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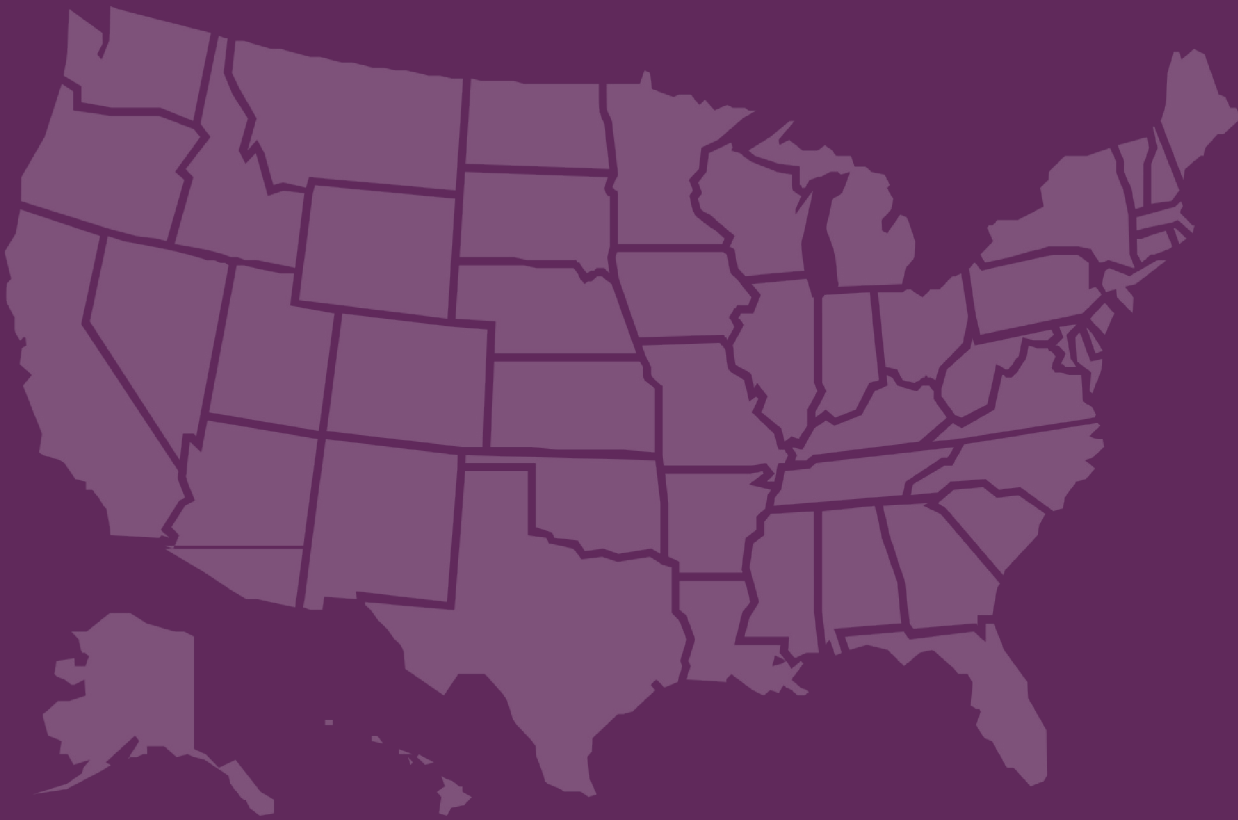
A grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Reaching DACA Recipients:

*Resources to Support State Outreach and
Education to Drive Healthcare Enrollment*

Prepared by GMMB

October 2024



Reaching DACA Recipients:

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Introduction

On May 3, 2024, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a [final regulation](#) amending the definition of “lawfully present” to include people who receive Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status for purposes of Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace and Basic Health Program (BHP) eligibility. Under [the new policy](#), DACA recipients, known as “Dreamers”—undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children and meet certain requirements—will be able to enroll in a health plan through health insurance Marketplaces, receive financial assistance through federal advance premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions, and enroll in BHP coverage in the states that participate—currently Minnesota and Oregon.

