

Hi everyone. Thanks for joining today for this information sessions on becoming a Certified Application Counselor or a 'CAC.' My name is Kara Chiev. I'm a MassHealth external and communication training manager. I oversee the CAC program. This afternoon, we will be giving you a lot of information related to our program as far as what it is and how your organization can partner with us in the this program.

The CAC program or Certified Application Counselor Program in Massachusetts is overseen by MassHealth and is in partnership with the Massachusetts Health Connector. This is a voluntary program for organizations to participate in. CACs, commonly referred to as Certified Assisters or Enrollment Assisters in the community, help individuals and families seek health care coverage, complete an application, and provide or submit supporting documents to MassHealth of the Health Connector. They can also help members renew their health care coverage and can help translate letter that members receive from either MassHealth of the Health Connector.

No one pays for the services they receive from a CAC, nor do they need a CAC to complete or submit an application. They are in the community to serve as an additional resource to help individuals complete their application or renewal, as most often our members just don't understand our application and our process.

To become a CAC, individuals need to work or be appointed by the CAC designated organization. A tri-party agreement is completed between the interested agency, MassHealth, and the Health Connector. Currently, out in the community MassHealth partners with over 200 CAC designated organizations. You can find a lot of the CAC, most but not always, at community health centers, hospitals, and community-based agencies. What is the process for becoming a CAC? CACs are required to be certified by MassHealth. They go through a self-paced training in the Assister Learning Management System. We provide the tools needed for CAC to train and additional resources and job aids to support them in their role. They are required to maintain the certification yearly and be in good standing as they help applicants and members through their application process.

Here you have the really high-level roles and responsibilities of a CAC. As far as their responsibilities, they work or volunteer for an organization that has partnered with us. They complete the initial CAC training. Like I mentioned, they need to maintain their status, as well as be certified yearly. And we do ask that CACs not turn anybody away. They are willing and able to support our applicants and members out in the community. As far as the benefits of becoming a CAC or CAC designated organization, once an organization is designated, you can have more than one staff or as many team members as needed for your program become CACs/ You will be able to be prepared to help individuals complete applications or renewals. You will also have access to certain MassHealth and Health Connector systems to be able to check the status of application and renewals, as well as complete online application. For members or applicants under the age of 65, we do have an online application and when you become a CAC you are able to access that application online to help the member real time complete their application.

CACs do provide a full range of health care coverage options and offer education related to MassHealth programs and the Health Connector Program. They help individuals and families complete and submit their application for health benefits and renewals. They work with the individual and the family to submit any verification or documentation that is requested of them to ensure they maintain coverage. CACs are able to interact with MassHealth and the Health Connector customer service to support member individuals with their application and renewal process. They can help facilitate enrollment into health care programs. CAC, on the other hand, do not make any decisions on whether the individual or family are eligible for any public health benefits or programs. They don't assist individuals with private health insurance applications. They do not get paid for the work they are doing out in the community by either MassHealth or the Health Connector. And again, they do not charge for the services they provide as a certified assister.

To find a local assister, you can go to the Find Local Help tool at [mahealthconnector.org](https://mahealthconnector.org). It can be used to help find a certified assister in the community. It includes CACs, Certified Application Counselors, as well as Navigators. Navigators are another certified assister out in the community. They are funded by the Health Connector but also support MassHealth members and applicants. You can quickly find a certified assister through this Find Local Help tool. It is online as [mahealthconnector.org](https://mahealthconnector.org). And that's it as far as the CAC program.

I just wanted to give you a little bit of information related to training. On average, we have heard from assisters that it may take them around ten hours to complete, but for somebody that is newer to the health care space, ten hours would get them through our training materials but they may need to take a little but more time understanding our application and our processes and that's okay. There are a lot of opportunities for certified assisters to get support from my team mostly, as well as our platform where we provide updates related to MassHealth and that is called the Massachusetts Healthcare Training Forum. There are a number of platforms through which we provide support to our certified assister community to make sure they are up to date with information about MassHealth as well as the Health Connector program.