital services
- inpatient medical/surgical care
- organ transplants
- anesthesia
- breast reconstruction surgery
- hospice services
- private duty nursing
- radiation and chemotherapy services
- maternity and newborn care
- prescription drugs
- durable medical equipment
- physical, speech and occupational therapy
- lab and radiology services (ex: blood work, x-rays)
- preventative and wellness services
- chronic disease management
- colorectal cancer screening
- mammography screening
- audiology (ex: hearing aids)
- pap tests and gynecological exams
- prostate cancer screens
- routine foot care
- allergy testing and shots
- family planning services (ex: office visits, birth control)
- transportation to/from medical appointments

Health First Colorado has a limited benefit for eye care for adults. Talk with the Care Coordinator at your regional organization if you are having vision problems or would like eye care services.

### Your primary care provider

Everyone with Health First Colorado will have one doctor they see the most. This doctor is called your Primary Care Provider. Your Primary Care Provider is who you see for your annual physical or who you talk to about any specific health concerns. Your primary care provider may refer you to a specialist.

As a Health First Colorado member you will have a primary care provider. If you don't like or aren't happy with the primary care provider you are given, you can make changes at any time by calling Health First Colorado Enrollment at 303-839-2120 or 888-367-6557(outside of Denver).

You can also talk with a Care Coordinator at the regional organizations if you want to change your primary care provider and need some help. Some things you may want to think about when looking for a primary care provider: Would you prefer to see a female doctor? Someone on a bus line? Someone who has worked with justice involved people? Having a list of ideas of what sort of primary care provider you'd like, may help the Care Coordinator find the right doctor for you.

If any of your friends or family has Health First Colorado you can also ask them if they have a primary care provider they like and trust. If they have a recommendation, you can talk with your Care Coordinator about helping you set up an appointment. You can also call the doctor's office directly to see if they are taking new Health First Colorado patients and to set an appointment.

There are many health clinics in Colorado that accept people with Health First Colorado.

- **Community Health Centers** provide healthcare services on a sliding fee scale. You can find a community health center near you by using this online map: [cchn.org/map](http://cchn.org/map) or by calling the Colorado Community Health Network at 303-861-5165.

- **Rural Health Clinics** are available if you live outside the Denver metro area. See a map and find a list of Rural Health Clinics near you: [coruralhealth.org/resources/maps](http://coruralhealth.org/resources/maps) or by calling the Colorado Rural Health Center at 303-832-7493.

*Some things to know about finding a Health First Colorado...*

- Doctors are not required to accept Health First Colorado. Some doctors who accept Health First Colorado may not be accepting any new Health First Colorado patients at the time. It may take some time to find a primary care provider if you are looking on your own.
- Health First Colorado does cover emergency visits. If you are having an emergency, go to the emergency room or an urgent care center. Be aware that not all urgent care centers take Health First Colorado. You may also call the Ask-a-Nurse-Line, 24-hours-a-day to discuss any health concerns: 800-283-3221.
- After your first appointment with your primary care provider, you may decide you don't like that doctor or clinic. If that happens, contact your Care Coordinator within your regional organization and see if there is someone else they can recommend.

**How to get your health care record from prison or jail**

If you received medical care while in prison or jail, you may want to let your primary care provider know. They may want your medical records to better understand your medical history and the care you received. You will need to sign a release of information to allow this to happen.

If you've been incarcerated in jail, you will have to check with medical at the jail to see how to get your health record. Your doctor may need to contact the jail to request your medical records.

If you've been incarcerated in Department of Corrections (DOC), your doctor can contact Bradford Neisler at DOC to get copies of your medical records at no cost: [bradford.neisler@state.co.us](mailto:bradford.neisler@state.co.us).

**GETTING DRUG, ALCOHOL OR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT**

Health First Colorado can pay for mental health and addiction treatment. Most behavioral health services will need to be approved before you can get treatment. This means you will have to be assessed by a behavioral health provider to see what treatment you may be eligible for. The health

**The term “behavioral health” means both substance use disorder and mental health services.**

center where you see your primary care provider may also offer some treatment services. You can talk with your primary care provider or Care Coordinator to learn more.

Below is a list of behavioral health services that Health First Colorado may pay for. With Health First Colorado, you do not have to pay for mental health or addiction treatment.

The only exception is that Health First Colorado does not currently pay for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment.

