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Governor Phil Murphy



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Governor Highlights Expanded Eligibility for NJ FamilyCare Health Care Coverage as Administration Continues Efforts to Cover All Kids

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Income-Eligible Children Can Now Obtain Medicaid Coverage in New Jersey Regardless of Immigration Status

MORRISTOWN – Governor Phil Murphy today highlighted expanded eligibility for the NJ FamilyCare health care coverage as part of his Administration’s efforts to provide all New Jersey children with health insurance through the “Cover All Kids” campaign. As of January 1, 2023, children under the age of 19 whose families meet income eligibility requirements are now able to obtain Medicaid coverage regardless of their immigration status.

NJ FamilyCare is the state’s publicly funded health insurance program that includes Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) recipients and is managed by the New Jersey Department of Human Services.



“Every child should have access to health care,” **said Governor Murphy.** “By helping more children get NJ FamilyCare coverage regardless of their immigration status, we are working to make New Jersey a fairer, more affordable place for all to live. This expanded eligibility is an important step in my Administration’s ongoing efforts to ensure every child in our state has access to the quality health insurance coverage they deserve.”

Phase 1 of the Cover All Kids campaign helped remove barriers and support connections to coverage by eliminating the 90-day waiting period for children to get coverage after enrolling in the New Jersey Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and eliminating premiums families would have paid for children enrolled in CHIP. Targeted mailings have been sent to key community partners, like food pantries, libraries, family success centers, local health departments, and others.

This year’s expanded eligibility represents the start of Phase 2 of the campaign, which focuses on equitable access to health insurance coverage regardless of immigration status. As of January 1, standard coverage is now available for children of undocumented status who otherwise meet the same requirements as all other children in the Medicaid program. This expanded eligibility is estimated to apply to an additional 16,000 children throughout New Jersey.

To help boost enrollment for eligible children who have not yet been enrolled in a health insurance plan, the Administration is developing a grant program to support outreach and enrollment by community organizations.

Since the launch of Cover All Kids in 2021, more than 47,000 New Jersey children who were eligible but not enrolled are now insured through NJ FamilyCare.

In addition to highlighting the newly-expanded eligibility, Governor Murphy and fellow speakers at today’s event at Zufall Health Center – a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Morristown that provides health care services regardless of documentation status or ability to pay – emphasized the importance of residents applying for health insurance through NJ FamilyCare if they and their children are eligible.

Families can learn more and apply by visiting njfamilycare.org or by calling 1-800-701-0710 (TTY: 711).

“Access to health care, particularly to primary care, makes kids healthier and communities stronger, and doing so is a fiscally responsible investment in our children’s futures,” **said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman.** “Income eligible children, regardless of immigration status, can now enroll in the same FamilyCare coverage any other child has and we encourage families to sign

up.”

“With this expanded eligibility, the State has reached a significant milestone in our efforts to ensure all children in New Jersey have access to more affordable coverage,” **said Shabnam Salih, Director of the Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency.** “I thank the Governor for being a leader in advancing policies that prioritize health care affordability and accessibility for all, and thank Commissioner Adelman for making this new benefit a reality for the many children and families who will now have the peace of mind that comes with consistent and accessible health care coverage.”

“No parent should be left to choose between putting food on the table or taking their child to the doctor. I applaud Governor Murphy’s efforts to ensure all New Jersey children have access to health care,” **said Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz.** “Expanding Medicaid coverage to children regardless of status will ensure they are able to get the care they need when they need it the most.”

“Health care is a fundamental human right, and it is unconscionable that any child in our state has gone without coverage because of family resources or immigration status,” **said Assemblyman Raj Mukherji, Chair of the Legislature’s Joint Asian Pacific American Caucus.** “By expanding eligibility for Medicaid coverage, New Jersey is putting affordable health care in reach for families across New Jersey and ensuring all children can access the treatment they need.”