The rule marks an important step forward for health equity. [Survey data](#) shows that 27% of DACA recipients are uninsured, making them three times more likely than the general population to be uninsured. Starting November 1, 2024, Marketplace eligibility and savings will open for people with DACA status, including people with no or low incomes. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [projects that 100,000](#) uninsured DACA recipients are likely to enroll in health insurance and gain access to the care they need to maintain and improve their health.

To inform state strategies to best reach and educate newly eligible DACA recipients about their eligibility, GMMB produced this toolkit with insights on barriers to coverage for the DACA population based on existing research, key messages, outreach strategies, and template materials to raise awareness and promote enrollment. States can leverage this toolkit, customizing where possible, to augment their outreach efforts.

The template communications resources in English and Spanish are available for download through the State Health and Value Strategies [Social Press Kit](#).

2024 Qualitative Research Insights

In August 2024, the National Immigration Law Center and Young Invincibles conducted focus groups with DACA recipients to uncover outreach best practices related to the new coverage expansion.¹ The research revealed important communication considerations. Participants indicated that while they are generally English proficient, many of them speak other languages in their day-to-day. Participants also shared they are consumers of in-language media, like Spanish-language television, and rely on these sources for immigrant-specific information. The insights reinforce the need for state outreach to include partnerships with in-language media.

The research also highlights the significant role of cultural factors in how participants engage with the healthcare system. As many participants were not raised with regular primary care, messages that emphasized preventive care and free check-ups were not as resonant. The research found that participants were more motivated by the potential consequences of not having coverage and the implications for medical and financial emergencies. These findings underscore the importance of culturally responsive communication.

According to [data from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#), the top 25 countries of origin for DACA recipients nationwide are Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, South Korea, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina, Philippines, Jamaica, India, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Chile, Pakistan, Poland, Nigeria, and Guyana. This information highlights the diversity that exists within the DACA population and the importance of ensuring consumer-facing messages and materials are linguistically appropriate.

¹National Immigration Law Center and Young Invincibles, “Best Practices for Health Insurance Outreach to DACA Recipients: Results from Focus Groups,” August 22, 2024. Please contact Ben D’Avanzo, at the National Immigration Law Center, davanzo@nilc.org, for access.

Communications Materials

Message Priorities

As states prepare to reach and enroll DACA recipients, messaging and materials must not only raise awareness about the new opportunity to enroll in affordable health coverage, but also acknowledge and mitigate the fears and apprehensions likely to dissuade enrollment.

Recent [research has found that eligibility, awareness of coverage options, and immigration anxieties](#) are common barriers to coverage for uninsured DACA recipients. The same study also named cost of care as a challenge, with 71% of DACA recipients reporting being unable to pay for medical bills or expenses in the past.

With these insights in mind, to effectively reach this audience, messaging and materials must:

- **Come from a credible source and display a government seal and .gov URL:** [Research studies conducted with DACA recipients and non-citizens](#) have consistently shown audiences prefer to receive healthcare-related information through official government entities. Prominently displaying a state or government seal, using links to official government websites, and disseminating materials from a .gov address can lend credibility and trust to information that audiences receive about new health coverage options.
- **Signal new eligibility:** Explicitly state that a new federal policy means DACA recipients can now qualify for private health plans through the Marketplace. Note the window to enroll in coverage (November 1, 2024 through January 15, 2025, in most states).
- **Ease immigration fears:** A majority of DACA recipients live in mixed-immigration status households, alongside family members who are U.S. citizens, have green cards, or are undocumented. Ensure all communication about their eligibility for Marketplace coverage reinforces that enrolling will not affect their family's or personal immigration status or ability to adjust status in the future. [Research-informed messages](#) developed by the Protecting Immigrant Families coalition can guide effective communication.
- **Emphasize affordability:** As DACA recipients will often be first-time consumers in the Marketplace, mitigate concerns about the high costs of coverage by communicating that they may be eligible for financial assistance and savings depending on their income.
- **Clarify the enrollment process and promote assistance:** As Marketplaces implement the new rule, they play a crucial role in ensuring a smooth enrollment process. While there may be variances in the enrollment process that states adopt, it's important that all communications clearly state how DACA recipients can enroll in a health plan and where enrollees can find application assistance.

