

TurnAround Ohio: Medicaid Eligibility Expansions

APRIL 2008

Starting January 2008, Ohio Medicaid began implementing new initiatives geared toward covering more of Ohio's pregnant women, uninsured children, and workers with disabilities.

Pregnant Women (any age)

Because prenatal care is so important, Medicaid's Healthy Start program raised the income limit for pregnant women to qualify from 150% to 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Once eligible, pregnant women can receive care at no cost for up to 60 days after giving birth. Plus, babies born to Healthy Start mothers automatically qualify for Medicaid for their first year of life. This expansion took place on Jan. 1, 2008 and is expected to cover 1,700 additional pregnant women.

Coverage for Youths Aging Out of Foster Care

To support youths aging out of the foster care system, the Medicaid program now provides health care for former foster care youths until they reach age 21. Previously, medical benefits ceased at age 18. With this new initiative, case managers responsible for transitioning youths to community resources have been directed to continue their enrollment in the Medicaid program. Youths younger than age 21 who have already aged-out of the foster care system can contact their local county office to apply. This expansion began on Jan. 1, 2008 and is expected to provide coverage for approximately 900 youths.

Children's Coverage (up to age 19)

Ohio Medicaid will increase program income limits to cover more of Ohio's uninsured children. Depending on their income, some families may have to pay a monthly premium of \$40 per child (\$120 maximum per family) to qualify. It is estimated that an additional 11,000 children could be eligible for the program. Once federal approval is granted, an implementation date will be set for this expansion.

Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities (MBIWD) Program

This new program allows people with disabilities to earn more money and still keep their Medicaid health benefits. Previously, minimal earnings from employment could disqualify people with disabilities from receiving Medicaid. This presented a challenge since these applicants typically have conditions that are not covered by private insurers.

This program enables workers with disabilities to contribute to Ohio's economy, keep more of their



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income, and maintain their health care benefits. Depending on income, monthly premiums may apply. This expansion began April 1, 2008. It is estimated that 5,800 individuals will enroll in MBIWD.

Application Process

To apply, call 1-800-324-8680/TTY 1-800-292-3572, visit www.jfs.ohio.gov/ohp or contact a local county department of job and family services. No face-to-face interview is necessary.

Children's Buy-In (CBI) Program

CBI provides another option for Ohio's uninsured children in families with income above 300% FPL. CBI allows working families who have uninsured children with special health needs or high monthly premiums to purchase public health coverage for their children. Children must be uninsured for six months prior to enrolling and must meet additional criteria in order to qualify. This program began April 1, 2008 and it is estimated that 5,000 uninsured Ohio children will obtain health coverage through this program.

Please note: This program is not available through the local county departments of job and family services. Applications are only accepted online. Visit: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/cbi/> for more information.

