

Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

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Department of Health

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska ‘Pregnant Women Medicaid’ Changes Take Effect February 1

January 31, 2024 / ANCHORAGE — In a significant step toward enhancing maternal healthcare access, the Alaska Department of Health (DOH) is implementing changes to coverage for “Pregnant Women Medicaid.” Postpartum coverage is being extended, from 60 days after pregnancy to 12 months, and the income limit is being increased, from 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to 225%.

Governor Mike Dunleavy introduced [Senate Bill 58](#) during the last legislative session, a bill that overwhelmingly passed in May 2023. Since then, DOH has completed the regulatory and federal requirements necessary to implement this change.

“Supporting families – particularly new moms and babies – is part of my pledge to make Alaska the best state in the nation to raise healthy families,” said Governor Dunleavy. “Protecting the core of the family unit during the first year of life is essential to providing access to a healthy start.”

Key features of the Alaska Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Extension include:

Extended Postpartum Coverage: Eligible beneficiaries will have 12 months of coverage, adding 10 months to the current 60-day postpartum period covered by Medicaid. This expansion ensures comprehensive healthcare support during the crucial post-delivery phase.

“This preventive measure aligns with our broader efforts to provide access to healthcare for all Alaskans,” said Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. “With 60 days of Medicaid coverage, many women who experience postpartum depression may not realize an onset of symptoms until it is too late to seek treatment. Extending postpartum coverage to a full year after birth provides new mothers additional support for physical and mental health, improving overall well-being of mother and baby.”

Additionally, Senate Bill 58 raised the income limit for Medicaid coverage for pregnant women.

Higher Income Eligibility Level: Starting February 1, 2024, the income limit for pregnant women increases, from 200% to 225% of the federal poverty level, potentially extending coverage to thousands of additional recipients.

The implementation of these changes marks a significant stride toward a healthier future for Alaska’s families. According to Commissioner Hedberg: “Making health care coverage accessible to more new

mothers for 10 more months can help address the alarming rise in maternal death rates across the nation and our state – and increases infants’ ability to meet their developmental milestones, by providing more opportunities for early screening and interventions with provider visits.”

The changes underscore Alaska's commitment to the well-being of mothers and infants.

Learn more about the expanded postpartum coverage and how to apply by visiting <https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/press/Postpartum-Coverage-FAQs.pdf>.

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