Talking Points

These talking points should be used as a base for communications. States may access a downloadable Word document of these talking points through the State Health and Value Strategies [Social Press Kit](#). Where applicable, the language should be updated to reflect the state, Marketplace name and website, enrollment dates, and more.

English

- **The change:** The rules have changed, and DACA recipients can now get health insurance through [Marketplace] [starting November 1, 2024]. The federal government added DACA to the list of eligible immigration statuses for [Marketplace] coverage, which also includes green card holders, asylees, and refugees, among other groups. Enrolling in a health plan through [Marketplace] will not impact a DACA recipient's immigration status or their family members'. The window to enroll will start on [November 1, 2024].

- **The benefits:** [Starting November 1, 2024] DACA recipients can now get health insurance through [Marketplace]—giving them access to essential health benefits and savings. All health plans include doctor visits, emergency care, prescriptions, mental health services, and more. And [8 in 10] people enrolled get savings to help pay for the cost of their plan. Visit [Marketplace] to get a plan that works for your health and your wallet.
- **The public charge context:** **The Biden administration ended the 2019 public charge policy** that put immigration applications at risk if lawfully present immigrants used public benefits related to healthcare, housing, and nutrition. Using these programs will not affect the current or future immigration status of the person enrolling, or their family members.
- **The process:** [Starting November 1, 2024] DACA recipients can enroll in a health plan through [Marketplace] and get savings. When applying, you'll be asked about your immigration status, household, and income, and may need to submit documents such as your pay stubs or W-2s and a photo ID. The documents can only be used to verify your eligibility for coverage and cannot be used for immigration enforcement purposes. For enrollment assistance: [Website URL or phone number].
- **Special enrollment period:** For the first time, DACA recipients can use [Marketplace] to get health insurance and savings. A special enrollment period will start on [November 1, 2024], to enroll in a health plan in 2024. Apply by [November 15, 2024], to get coverage starting December 1, 2024.
- **Open enrollment:** DACA recipients can now sign up for health insurance through [Marketplace]—just in time for the open enrollment period. Starting [November 1, 2024], DACA recipients can shop and compare health plans and get savings. Enroll by [December 15, 2024] to have coverage in the new year.
- **Assistance:** DACA recipients are now eligible to enroll in [Marketplace] coverage starting [November 1, 2024]. Don't miss out on the opportunity to sign up for a health plan that works for your health and budget. You may qualify for savings based on your income. For help enrolling, [visit or call website URL or phone number].

Spanish

- **El cambio:** Las reglas cambiaron, y ahora los beneficiarios de DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico a través de [Mercado] [a partir del 1 de noviembre de 2024]. El gobierno federal agregó DACA a la lista de estatus migratorios elegibles para cobertura de [Mercado], entre los que también se encuentran residentes legales permanentes, asilados y refugiados, entre otros grupos. Inscribirse en un plan médico a través de [Mercado] no afectará el estatus migratorio de los beneficiarios de DACA ni de sus familiares. El período de inscripción comienza el [1 de noviembre de 2024].
- **Los beneficios:** [A partir del 1 de noviembre de 2024] los beneficiarios de DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico a través de [Mercado], recibir ahorros y acceder a beneficios médicos esenciales. Todos los planes médicos incluyen citas médicas, atención de emergencia, medicamentos recetados, servicios de salud mental y más. Y [8 de cada 10] personas inscritas reciben ahorros para ayudar a pagar el costo del plan. Visite [Mercado] y encuentre un plan que se ajuste a sus necesidades de salud y a su presupuesto.
- **La carga pública en contexto:** **La administración de Biden puso fin a la política de carga pública** de 2019 que ponía en riesgo las solicitudes de inmigración si los inmigrantes legalmente presentes usaban beneficios públicos como atención médica, vivienda y nutrición. Usar estos programas no afectará el estatus migratorio actual o futuro de una persona que se está inscribiendo ni de sus familiares.
- **El proceso:** [A partir del 1 de noviembre de 2024] los beneficiarios de DACA pueden inscribirse en un plan médico a través de [Mercado] y recibir ahorros. Al llenar su solicitud, le preguntarán por su estatus migratorio,

