

What's New with Texas Medicaid, SNAP, and Healthy Texas Women

Presenters:

Diana Forester, Texans Care for Children [slides](#)

Kristen Lenau, Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition [slides](#)

Rachel Cooper, Every Texan [slides](#)

Diana Forester of Texans Care for Children presented on the upcoming implementation of 12-month Medicaid postpartum coverage for new mothers. 12-month postpartum coverage was passed in the last legislative session and the benefit is expected to be live in HHSC's system on March 1, 2024. Texas is the 42nd state to extend postpartum Medicaid to 12 months from 60 days.

Current coverage for pregnancy and postpartum through Texas Medicaid:

- Mother is covered on Medicaid during pregnancy.
- Mother receives 60 days coverage on Medicaid postpartum.
- After the postpartum period she can apply for Medicaid renewal, but is likely to be denied.
- If denied for Medicaid, she may be eligible for other programs such as Healthy Texas Women (more on this below) or HTW+ for postpartum women.

Healthy Texas Women+ was implemented during pandemic but wasn't really in effect until recently since many expectant mothers could get Medicaid coverage and keep it through continuous eligibility.

Coverage for pregnancy and postpartum going forward:

When 12-month postpartum Medicaid is implemented, moms who are still in their 12-month postpartum window—but who lost their 60-day coverage—will get Medicaid turned back on for the remainder of their 12 months. This should happen automatically, but given HHSC system problems that may not happen. HTW+ remains an option for those who lost Medicaid because of an income change that made them ineligible.

Coverage reinstatement example:

- Mother was on Medicaid during pregnancy and will exhaust her 60 days of postpartum coverage in December 2023.
- Mother's coverage will restart in March 2024 because she is still within the 12-month postpartum period, and continue through the remainder of her 12 months (i.e. through October 2024)
- The eligibility for postpartum Medicaid coverage doesn't change, just the length of coverage from 60 days to 12 months.

After session note: some who are no longer eligible for pregnancy Medicaid but are eligible for Healthy Texas Women might also be eligible for HealthCare.Gov. It's important to review their options, as HealthCare.gov is more comprehensive coverage than the limited services Healthy Texas Women covers.

Kristen Lenau Texas Healthy Women Coalition gave overviews of Healthy Texas Women, the Family Planning Program and Title X, plus updates on the women's health budget passed in the last legislative session.

About Healthy Texas Women:

HTW is a Medicaid waiver program that provides women's health and family planning services at no cost to eligible, low-income Texas women. Approximately 350,000-400,000 women are enrolled per month, and there are approximately 3000 providers in Texas. HTW+ provides additional benefits for postpartum women.

Eligibility:

- Women ages 15-44
- Citizen
- Income <200% FPL
- Not pregnant
- No other insurance

About the Family Planning Program:

FPP is a General Revenue funded program (not a Medicaid waiver) that offers free or low-cost birth control and well woman services at almost 200 clinics. It's a key part of the safety net for more than 100,000 Texans.

Eligibility:

- Women and men under age 64
- Texas resident
- Income <250% FPL

About Federal Title X Program:

Title X is a federally-funded program for birth control, cancer screenings and STI testing/treatment.

- Women and men no age restrictions
- Minors under 18 require parental consent for birth control
- No income requirements
- No citizenship requirements

Increases in the women's health programs budget included \$2.6 million for HTW patient navigators, \$5 million to increase the number of women's preventive health mobile units in areas without a women's health provider within 100 miles, and a Family Planning Program notification 30 days prior to a "funds gone" status to protect providers from providing services that won't be covered.

Texas women can now get a 12-month supply of contraceptives in one visit (started September 1). The new law requires health plans to allow women to receive a 12-month supply of birth control with one

prescription. A 3-month trial may be required if a new method or medication is prescribed.

Rachel Cooper of Every Texan presented state and federal updates on SNAP that improve Texans' access to SNAP benefits and reduce some barriers to qualifying for SNAP.

State benefits and changes:

- People leaving the criminal justice system in Texas (state only, not federal) will be pre-enrolled in SNAP and receive activated Lone Star cards upon release.
- A one-time adjustment to the value of vehicles families can own and qualify for SNAP
 - The law changed on September 1, but HHSC can't implement system changes until January 2024.
 - The allowed value of a first car increases to \$22,500 from \$15,000 and to \$8700 from \$4650 for additional cars.
 - If you come across anybody who is denied SNAP based on the old rule but would qualify under the new rule, Every Texan wants to know about it so we can help. Contact cooper@everytexan.org or kmartinez@everytexan.org.
 - Vehicle value is provided by Kelly Blue Book
- Updated household change reporting requirements
 - Households with children are exempt and don't need to report a change in residence or a change in shelter costs (i.e. rent/mortgage). They MUST report if they move out of Texas.
 - Elderly, disabled, or "Able-bodied adults without dependents" (ABAWD) must report when household gross monthly income amount changes by more than \$125.
 - All households must report gambling winnings more than \$4250.

Federal law changes on age limits for work reporting requirements:

- Federal law changed work reporting requirements to apply to "able-bodied adults without dependents" (ABAWD) ages 18-54 vs. 18-49.
- HHSC is currently using a federal option to exempt ABAWD from the work requirement if they are currently over the age of 50.
- ABAWD can only receive SNAP for three months in a three-year period unless they can meet work reporting requirements or are exempt.
- The federal phase-in up to age 54 continues into 2024 and reverts to 18-49 in 2030.
- New rules went into effect September 1, but changes won't be implemented in HHSC's system until November 18.

Adults exempt from work reporting requirements:

- Pregnant
- Physically or mentally unable to work

- Homeless—now more broadly defined as not having a regular nighttime residence. In theory they can self-identify but HHSC can request verification.
- Veterans—anyone who served in armed forces including reserves, type of discharge doesn't matter. HHSC *should* accept self-identification.
- Former foster youth ages 18-24—applies to foster care **in any state**. Self-identification is acceptable, and any contact with social services can suffice for Texas verification

Other key SNAP updates:

- SNAP is guaranteed for December if there's a government shutdown, but a shutdown could increase lead times. SNAP should be backdated to when the recipient applied.
- SNAP for full-time college students has returned to pre-COVID rules.

Additional information about SNAP processing from the Texas Medicaid unwinding Q&A:

In response to a few questions about SNAP lead times for processing, SNAP backlog and related issues, Michelle Alletto from HHSC shared the following:

- Regarding a 140+ day lead time before a SNAP application is processed, it is not the norm for SNAP-only applications and likely applies to cases with applications for multiple programs that require different information.
- SNAP application backlog is currently 100,000 cases not counting the expedited applications, and HHSC is focused on preventing people already enrolled from having a gap in benefits.
- Expedited SNAP applications are completed within the 30-day federal timeliness standard for people who indicate in their application that they are experiencing severe food insecurity and will have trouble paying rent, household bills, etc.
- Only HHSC workers can complete SNAP applications, so the agency can't outsource to nonprofit partners, for example.
- New employees coming into HHSC start on SNAP, so more help is coming. But new folks need to be trained and take time to get up to speed.