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Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy, Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra Announce Medicaid Expansion for New Moms 365 Days Postpartum

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New Jersey Becomes Second State in the Nation and First in the Region to Provide Medicaid Expansion to Improve Maternal and Infant Health and Decrease the Racial Disparity in Birth Outcomes

TRENTON – First Lady Tammy Murphy and Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra today announced that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will expand Medicaid coverage for 365 days postpartum to improve maternal and infant health and decrease the racial disparity in birth outcomes in New Jersey. By extending this critical coverage, approximately 8,700 postpartum New Jerseyans annually will receive comprehensive access to healthcare for a full year through Medicaid. Today’s announcement makes New Jersey the second state in the nation and first state in the region to provide this Medicaid expansion with the goal of preventing postpartum related illness and death.

In January 2021, First Lady Tammy Murphy unveiled the Nurture NJ Maternal and Infant Health Strategic Plan (<https://nurturenj.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/20210120-Nurture-NJ-Strategic-Plan.pdf>), which aims to reduce maternal mortality in the state by 50 percent over five years and eliminate the racial disparities in birth outcomes, in which expanding Medicaid coverage was a key recommendation of the strategy. Additionally, Governor Murphy’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget allocated funding to enable New Jersey to submit the federal request for the Medicaid extension.

“New Jersey is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of our mothers and babies,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “Expanding Medicaid coverage for a full year after delivery is an essential step toward solving our Black maternal health crisis and making sure that every mom and baby gets off to a healthy start. We are grateful for the leadership and vision of the Biden Administration, our federal partners, my wife First Lady Tammy Murphy, and so many others who championed this critical and commonsense policy change which will guarantee health care for nearly 9,000 mothers across New Jersey every year.”

“As the second state in the nation to expand Medicaid coverage for mothers for a full year after delivery, New Jersey is now another step further on our mission to become the safest and most equitable state in the nation to deliver and raise a baby,” **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. “This expansion was a key recommendation in the Nurture NJ Maternal and Infant Health Strategic Plan, but any mother could tell you that access to health care for a year after delivery is a commonsense, necessary, and moral imperative for any state that values healthy families. I am grateful to the Biden Administration, our federal partners, and my husband, Governor Phil Murphy, for their vision, compassion, and dedication to the mothers and babies of New Jersey.”



“Becoming a parent is among life’s greatest milestones, but sadly paired with significant challenges for many in low-income communities,” **said Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra**. “I applaud New Jersey for taking action to provide vital care for new parents and their precious babies. Expanding postpartum coverage will not only improve health outcomes among families of color— it will save lives. The Biden-Harris Administration encourages states across the country to follow New Jersey’s example to support healthy parents and infants.”

“Our country is facing a maternal health crisis, and it is disproportionately harming people of color,” **said CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure**. “Access to postpartum care is critical to keeping our nation’s families healthy. That’s why CMS is proud to partner with New Jersey today to expand postpartum health coverage and advance health equity for thousands of low-income people covered by Medicaid and CHIP.”

This amendment to the New Jersey FamilyCare Comprehensive Demonstration aligns with coverage options available under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Beginning on April 1, 2022, states will have the option to extend coverage for postpartum individuals **(https://www.facebook.com/govmurphy)** through the end of the month in which a 12-month postpartum period ends. **(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)**

Medicaid covers nearly one in five women of reproductive age nationally and makes pregnancy-related care accessible for more than 40 percent of people giving birth. Currently, a third of maternal deaths occur between one week to a year after childbirth, and in New Jersey **(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)** Black women suffer over seven times more pregnancy-related deaths than white women. Providing continued Medicaid and CHIP coverage helps ensure access to the ongoing care people need during the postpartum period. The continuity of coverage available through this demonstration can help postpartum people manage chronic conditions like hypertension and diabetes, and provide access to behavioral health and other mental health care services. **(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)**

This demonstration amendment will also ensure that the state can receive the enhanced funding for expenditures related to eligible people who remain covered through the demonstration and who would otherwise qualify for the Medicaid expansion adult group.

As part of this approval, New Jersey has agreed to undertake monitoring and evaluation of the demonstration for the extension period, in alignment with any applicable CMS-provided technical assistance.

“One of our aims with the American Rescue Plan was to address racial inequities in our health care system that the pandemic made worse but in truth have long plagued our country. The data is indisputable: racial bias against pregnant Black women and mothers has deadly consequences,” **said U.S. Senator Bob Menendez**. “Turning around America’s dismal maternal health record will demand multidimensional solutions, from better training for health providers to more investments in preventative care. But there’s no question that gaps in health care coverage are a significant contributor to the problem. I am confident that this tiny provision tucked inside the American Rescue Plan will have a big and positive impact on maternal health outcomes in our state.”

“In a nation where nearly half of all births are covered by Medicaid and where one-third of all maternal deaths occur up to a year post-birth, expanding Medicaid postpartum coverage from the current 60 day limit to 365 days is a common sense solution whose time has come,” **said U.S. Senator Cory Booker**. “Since I first introduced the MOMMIES Act, I have been leading the push in the Senate to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage, including by securing a pathway in the American Rescue Plan Act for states to expand this coverage. This is especially critical for communities of color as Black and Indigenous people are significantly more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than their white peers. I applaud HHS and Governor Murphy for their leadership on this issue, and as Congress continues working on the Build Back Better Act, I remain committed to ensuring that pregnant people in every state have access to postpartum Medicaid coverage.”

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