su hogar y sus ingresos, y puede ser que tenga que enviar talones de pago o W-2 y una identificación con foto. Estos documentos solo se pueden utilizar para verificar su elegibilidad para la cobertura y no se pueden utilizar para fines de control migratorio. Para ayuda con la inscripción: [URL del sitio web o teléfono].

- **Período especial de inscripción:** Por primera vez, los beneficiarios de DACA podrán usar [Mercado] para obtener un seguro médico y recibir ahorros. El período especial de inscripción comienza el [1 de noviembre de 2024] para inscribirse en un plan médico en 2024. Solicite antes del [15 de noviembre de 2024] para obtener cobertura a partir del 1 de diciembre de 2024.
- **Inscripción abierta:** A partir de ahora, los beneficiarios de DACA pueden solicitar un seguro médico a través de [Mercado], justo a tiempo para el período de inscripción abierta. A partir del [1 de noviembre de 2024], los beneficiarios de DACA pueden buscar y comparar planes médicos y recibir ahorros. Inscribese antes del [15 de diciembre de 2024] para tener cobertura en el año nuevo.
- **Ayuda:** Los beneficiarios de DACA ahora son elegibles para inscribirse en la cobertura de [Mercado] a partir del [1 de noviembre de 2024]. No pierda la oportunidad de inscribirse en un plan médico que se ajuste a sus necesidades de salud y a su presupuesto. Podría calificar para ahorros según sus ingresos. Para ayuda con la inscripción, [visite o llame URL del sitio web o teléfono].

Outreach Recommendations

More than **100,000 DACA recipients** are estimated to benefit from Marketplace or BHP coverage. To effectively reach this population, states must deploy a combination of direct-to-consumer and stakeholder outreach strategies to ensure important enrollment information reaches them where they are.

Direct-to-Consumer Outreach

- **In-person events:** Enrollment events at/through universities and community colleges, recreational fairs, and community centers can ensure state health officials 1) connect and build trust with newly eligible DACA recipients that may be otherwise missed by traditional messaging; and 2) create space for eligible DACA recipients to directly connect with officials or designated Navigators with questions about the enrollment process in a way that a flyer cannot.
- **Social media:** Social media can provide an opportunity to target messaging directly to eligible DACA recipients through states' official channels or partners with greater access to the non-citizen community. These partners include advocacy organizations with established connections and community trust (e.g., United We Dream and Protecting Immigrant Families), and online influencers and social media personalities with greater digital reach. States should also consider disseminating content through DACA-specific social media communities such as Facebook's **Dreamers2gether** or Reddit's **r/DACA**.

Outreach Through Stakeholders

- **Partner with trusted messengers:** Engaging other government agencies, community partners, and advocacy organizations can be key to ensuring enrollment information and collateral reaches newly eligible DACA recipients. For example, as uninsured DACA recipients are more likely to use Emergency Medicaid services, hospitals can be an important touchpoint in disseminating information.
 - **Government agencies:** State Medicaid and Marketplace agencies, local Internal Revenue Service offices, Health Resources & Services Administration Health Centers, the Department of Veterans Affairs and affiliated hospitals, and AmeriCorps VISTA programs.
 - **Partners:** Hospitals, community health clinics, community colleges, social services organizations, food banks, immigration attorneys, and legal clinics.