“I am happy to join Governor Murphy in his announcement of Phase II of the Cover All Kids Initiative which allows all income eligible children access to affordable and accessible health insurance through NJ FamilyCare,” **said Morristown Mayor Timothy Dougherty.** “This is a proud moment in our State and I commend the Governor for his commitment to prioritizing a healthier future for all New Jersey’s children”

“Racial health disparities continue to persist in New Jersey. By providing coverage for our children in the most formative and vulnerable years of their lives, we are making bold strides to begin addressing those gaps, and importantly, making the investments in care and coverage that prevent costly emergencies and crises further down the road. To truly realize our vision of becoming the Opportunity State, New Jersey’s public programs and services must grow to reflect the increasingly diverse families that call this great state home. This year, we are doing exactly that with ‘Cover All Kids,’” **said Amy Torres with New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice.** “The fight for the ‘Cover All Kids’ campaign is a testament to the growing organizing power of immigrant families. We must empower those same voices to spread the word so that every family with an eligible child has the support and

guidance they need to apply. We look forward to continuing to work with our State and coalition partners to ensure this program receives the fair funding and resources it deserves, both in this inaugural year and in the years to come.”

“Expanding access to NJ FamilyCare health care coverage is critical to making sure more New Jersey families can obtain the health care services their children need,” **said Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter, Chair of the Legislative Black Caucus.** “Everyone deserves to receive quality healthcare. I applaud these ongoing efforts to work towards our shared goal of ensuring health care coverage for every child in our state.”

“As a health center serving more than 3,500 uninsured children, we believe that the expansion of Cover All Kids will be truly transformative for thousands of children and families in New Jersey,” **said Eva Turbino, President and CEO, Zufall Health.** “Although care at Zufall Health and other community health centers has been available to uninsured children for decades, this expansion of insurance coverage will allow families access to a much broader range of services. We hope that this important measure will encourage early, appropriate medical care for all children, keeping them—and all of us—safer and healthier.”

“We applaud Governor Murphy’s efforts to ensure healthcare coverage for our state’s children,” **said Angie Waters, Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Jersey, Inc.** “So many of the children served by Court Appointed Special Advocates have medical needs which, but for Medicaid and NJ Family Care, would go unaddressed.”

“On the heels of Martin Luther King Day, the implementation of this phase of Cover All Kids removes barriers to health coverage that largely impact our communities of color and contribute to systemic racial inequities,” **said Laura Waddell, Health Care Program Director at NJ Citizen Action.** “New Jersey has taken an important step toward protecting the health of our most vulnerable residents – our children, regardless of immigration status. Our thanks to the Murphy Administration for fulfilling this important promise to our kids.”

“This expansion is cause for celebration as New Jersey keeps adopting progressive policies that make it a true opportunity state for all of its residents,” **said Lady Jimenez Torres, Policy Director at New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children.** “We applaud the Administration and the New Jersey Legislature for advancing this important initiative and we acknowledge the Department of Human Services’ role in the implementation of this expansion. The impact this will have on families across the garden state will be evident not only on the children’s physical health, but also their mental health and social wellbeing. We are prepared to

support and will keep advocating for the removal of enrollment barriers for immigrant children.”

“Our recent ALICE in Focus data showed that nearly 34,000 New Jersey children living within financially strapped ALICE households had no health insurance pre-pandemic,” **said United Way of Northern New Jersey CEO Kiran Handa Gaudio**. “No child should grow up without access to quality, affordable health care. Our United Way applauds this commitment to address the coverage gaps for ALICE children who deserve the resources and opportunity to meet their potential.”

“The expansion of NJ FamilyCare to all income-eligible children, regardless of immigration status, is a historic step toward a stronger and healthier New Jersey,” **said Brittany Holom-Trundy, Senior Policy Analyst at New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP)**. “Thousands of families in our neighborhoods, friends and colleagues – will now have access to high-quality, affordable health coverage for their children. Policies like this are how we put opportunity within reach for every family, and how we set up kids for success now and later in life. We thank Governor Murphy, members of the Legislature, and all of the advocates who made this possible.”

Governor Phil Murphy

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Office of Governor PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

609-292-6000

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