**Mental health benefits**

- Inpatient hospital psychiatric care
- Individual, group and family therapy
- Outpatient hospital psychiatric care
- Psychiatrist services
- Medication management
- Case management services
- Assessments and evaluations
- Emergency services
- Vocational services
- Clubhouse/drop-in centers
- Assertive community treatment
- Recovery services
- Respite services
- Prevention/early intervention activities
- School-based and day treatment services for children/youth

## Substance use disorder benefits

- Alcohol and/or drug assessments
- Social detox services
- Individual and group therapy – outpatient
- Targeted case management
- Drug screening and monitoring
- Peer advocate services
- Medication assisted treatment (ex: methadone)

We are seeing a high rate of overdoses in Colorado. Health First Colorado covers Naloxone. It can help to reverse an opioid overdose.

People who have been incarcerated are at higher risk of overdosing after they are released. We encourage you to please be careful and make sure you have Naloxone with you. You can get Naloxone from certain pharmacies or by calling the Harm Reduction Action Center for more information: 303-572-7800.

If you are not satisfied with your mental health therapist or treatment provider you can call your regional organization and share your concerns. They may be able to help you find another therapist or treatment center.

## Try not to get discouraged!

Even with Health First Colorado, you may have a long wait (like weeks) to get in to see a psychiatrist, get your meds or find treatment services.

## Confidentiality

Your therapist is usually not allowed to share anything you say in treatment with anyone else unless you give permission. Though there can be exceptions. A therapist may have to share some information if you are in an emergency, or if a judge issues an order. It would be good for you to talk with any therapist or treatment provider about confidentiality.

If you don't know how or where to begin getting mental health, substance use or emotional help for yourself or someone else, you can always call the Colorado Crisis Services hotline. The hotline is staffed 24-hours-a-day/7-days-a-week and is a safe place to call if you are in crisis or need help finding care and treatment: 844-493-8255.

## GETTING DENTAL CARE

This information is for people who are 21 years of age and older. Children have a different dental benefit.

### Adult dental benefit

Health First Colorado will pay for up to \$1,000 a year for dental care.

- Basic preventive dental exams
- Diagnostic and restorative dental services (such as x-rays and fillings)
- Extractions (tooth pulling)
- Root canals
- Crowns
- Partial dentures\*
- Complete dentures\*
- Periodontal scaling
- Root planing
- Other procedures requiring prior authorization

\*Partial and complete dentures are not subject to the \$1,000 cap per year.

Health First Colorado uses a company called DentaQuest to help people find a dentist. You can contact DentaQuest directly to get help finding a dentist by either going online to [dentaquest.com/colorado](https://dentaquest.com/colorado) or by calling them at 855-225-1729.

The Care Coordinator at your regional organization should be able to help you find a dentist too.

One of the best things about having Health First Colorado is that there is a dental benefit!



## TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM APPOINTMENTS

Health First Colorado may pay for transportation to get you to and from your health care appointments. You will need to make sure Health First Colorado will cover your transportation first before scheduling a ride. Please call and talk to these transportation companies to see if you can get a free ride if you need one. You can also discuss transportation with your regional organization Care Coordinator.

Have the following info ready when you call to schedule your trip:

- Your Health First Colorado ID number, name and date of birth
- The address where you need to be picked up
- Your doctor's name, address and telephone number
- The date and time of your medical appointment along with an estimated time for any return trip

County		
		Veyo • 855-264-6368 • <a href="http://medicaidco.com">medicaidco.com</a>
Adams Arapahoe Boulder Broomfield Denver	Douglas Jefferson Larimer Weld	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You must request a ride at least 48 hours before your appointment</li> <li>● Your trip must not be more than 25 miles of the pick-up location</li> </ul>
Eagle Grand Jackson	Park Pitkin Summit	Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center 844-686-7433 • <a href="http://mtnride.org/medicaid-transportation">mtnride.org/medicaid-transportation</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You must request a ride at least five business days before your medical appointment</li> </ul>
Logan Morgan Phillips	Sedgwick, Washington Yuma	County Express - <a href="http://necalg.com/county-express">necalg.com/county-express</a> Fort Morgan: 970-867-6494; Sterling: 970-542-6440; Yuma: 970-848-0300 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New or first time Health First Colorado rides will require at least 1 to 2 weeks for approval before you can request a ride.</li> <li>● Once approved, you have to request a ride at least 48 hours in advance.</li> <li>● If you need an out of town ride for a medical service, you must request a ride at least 72 hours in advance.</li> </ul>

### Counties

Alamosa	Mineral
Conejos	Rio Grande
Costilla	Saguache

Red Willows • 719-589-5734

- New or first time Health First Colorado rides will need to be approved before being able to get a ride.
- Once approved, you have to request a ride at least 72 hours in advance.

**If you live in a county that is not listed here, contact your Regional Organization to see what transportation help may be available.**

## PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

We know that going to the doctor can be stressful. Here are some tips that may help.

