

Winter 2025
Healthy Together

1-800-562-4620 • WWW.OHPCC.ORG

Housing Support **Is Available**

Winter is just days away. Is your home ready to keep you safe and warm? The Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) program is here to support you with housing and utilities. This includes providing heaters or other climate control devices to eligible Open Card members with Medicaid.

Here are key HRSN program updates you should know about:

Funding Has Increased

Recent state budget approvals have increased the HRSN program's funding. This means HRSN can offer more support in covering your

housing and utility costs. For details on updated benefits and maximum assistance amounts, call Acentra's HRSN staff at **1-888-834-4304**.

More People Are Eligible

The criteria for being able to access HRSN benefits are broader. You may now be eligible if you did not qualify in the past. Requirements include:

- You must be enrolled in Oregon's Open Card Medicaid program.
- You rent housing or own and live in a certain type of property (owner-occupied housing).

Do you have questions? Call the Acentra HRSN staff at **1-888-834-4304**. We are here to make sure you receive the benefits you need.

The Process Has Been Streamlined

It is now easier to apply. You can fill out an application online. The four steps are:

1. Go to **ohpcc.acentra.com/HRSN**.
2. Fill out the application. You will need to provide personal and financial information. If you need help to fill out the form, call **1-888-834-4304**.
3. Submit your documents. You will need to provide proof of Medicaid enrollment, proof of income and your housing details.
4. After your application is processed, you will receive information about the support available to you.

Thank you for your attention to these important updates. We are dedicated to helping you navigate these changes and make the most of the resources available to you.



Enjoying Healthy Eating During the Holidays

The holidays are a fun time filled with big meals, sweet treats and family gatherings. It can be easy to eat too much or choose less healthy foods. The good news is you can still enjoy your favorite holiday dishes while making healthier choices!

To keep your eating habits balanced during the holidays:

- **Watch your portions.** It is easy to fill your plate. Instead, try starting with smaller amounts. That way, you can taste a little bit of everything you want without overeating.
- **Choose healthier options.** If you see fruits, vegetables or whole grains, go for those first. Instead of mashed potatoes with butter and cream, try roasted vegetables with olive oil.
- **Limit sweets.** It is OK to enjoy a treat but be mindful of how much. Enjoy a small piece of pie or a cookie. Do not go for seconds. You can also try healthier desserts like fruit salads or yogurt parfaits.
- **Drink water.** Eggnog, sugary punches and other holiday favorites often have a lot of calories. Replace servings with water. Also try flavored sparkling water for a more festive way to stay hydrated and cut down on added sugar.
- **Take your time.** Eating slowly gives your body a chance to tell you when you are full. Plus, you will have more time to enjoy your meal and talk with family and friends.

Making a few healthier choices throughout the holidays can help you feel better during and after celebrations.

health briefs

Baking Season Is Here!

If your recipes go beyond cookies, that is good news for your health. Baking, roasting and broiling food is better for you than deep-frying it. You will cut calories and fat. You should be able to update most recipes to work in the oven. For recipes and more, visit www.myplate.gov.



Feeling Blue?

Does your mood change with the seasons? Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) often starts in the late fall or early winter. Then it lasts until spring or summer. Along with symptoms of major depression, people with SAD may withdraw from social activities and overeat carbohydrate-rich foods. Talk with your health care or a mental health provider if you have any concerns.



Prevent Severe Illness

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) can cause more than annoying coughs and sneezes. Infants, young children and older adults are more likely to become very ill. Help your family stay safe: A vaccine is available for people ages 60 and older. Children younger than 8 months, and some up to age 24 months, should have immunotherapy (monoclonal antibody) products. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/rsv.





Drinking Alcohol Can Be Risky if You Take Medicine

Alcohol can change how your body absorbs or breaks down prescription medicines. Sometimes they can cause symptoms or become harmful. Even if you feel fine, alcohol can keep drugs from working as they should. Here are a few common examples:

- **Pain medicine:** If you take an opioid, alcohol can make you feel drowsy or dizzy. It may slow your breathing down. This can be very dangerous, even life-threatening.
- **Antibiotics:** These drugs fight infections caused by bacteria. Some types do not work as well if mixed with alcohol. You may have a headache or feel sick. One type of antibiotic called metronidazole can cause severe nausea and vomiting if you drink alcohol.
- **Blood pressure medicine:** Having alcohol while on these drugs can cause your blood pressure to drop too low. This can lead you to feel dizzy or faint.

- **Antidepressants:** Alcohol can make you feel even more depressed or anxious. It can also increase the risk of side effects like drowsiness, confusion or poor coordination.

Try these tips to stay safe:

- **Read the label.** Always check your medicines for warnings about drug interactions. These may include alcohol.

- **Ask your health care provider or pharmacist.** They can tell you if it is safe to drink alcohol while you are on the medicine.
- **When in doubt, skip alcohol.** It is not safe to drink if you do not know how alcohol might affect your medicine.

Mixing alcohol and prescription drugs can be harmful. Knowing the risks and understanding your medicines will help protect your health.

You are not alone. Get help

If you ever feel like hurting yourself or are thinking about suicide, it is important to talk to someone you trust, like a parent, teacher or friend. You can also call the **OREGON SUICIDE LIFELINE** at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or dial 988 anytime. They are there to listen and help you. You matter, and there are people who care about you. Please reach out if you need help.



Oregon Health Plan Care Coordination
P.O. Box 2480
Tualatin, OR 97062



Ready to quit tobacco?
Call a Quit Coach 24 hours
a day, 7 days a week,
in 170+ languages:
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569)

Online:
www.quitnow.net/oregon

Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or
any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Developed by Krames, a WebMD Ignite solution

Keep Cannabis Products **Away from Kids**

Eating or drinking products that contain cannabis is dangerous for children. Yet, many of them look like treats kids love. Gummies, chocolates, sodas, juices and other edibles containing cannabis may even come in colorful packages that are easy to confuse with regular (cannabis-free) versions.

Health Risks

If a child ingests cannabis by mistake, it can lead to serious health problems. Since a child's body is smaller, the effects can be much stronger for them than for adults. Some symptoms may include:

- Fainting (losing consciousness)
- Feeling dizzy or confused
- Trouble breathing

Safe Storage

Along with foods and drinks, lotions, lip balms and oils can contain cannabis. Keep them away from curious kids.

Treat all cannabis products like medicine or cleaning supplies:

- Keep them in the original packages so it is clear that they are not regular products.
- Put the packaged products inside childproof containers.
- Place the containers out of sight and reach. Lock cabinets and drawers.

Tell everyone in your home how important it is to keep cannabis products away from children. Show them how to store products the right way. Learn more about cannabis health and safety at **www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/preventionwellness/marijuana**.

If a child eats or drinks any type of cannabis product, call Poison Control:
1-800-222-1222

