

March of Dimes urges Congress, federal agencies, and state legislatures to act to ensure that pregnant people and their families do not lose access to critical healthcare benefits, including Medicaid postpartum coverage extension and telehealth services, when the continuous enrollment conditions expire.

## Summary

Moms and babies will lose access to valuable services when the continuous enrollment condition and the public health emergency provisions expires.

- Women who qualified for Medicaid due to their pregnancies will lose their continuous coverage protection at 60 days postpartum in many states.
- Moms and babies will lose access to coverage for many telehealth services. These services are covered by Medicaid under the public health emergency provisions and are essential to ensure all moms and babies have access to quality care.

## Medicaid Continuous Coverage Requirement

March of Dimes urges all remaining states to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage for pregnant people before the continuous enrollment provisions expire.



65.3% of maternal deaths occur during the first year after childbirth.<sup>1</sup>



More than 80% of these deaths were preventable.<sup>1</sup>



Medicaid covers more than 4 in 10 births each year.<sup>2</sup>



Postpartum Medicaid coverage up to a year after childbirth provides critical access to maternal health services.



Lack of access to postpartum care may directly contribute to racial and ethnic disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>



Pregnant people who live in states without current expansion policies will lose Medicaid coverage at 60 days postpartum after the continuous enrollment provision expires.<sup>4</sup>

March of Dimes applauds Congress for making the 12-month extended Medicaid postpartum coverage state option permanent in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, September 19). Pregnancy-related deaths: Data from Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 36 US States, 2017– 2019. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/erase-mm/data-mmrc.html>

<sup>2</sup>Usha Ranji, I. G., & 2020, D. (2021, March 9). Expanding postpartum Medicaid coverage. KFF. Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/expanding-postpartum-medicaid-coverage/>

<sup>3</sup>Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC). (2021, March). Chapter 2: Advancing maternal and infant health by extending ... - macpac. Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP. Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://www.macpac.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Chapter-2-Advancing-Maternal-and-Infant-Health-by-Extending-the-Postpartum-Coverage-Period.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>Press Release HHS approves 12-month extension of postpartum Medicaid and chip coverage in Indiana and West Virginia. CMS. (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/hhs-approves-12-month-extension-postpartum-medicaid-and-chip-coverage-indiana-and-west-virginia>

<sup>5</sup>H.R.2617 - 117th Congress (2021-2022): Consolidated Appropriations Act ... Congress.gov. (2022). Retrieved February 1, 2023, from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2617>

## Medicaid for Babies

March of Dimes urges Congress to act to [minimize coverage losses](#) and to intervene quickly if babies and children become uninsured.

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Half of the nation's children are covered by Medicaid.<sup>6</sup>



More than [6.7 million children](#) will [lose their Medicaid coverage](#) when the continuous coverage requirement expires.<sup>5</sup>



Medicaid programs provide [essential medical services to babies](#).

- Vaccinations
  - Health screenings
  - Treatments for acute and chronic illnesses.
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These services have provided a [safety net](#) for millions of families.

March of Dimes applauds Congress for passing the 12-month continuous eligibility requirements for children enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023.<sup>7</sup>

## Telehealth Services

March of Dimes urges Congress to [permanently extend Medicaid coverage](#) for evidence-based telehealth maternal care services.

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More than [2.2 million women of childbearing age](#) in the U.S. live in counties without a hospital offering obstetric care, a birth center, or an obstetric provider.<sup>8</sup>



An additional [4.7 million women](#) live in counties with limited maternity care access.<sup>5</sup>



About [150,000 babies](#) are born in maternity care deserts.<sup>5</sup>



Pregnant women living in maternity care deserts have limited access to maternal care due to [distance, lack of transportation, and travel time](#).



Over [40 studies](#) confirmed that [telehealth services](#) led to similar or better patient outcomes when compared to routine maternal services, particularly in mental health, general maternal care, and prenatal diabetes.

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<sup>6</sup>Alker, J., Brooks, T., Gardner, A., & Klukoff, H. (2022, February 23). Millions of children may lose Medicaid: What can be done to help prevent them from becoming uninsured? Center For Children and Families. Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2022/02/17/millions-of-children-may-lose-medicaid-what-can-be-done-to-help-prevent-them-from-becoming-uninsured/#heading-11>

<sup>7</sup>H.R.2617 - 117th Congress (2021-2022): Consolidated Appropriations Act ... Congress.gov. (2022). Retrieved February 1, 2023, from <https://www.congress.gov/bills/117th-congress/house-bill/2617>

<sup>8</sup>March of Dimes. (2020). Nowhere to go - March of Dimes. NOWHERE TO GO: MATERNITY CARE DESERTS ACROSS THE U.S. 2020 REPORT. Retrieved September 21, 2022, from <https://www.marchofdimes.org/materials/2020-Maternity-Care-Report.pdf>