




Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Maryland Medical Assistance Program
MCO Transmittal No. 173
May 8, 2023

TO: Managed Care Organizations

FROM: 
Tricia Roddy, Deputy Medicaid Director
Maryland Medicaid

RE: Healthy Babies Equity Act, Effective July 1, 2023

NOTE: Please ensure that appropriate staff members in your organization are informed of the contents of this memorandum.

Effective July 1, 2023, the Maryland Department of Health's Medical Assistance Program (the Department) will provide comprehensive coverage to non-citizen pregnant Marylanders with income up to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL) who would otherwise be eligible for Medicaid or Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) but for their immigration status, as well as their children up to the age of one year, as required by *HB 1080—Healthy Babies Equity Act (Ch. 28 of the Acts of 2022)*.

The Department estimates approximately 6,000 non-citizen pregnant Marylanders will be eligible for this benefit in the first year. Applicants will apply for coverage through the consumer portal on Maryland Health Connection. The benefit will provide coverage during the pregnancy and four months of comprehensive coverage during the postpartum period. This postpartum period is defined as the date a pregnancy ends to the last day of the month in which the four-month period ends. Retroactive Fee-for-Service (FFS) coverage will be available for up to three months, subject to the limitations outlined below.

The non-citizen pregnant individual (birthing parent) will be eligible for the same benefits package available to other pregnant individuals, including physical and behavioral health services, as well as dental and prescription drug coverage without copays. Participants will be enrolled in a managed care organization (MCO) during the prenatal and postpartum periods. Carved out benefits will be covered on a fee-for-service basis.

Individuals who currently qualify for emergency medical services due to pregnancy (X03 L) will be contacted by MDH to alert them to this new coverage opportunity. These individuals can apply for comprehensive benefits using Maryland Health Connection's consumer portal beginning July 1, 2023.

Participant Eligibility Criteria

An individual may qualify for this coverage if they meet the following criteria:

- Non-citizen (*e.g.*, undocumented, non-qualified alien) who does not qualify for Medicaid solely due to immigration status;
- Maryland resident;
- Currently pregnant and **apply prior to the final day of their pregnancy;**
 - Any individual who applies on the pregnancy end date (*i.e.*, at labor and delivery) will **NOT** be eligible for this benefit.
- Income up to 250% FPL.

Up to three months of retroactive coverage before the individual's coverage start date is available but will not extend prior to the start of the pregnancy or before July 1, 2023.

Coverage Groups

Two new coverage groups will be created and will mirror the coverage rules for the P02 and P11 coverage groups.

- Healthy Babies Prenatal Coverage Group (X11)
 - Eligibility Period: from conception until the end of the month in which pregnancy ends
 - Access to full adult Medicaid coverage, identical to P02/P11
- Healthy Babies Postpartum Coverage Group (X12)
 - Automatic switch from X11 to X12 at the end of the month in which the pregnancy ends
 - Entitled to the same benefits as X11 participants, identical to P02/P11

Rates

- Two new rate cells
 - One for the X11 Pregnant Parent Coverage Group
 - One for the X12 Postpartum Parent Coverage Group
- Rates identical to P02/P11 rates
- Rate cells for supplemental payments are the same as existing coverage groups
 - Birth weight
 - Normal Birth Weight, Low Birth Weight
 - Regions
 - Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Rest of State

Individuals who do not qualify for this benefit may be eligible for emergency medical services covered through a limited Medical Assistance benefit for non-qualified or undocumented non-citizens.

For questions about this transmittal, please contact Annapurna Kocherlakota at mdh.medicadmch@maryland.gov.