

# SAVE MEDICAID Toolkit

May 2025



**HFS**

Illinois Department of  
Healthcare and Family Services





# SAVE MEDICAID

**Medicaid is Under Threat. The Stakes are High and the Moment is Now.**

Illinois Medicaid is a trusted, innovative, and fiscally responsible program. It delivers real value to Illinois taxpayers and keeps our communities healthier.

Today, 1 in 4 Illinoisans rely on Medicaid for access to doctors, prescriptions, and preventive care—that's more than 3.4 million children, older adults, people with disabilities, and working families across our state.

But now, harmful federal proposals threaten what we've built. These proposed cuts could strip health coverage from over 770,000 hardworking Illinoisans who recently gained it through expansion, deepen health disparities, drain billions from Illinois' economy, disproportionately impact rural and underserved areas, and raise health care costs for everyone, including businesses.



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# Share Our Message to **SAVE MEDICAID**

At the end of FY2024, over 3.4 million Illinoisans were enrolled in Medicaid, and over 770,000 were enrolled under the ACA expansion population.

We must act together to **SAVE MEDICAID**. Illinois policymakers, health care providers, community leaders, and advocates can:

- Stand united in defense of Medicaid
- Urge Congress to reject harmful cuts
- Lift the stories of those whose lives have been changed by Medicaid
- Protect Illinois' gains in coverage, equity, and economic stability
- Share our unified message that resonates across communities



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# Campaign Message

One in four Illinois residents — over 3.4 million people — are covered by Medicaid, including nearly half of our state's children. Medicaid covers 44% of births, and it's the largest insurer for long-term care, funding 68% of nursing facility days. In rural areas, Medicaid covers 23% of children, 16% of non-elderly adults, and 12% of seniors.

**Federal Medicaid cuts pose threats to coverage for customers no matter their age or where they live.**



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# Campaign Message

The Affordable Care Act has brought about greatly improved health outcomes in states that expanded Medicaid, while at the same time saving money and providing critical support to chronically underfunded health care systems. After the expansion took effect in Illinois, the statewide uninsured rate dropped by 44%, while hospitals saw uncompensated care costs decrease because providers were absorbing fewer costs for people who were not able to pay.



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# Campaign Message

When people don't have access to healthcare coverage, they're often forced to make incredibly difficult decisions. Imagine canceling a procedure because the out-of-pocket cost will result in significant medical debt or choosing between continuing your child's critical therapy appointments and paying the electric bill. These are the types of choices many will face if Congress passes these proposed cuts.



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# Campaign Message

Proponents use terms such as per capita caps, work requirements, and provider taxes – but make no mistake: these are all Medicaid cuts, which means Illinoisans will lose healthcare coverage or see fewer services they need covered by their insurance.



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# Campaign Message

## **Current proposal for Medicaid work requirements:**

To qualify for Medicaid, able-bodied adults without dependents would need to complete at least 80 hours per month of work, education, or service under new "community engagement requirements" starting December 31, 2026. They would also need to verify eligibility twice a year instead of once.

Although 68% of non-disabled customers aged 19-64 are enrolled in Illinois Medicaid with some income, and others have valid exemptions – such as a disability, caregiving, or being in school – many may face a significant administrative burden to prove their eligibility.



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# Campaign Message

Illinois Medicaid has helped reduce emergency room visits by improving care coordination and preventive services, keeping Illinoisans healthier and out of crisis care.



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# Campaign Message

Last fiscal year, the Illinois Medicaid program invested more than \$20 billion to support hospitals, long-term care facilities, pharmacies and physicians. Illinois hospitals and health systems collectively generate \$117.7 billion for the state annually.



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# Campaign Message

Losing health coverage has direct health consequences. Many of those losing coverage would lose access to treatment for chronic conditions, receive delayed diagnoses for diseases like cancer, and, in turn, face higher risks of death, and be unable to afford needed prescriptions.



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# Campaign Message

Over 25% of Illinoisans who are covered by Medicaid say they would have very little or no access to healthcare without it.



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