



It's time for Congress to put people first

Next coronavirus relief bill must strengthen Medicaid

Medicaid is a critical source of health insurance coverage for kids and families in Iowa—making it possible for thousands of low-income Iowa children and adults to get and stay healthy. To see how many kids in your county receive coverage through Medicaid click [here](#).

Medicaid has been a frontline responder during this crisis, stepping up to do the job it was designed to do at exactly the time Iowa needs it. The Department of Human Services has leveraged Medicaid's inherent flexibilities and adapting the state's Medicaid program to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, the state has implemented continuous eligibility for adults and waived premiums and co-pays for all members. These are important steps to make it easier for eligible individuals to get and stay enrolled.

However, given current crises, Iowa needs Congress to act and provide additional, substantial relief to ensure Medicaid remains strong and can do its job in supporting Iowa families. The time for another federal COVID-19 package is now and increasing federal Medicaid funding must be part of the solution.

- **Increase federal Medicaid funding at least 12 percentage points.** Iowa needs further increases in federal Medicaid funding, and needs it now. As the economic crisis deepens and becomes far more severe than during the Great Recession, it is becoming increasingly clear that the enhanced federal Medicaid matching rate (FMAP) outlined in the Families First Act is not enough: Congress must provide further large FMAP increases as part of the next COVID-19 response bill. We cannot wait to act until our state budget is even further in the hole and more people are unemployed, uninsured and needing care. Iowa families need support now.
- **Tie federal funding to economic recovery.** Right now, the enhanced FMAP is not only insufficient; it lasts only through the duration of the public health emergency. But long after this declaration is lifted, Iowa will be struggling to recover economically. Congress must not only increase the Medicaid FMAP further; they must sustain this enhanced support until states can get back into a place of economic stability.
- **Continue to guarantee coverage for Iowa residents.** Congress must uphold critical requirements tied to the FMAP increase—like not disenrolling anyone from Medicaid or cutting eligibility or benefits—for states to receive this enhanced funding. States need systems that are streamlined and focused on enrollment, and families need to know their coverage is guaranteed throughout this crisis.

As Iowa works to address the coronavirus pandemic, it is important to ensure our systems are functioning well. We must support Medicaid and make sure Iowans can easily enroll, keep their coverage and access the care they need.