

Tailored Supports for Older Adults (TSOA) and Medicaid Alternative Care (MAC) programs

Author

Northwest Justice Project

Last Review Date

October 1, 2025

Unpaid caregivers who take care of family members who are at least 55 years old may be eligible for the TSOA or MAC programs. These programs provide support for the caregiver and the older person.

What are the TSOA and MAC programs?

The Tailored Supports for Older Adults (TSOA) and Medicaid Alternative Care (MAC) programs (<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/programs-and-initiatives/medicaid-transformation-project-mtp/older-and-aging-adults-and-family-caregivers>) provide services for **unpaid caregivers** who are taking care of someone who is 55 years old or older.

- TSOA is for people who aren't eligible for Medicaid.
- MAC is for people who are eligible for Medicaid but have chosen not to participate in a Medicaid program.

How do I get TSOA and MAC program coverage?

You can apply online (<https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>) or go to your local DSHS office (<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/office-locations>). You can ask DSHS for help applying for the program.

What's the income limit for TSOA?

You're eligible for TSOA if your income is **\$3,868/month or less**.

What's the resource limit for TSOA?

The resource limit is **\$77,052** if you're single and **\$149,581** if you're married.

Some resources, like your house, car, and personal items don't get counted for the resource limit.

What's the income limit for MAC?

You're eligible for MAC if you're eligible for "categorically needy" Medicaid or "alternative benefit plan" Medicaid. Generally, your income must be at or below 138% of the federal poverty level, which is **\$1,800/month** if you're single and **\$2,433/month** if you're married. You might qualify with higher income if you have certain disabilities.

What's the resource limit for MAC?

If you're already eligible for a Medicaid ("Apple Health") program that doesn't have a resource limit, there's no resource limit.

Otherwise, the resource limit is **\$2,000** if you're single and **\$3,000** if you're married.

Some resources, like your house, car, and personal items don't get counted for the resource limit.

What's a CARE Assessment?

Once DSHS decides you're financially eligible for TSOA or MAC, a specialist will interview you and your unpaid caregiver to find out what kind of help you need.

When does TSOA and MAC coverage start?

Coverage for both programs can start after a quick eligibility screening with DSHS. For TSOA, you might also have to go through an application process. But if it turns out you're not eligible for TSOA, you don't have to pay anything back. There's no retroactive coverage for TSOA or MAC.

What services do TSOA and MAC offer?

There are different levels (or "steps") of services for TSOA and MAC depending on what you and your unpaid caregiver need. Services can include, but aren't limited to, these:

- Caregiver support groups
- Caregiver training and consultation
- Dietician consultation
- Fall prevention workshops
- Long-term care planning assistance
- Short and long-term respite care
- Home safety evaluation
- Transportation assistance
- Adult day health
- Medical equipment and supplies
- Personal emergency response system
- Minor home modifications

- Meals and housework

Can I give my home or other resources away?

Yes. But be careful! If you're only getting TSOA or MAC, you can transfer your resources without penalty. But your ability to transfer resources may be limited for other programs you need now or in the future.

Will DHS try to get paid back from my estate after I die?

No. But other Medicaid services involve "estate recovery."

WashingtonLawHelp.org gives general information. It is not legal advice.

Find organizations that provide free legal help on our Get legal help page.

Tailored Supports for Older Adults (TSOA) and Medicaid

Alternative Care (MAC) programs