



# How to Find a Dentist Who Accepts Medicaid

If you have Medicaid, finding a dentist who accepts your plan is an important first step toward receiving affordable dental care. Not every dental office participates in Medicaid, so it is helpful to confirm coverage before scheduling an appointment.

Taking a few minutes to verify your benefits can help you avoid unexpected costs and delays in treatment.

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## Check Your Medicaid Plan

Many states provide dental benefits through managed care organizations or contracted dental plans.

Before looking for a dentist, make sure you know:

- The name of your Medicaid plan.
- Your member ID number.
- Whether your plan includes dental benefits.
- Which services are covered.

Your Medicaid identification card or member handbook usually contains this information.

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## Use Your Plan's Provider Directory

Most Medicaid dental plans maintain an online directory of participating dentists.

These directories allow you to search by:

- ZIP code
- City
- Distance from your home
- Language spoken
- Specialty
- Office accessibility

Using the provider directory is one of the easiest ways to find an in-network dentist.

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## Call Before Scheduling

Even if a dentist appears in the provider directory, call the office before making an appointment.

Ask:

- Do you currently accept my Medicaid plan?
- Are you accepting new Medicaid patients?
- What dental services do you provide?
- Is there a waiting list?
- Do you have staff who speak Spanish or other languages if needed?

Provider participation may change over time.

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## Community Health Centers

Many Community Health Centers (FQHCs) accept Medicaid and provide comprehensive dental services.

These clinics often offer:

- Preventive care
- Dental cleanings
- Fillings
- Extractions
- Emergency treatment
- Oral health education

Community Health Centers may also help patients understand their insurance benefits.

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## Dental Schools

Some dental schools accept Medicaid for certain services.

Availability varies by institution, so contact the school directly to ask:

- Whether Medicaid is accepted.
- Which services are covered.

- Whether new patients are being accepted.
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## **Bring the Right Information**

At your first appointment, you may need:

- Your Medicaid card.
- A photo ID.
- A list of current medications.
- Your medical history.
- Previous dental records or X-rays, if available.

Having this information ready can help your visit go more smoothly.

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## **Understand Your Coverage**

Even if your dentist accepts Medicaid, not every procedure may be covered.

Before beginning treatment, ask:

- Is this procedure covered?
- Do I need prior authorization?
- Will I have any out-of-pocket costs?
- Are there alternative covered treatments?

Understanding your benefits can help you make informed decisions.

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## **Keep Regular Dental Visits**

Regular preventive care is one of the best ways to protect your oral health.

Routine checkups and cleanings may help detect problems early, reduce the need for more extensive treatment, and improve overall health.

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## **Key Takeaways**

- Not every dentist accepts Medicaid.
  - Use your Medicaid plan's provider directory to find participating dentists.
  - Always call the office to confirm participation and availability.
  - Community Health Centers and some dental schools may also accept Medicaid.
  - Ask about coverage before starting treatment to avoid unexpected costs.
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## References

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Medicaid.gov
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)