- Write down any questions or concerns that you want to talk to your doctor about. It can be easy to forget something.
- Make a list of any medications you are taking and any other doctors you are seeing.
- You may want to bring someone with you to your appointment, especially if you are nervous. It may help to have someone else with you to ask questions and listen.
- Make sure you have transportation set up to get to and from your appointment.
- Call to cancel your appointment as soon as you know you cannot make it. It is always good to let the doctor know if you are not able to keep the appointment. Some clinics may stop seeing you if you fail to show up for appointments without letting them know.
- Show up 10 to 15 minutes early for your appointment in case you have to fill out any forms.
- Be prepared to wait even if you have an appointment.
- If it's your first visit to a doctor you may want to write down some notes about your medical history before you go. You will probably have to fill out a form about your medical history.

## TALKING TO YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

It is important to find a primary care provider that you are comfortable with. Doctors may seem scary or not very friendly. It may take you a few visits before you get to know each other.

- If you don't understand what your primary care provider is telling you, don't be afraid to ask questions. It is important that you understand what the doctor is saying to you.
- If your primary care provider is not providing you the care or information you'd like, speak up for yourself.
- Take notes if you are getting a lot of information that is hard to understand or keep track of.
- Your primary care provider will most likely not know you are or were involved in the criminal justice system unless you share that information with her/ him. It is totally up to you whether to share that information or not.
- It can be hard to talk with your primary care provider about personal things but it's important for your doctor to know. This includes any current or previous drug use. We encourage you to let your doctor know about any drugs you are currently taking, both legal and illegal. Mixing drugs can have bad side effects. Your primary care provider will not call the police and they are not going to report you to your parole or probation officer.
- If you are currently injecting drugs, we recommend keeping a healthy vein so a doctor or nurse can easily draw blood.

A doctor should never treat you badly for sharing information about any illegal drug use. If you feel disrespected or shamed by your primary care provider, let him or her know. You can contact the Care Coordinator at your regional organization or call Health First Colorado Enrollment to find a new primary care provider.

## FILING A COMPLAINT IF YOU ARE DENIED SERVICE

If you are having trouble finding care or have been denied approval to get a healthcare service, you have a couple of options described below.

If you feel like you need to see a specialist or have a medical test and Health First Colorado won't pay for it, you should get a **Notice of Action**. Contact your regional organization to see if they can help you understand your **Notice of Action** and any next steps.

If your regional organization is not able to help you or you are not happy with the outcome, you can contact the Health First Colorado Member Contact Center at 800-221-3943. You may also call the Ombudsman for Health First Colorado Managed Care: 303-830-3560 or 877-435-7123.

If you are still being denied care and you are not being told why, you may also call the Office of Administrative Courts to learn more about how to request a State Level Hearing at 303-866-2000.

Beginning in the fall/winter of 2018, the Department of Human Services will have a Behavioral Health Ombudsman that may be able to help if you are not able to find mental health or addiction treatment services. As of this writing we do not know who or how to contact this Ombudsman. You can call CCJRC to find out more information at 303-825-0122.

If you feel like you were treated badly by a doctor or behavioral health therapist, you can file a complaint against the provider by contacting the Department of Regulatory Affairs (DORA). To file a complaint with DORA you must complete the online form or you can print the form and mail it in. Visit [colorado.gov/pacific/dora/DPO\\_File\\_Complaint](http://colorado.gov/pacific/dora/DPO_File_Complaint) for more information.

“

I mean I went from sleeping under a bridge (for) three years and now I have been clean about a year and a half. I go to methadone treatment on a regular basis. Medicaid saved my life.

”





# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

<p>Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) Customer Service Center</p>	<p><i>For information and/or questions on Health First Colorado benefits, programs and services</i></p>	<p><b>800-221-3943</b></p>
<p>Health First Colorado Enrollment</p>	<p><i>Health First Colorado health plan information, selection and changes</i></p>	<p>Denver: <b>303-839-2120</b> Outside of Denver: <b>888-367-6557</b></p>
<p>Health First Colorado Nurse Advice Hotline</p>	<p><i>Free hotline that is open 24/7 for Health First Colorado members to ask questions about your health and if you should go to a doctor</i></p>	<p><b>800-283-3221</b></p>
<p>Colorado Crisis Services</p>	<p><i>Free, confidential and immediate support available 24/7 to those in need of mental health, substance use disorder, or emotional help</i></p>	<p><b>844-493-8255</b></p>
<p>Colorado Quit Line</p>	<p><i>Free phone and online support to help people who want to quit smoking</i></p>	<p><b>800-784-8669</b></p>



To learn more about health care for justice-involved people visit [takecarehealthmatters.org](https://takecarehealthmatters.org)  
You may also contact CCJRC at 303-825-0122 or visit [ccjrc.org](https://ccjrc.org)