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.¹
- More than 80% of these deaths were preventable.¹
- Medicaid covers more than 4 in 10 births each year.²
- 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.³
- Pregnant people who live in states without current expansion policies will lose Medicaid coverage at 60 days postpartum after the continuous enrollment provision expires.⁴

March of Dimes applauds Congress for making the 12-month extended Medicaid postpartum coverage state option permanent in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023.⁵

**Medicaid for Babies**

March of Dimes urges Congress to act to **minimize coverage losses** and to intervene quickly if babies and children become uninsured.

Half of the nation’s children are covered by Medicaid.6

More than 6.7 million children will lose their Medicaid coverage when the continuous coverage requirement expires.5

Medicaid programs provide **essential medical services to babies**.

- Vaccinations
- Health screenings
- Treatments for acute and chronic illnesses.

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 2023.7

**Telehealth Services**

March of Dimes urges Congress to **permanently extend Medicaid coverage** for evidence-based telehealth maternal care services.

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.8

An additional 4.7 million women live in counties with limited maternity care access.5

About **150,000 babies** are born in maternity care deserts.5

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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