- **Advocacy organizations:** United We Dream, Protecting Immigrant Families, UnidosUS, CASA, and National Immigration Law Center.
- **Leverage networks and community connections:** Given their close ties and proximity to eligible DACA recipients, family and community networks could serve as intermediaries for information. Messages should be targeted to these audiences with a call to action to inform DACA recipients of their eligibility for Marketplace coverage, thus ensuring that accurate, reliable enrollment information and resources reach them.
- **SMS text messages:** As **more than half** of Latino/as use **the instant messaging platform WhatsApp**, text messages that employ **best practices** can be an effective tool in states' outreach campaigns. Trusted partners should be encouraged to employ SMS strategies when delivering key enrollment messages to newly eligible DACA recipients and provide sample text messages to facilitate partner outreach.

Template Resources

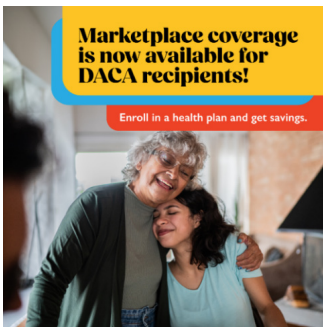
The following template communications resources in English and Spanish are available for download through the State Health and Value Strategies [Social Press Kit](#).

Social Media Graphics

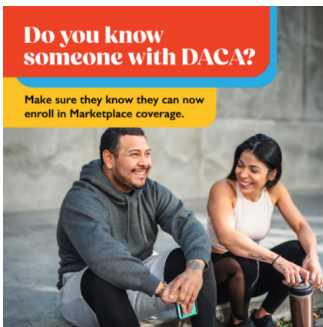
Graphic #1:



Graphic #2:



Graphic #3:



Social Media Posts

These sample posts can be used to promote DACA recipients' eligibility for Marketplace coverage. Where applicable, the information should be updated to reflect the state, Marketplace name and website, enrollment dates, and more.

English

- The rules have changed, and people with DACA can now get health insurance through [@Marketplace] starting Nov. 1, 2024. Enrolling in a health plan will not impact your immigration status or future green card applications. For more info & free enrollment help, visit: [Website URL or phone number]
- Starting Nov. 1, DACA recipients can get health insurance through [@Marketplace]. Don't lose out on essential health benefits & savings! All plans cover doctor visits, mental health services, & more. Find a plan that works for your health and wallet: [Website URL or phone number]
- Have DACA? Starting Nov. 1, you can enroll in health coverage through [Marketplace URL] without impacting your immigration status or future green card applications. For free enrollment support, visit: [Website URL or phone number]
- Attention DACA recipients: You can now get health insurance through [@Marketplace]! A special enrollment period will start on Nov. 1, 2024. Apply by [Nov. 15] to get coverage starting as early as December. Find free enrollment assistance: [Website URL or phone number]
- Did you hear? DACA recipients can now get health insurance and savings through [@Marketplace] with no impact on their immigration status or future green card applications. Shop and compare health plans during the open enrollment period, which starts [November 1]. Learn more: [Website URL or phone number]
- Spread the word! Starting Nov. 1, people with DACA can enroll in health coverage via [@Marketplace]—giving them access to essential health benefits and savings. [8 in 10] people enrolled get savings to help pay for the cost of their plan. Learn more: [Website URL or phone number]

Spanish

- Las reglas cambiaron y a partir de ahora las personas con DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico a través de [@Mercado] a partir del 1 de noviembre de 2024. Inscribirse en un plan médico no afectará su estatus migratorio o futuras solicitudes de residencia permanente. Para más información y para ayuda gratis con la inscripción, visite: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- A partir del 1 de noviembre, los beneficiarios de DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico a través de [@Mercado]. ¡No se pierda estos ahorros y beneficios médicos esenciales! Todos los planes cubren citas médicas, servicios de salud mental y más. Encuentre un plan que se ajuste a sus necesidades de salud y a su presupuesto: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- ¿Tiene DACA? A partir del 1 de noviembre, puede inscribirse en una cobertura médica a través de [URL del Mercado] sin que eso afecte su estatus migratorio o futuras solicitudes de residencia permanente. Para ayuda gratis con la inscripción, visite: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- Atención, beneficiario de DACA: ¡Ahora puede obtener un seguro médico a través de [@Mercado]! El 1 de noviembre de 2024 comienza un período especial de inscripción. Inscribese antes del [15 de noviembre] y obtenga una cobertura que comenzará en diciembre. Encuentre ayuda gratuita con la inscripción: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- ¿Se enteró? A partir de ahora los beneficiarios de DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico y ahorros a través de [@Mercado] sin que esto afecte su estatus migratorio o futuras solicitudes de residencia permanente. Busque y compare planes médicos durante el período de inscripción abierta, que comienza el [1 de noviembre]. Más información: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]

- ¡Corra la voz! A partir del 1 de noviembre, las personas con DACA pueden inscribirse en una cobertura médica a través de [@Mercado], recibir ahorros y acceder a beneficios médicos esenciales. [8 de cada 10] personas inscritas reciben ahorros para ayudar a pagar el costo del plan. Más información: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]

SMS Text Message Copy

Text messages can be an effective way to raise awareness about DACA recipients' eligibility for Marketplace coverage. States can customize these sample messages with their Marketplace name and website. The limit is 160 characters.

English

- Know someone with DACA? Starting Nov. 1, they can now enroll in health insurance via [Marketplace] with no impact on their immigration status. Learn more: [Website URL or phone number]
- The rules have changed. DACA recipients are now eligible for [Marketplace] coverage. Find a plan that works for your health and your wallet: [Website URL or phone number]
- For the first time, DACA recipients can enroll in health insurance through [Marketplace]! No impact on immigration status. Learn more: [Website URL or phone number]
- Starting Nov. 1, people with DACA can enroll in [Marketplace] coverage. No impact on immigration status. Get essential health benefits and savings: [Website URL or phone number]
- Spread the word: Starting Nov. 1, DACA recipients qualify for health insurance and savings via [Marketplace]. Shop and compare health plans: [Website URL or phone number]

Spanish

- ¿Conoce a alguien con DACA? Desde el 1 de nov. puede tener seguro médico de [Mercado] sin afectar su estatus migratorio. Más información: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- Las reglas cambiaron. Los beneficiarios de DACA ahora son elegibles para cobertura de [Mercado]. Encuentre un plan según sus necesidades y presupuesto: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- ¡Por primera vez, los beneficiarios de DACA pueden obtener un seguro médico vía [Mercado], ¡sin afectar su estatus migratorio! [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- Desde el 1 de nov., las personas con DACA pueden tener cobertura de [Mercado], sin afectar su estatus migratorio. Reciba beneficios médicos esenciales: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]
- Corra la voz: Desde el 1 de nov., los beneficiarios de DACA califican para un seguro médico vía [Mercado]. Busque y compare planes médicos: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]

Radio Readers

States can record the following scripts to serve as an audio on-hold message, record a video for their social media channels, or share the scripts with local radio stations to broadcast as a public service announcement and raise awareness that people with DACA status are newly eligible for Marketplace coverage. These sample scripts can be customized with state Marketplace names, websites, enrollment dates, and more. If states have an opportunity to secure sponsored content through their local radio station, it is recommended that they include a message that conveys the information is brought to listeners by the state's Marketplace.

Radio :60 – English

DACA recipients: The rules have changed, and you can now enroll in health insurance through [Marketplace]. The federal government added DACA to the list of immigration statuses eligible for Marketplace coverage—just in time for the open enrollment period.

Starting [November 1], you can visit [Marketplace] to shop and compare health plans that work for your health and budget. All plans cover essential health services, including doctor visits, emergency care, prescriptions, and more!

You may even be eligible for financial assistance to help cover the cost of a health plan! Providing information about your household and income can help determine if you qualify for help paying premiums and other healthcare costs.

Apply by [November 15] to get coverage starting in December. For help navigating the enrollment process, visit: [Website URL or phone number]

Radio :60 – Spanish

Beneficiario de DACA: Las reglas cambiaron y ahora puede inscribirse en un seguro médico a través de [Mercado]. El gobierno federal agregó DACA a la lista de estatus migratorios elegibles para cobertura del Mercado, justo a tiempo para el período de inscripción abierta.

A partir del [1 de noviembre], puede visitar [Mercado] para buscar y comparar planes médicos que se ajusten a sus necesidades y a su presupuesto. ¡Todos los planes cubren servicios esenciales, como consultas médicas, atención de emergencia, medicamentos recetados y más!

¡Hasta podría ser elegible para asistencia financiera para ayudar a cubrir el costo del plan médico! La información sobre el hogar y los ingresos puede ayudar a determinar si califica para recibir ayuda para las primas y otros gastos de salud.

Solicite antes del [15 de noviembre] para tener cobertura en diciembre. Para ayuda con el proceso de inscripción, visite: [URL del sitio web o teléfono]

Radio :30 – English

Calling all DACA recipients! The rules have changed, and you can now sign up for health coverage through [Marketplace] with no impact on your immigration status or future green card applications.

Find a plan that works for your health and your wallet. All health plans cover doctor visits, prescriptions, mental health services, and more. [8 in 10] people enrolled get savings to help pay for the cost of their plan.

Take action now for a healthier future. To learn more and find enrollment support, visit: [Website URL or phone number]

Radio :30 – Spanish

¡Atención, beneficiario de DACA! Las reglas cambiaron y ahora puede inscribirse en una cobertura médica a través de [Mercado] sin que esto afecte su estatus migratorio o futuras solicitudes de residencia permanente.

Encuentre un plan que se ajuste a sus necesidades y a su presupuesto. Todos los planes cubren citas médicas, medicamentos recetados, servicios de salud mental y más. [8 de cada 10] personas inscritas reciben ahorros para ayudar a pagar el costo del plan.

Inscríbase ahora para un futuro más saludable. Obtenga más información y reciba ayuda con la inscripción en [URL del sitio web o teléfono]

Support for this toolkit was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is a leading national philanthropy dedicated to taking bold leaps to transform health in our lifetime. Through funding, convening, advocacy, and evidence-building, we work side-by-side with communities, practitioners, and institutions to get to health equity faster and pave the way together to a future where health is no longer a privilege, but a right.

RWJF believes that achieving strong, lasting connections across the healthcare, public health, and social services systems helps build healthier and more equitable communities that provide everyone a fair and just opportunity for health and wellbeing.

ABOUT STATE HEALTH AND VALUE STRATEGIES—PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) assists states in their efforts to transform health and healthcare by providing targeted technical assistance to state officials and agencies. The program is a grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, led by staff at Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs. The program connects states with experts and peers to undertake healthcare transformation initiatives. By engaging state officials, the program provides lessons learned, highlights successful strategies and brings together states with experts in the field. Learn more at www.shvs.org.

ABOUT GMMB

This toolkit was prepared by GMMB. GMMB is a full-service communications firm dedicated to creating real and lasting positive change in the world. We work on behalf of several of the world's largest foundations, leading public interest groups and trade associations, federal and state government agencies, and corporations. For more than 40 years, we have been on the front line of issue-based communications, earning a reputation for shaping public opinion by developing research-based communications strategies that achieve real results. For more information, visit www.gmm.com.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank Tara Straw with Manatt Health and Sabrina Corlette with Georgetown University's Center on Health Insurance Reforms (CHIR) as well as Adriana Cadena, Sonya Schwartz, and Ed Walz with Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF), for reviewing and offering insightful feedback on this product.