

The FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS program, also known nationally as CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program), is currently funded in Virginia through January 31, 2018. Congress must renew federal funding for the CHIP to ensure continuation of the FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS programs beyond January 31, 2018. If federal funding is not authorized, children and pregnant women enrolled in FAMIS or FAMIS MOMS will lose their health insurance coverage on January 31, 2018.

Congress will very likely act to fund CHIP before the end of December or in early January. However, we cannot guarantee they will do this in time to keep FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS open so we are sending families an informational letter so they are not surprised if we have to close the program at the end of January.

FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS members will receive a letter from the Department of Medical Assistance Services in mid-December to notify them of the status of the program.

This letter tells members:

- FAMIS coverage **will** end January 31, 2018, if Congress does not act;
- They may continue to use their FAMIS benefits through January 31, 2018; and
- If you have urgent medical needs, it is best to address those needs immediately and not wait.

Important Information to relay to FAMIS beneficiaries:

- As of today, there are **no changes to your FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS benefits**. Please continue to use your benefits.
- If you or your family receives a letter stating it is time to renew your FAMIS benefits, **follow the instructions in the letter and complete your renewal**.
- Congress may renew funding for CHIP at any time, but **there is no guarantee** that they will.

FAMIS Member and Applicant Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: I've heard people talking lately about FAMIS funding. What's going on?

A: Continued Federal funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), known in Virginia as FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS, stopped September 30, 2017. However, Virginia has sufficient

funds to maintain the program through January 31, 2018. To continue FAMIS beyond the end of January the program requires renewed federal funding, which must be approved by Congress. If Congress does not renew the funding by January 31, 2018, the program will close in Virginia.

Q: Has anything changed yet? Are FAMIS members covered now?

A: Yes, FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS members will remain covered through January 31, 2018.

There are no changes to FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS benefits at this time. FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS members should continue to see the doctor and get health care, as usual. If medical services are needed in the near future, you are encouraged to set appointments prior to February 1, 2018 in case the FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS funding is not renewed by Congress before January 31, 2018.

Q: My child is on FAMIS. Should we still go to the doctor? Is it okay to schedule new doctor appointments?

A: Yes. Please continue to use your benefits. Keep taking your child to the doctor and make new appointments for your child just as you normally would. If you foresee your child needing a medical appointment or a prescription in the near future, you are encouraged to set appointments prior to February 1, 2018 in case the FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS funding is not renewed by Congress before January 31, 2018.

Q: I am a pregnant FAMIS/FAMIS MOMS member. Should I keep going to the doctor?

A: Yes. Please continue to use your benefits. Keep going to the doctor and make new appointments for yourself just as you normally would. Appointments should try to be scheduled before January 31st in case the program is terminated.

Q: I need health insurance for my children. Is it still possible to qualify for FAMIS?

A: Yes. There are no changes to FAMIS at this time and you can apply up until January 31, 2018 if the program is not funded beyond this date.

Q: What's going to happen if Congress never votes to allow more funding? Will FAMIS end?

A: Most people believe Congress will renew funding for this program, but the question is when. If Congress does not renew the funding prior to January 31, 2018, the funding for FAMIS will

run out and we will have to close the program on January 31, 2018. If/when Congress funds the program after this date, Virginia will reopen the programs once funding is available.

Q: What will Congress do?

A: We do not know what Congress will do. We will mail notifications out once a decision has been made. You can also contact us at Cover Virginia for an update at any time. (have then also check the website)

Q: How will I know if FAMIS is ending?

A: If your FAMIS benefits are going to end, you will receive a letter letting you know, so it's very important to make sure we have your correct contact information. <CSR should then confirm the caller's address on file>

Q: As a FAMIS member, do I need to shop now for a private health insurance plan?

Or

Q: Should I apply at Healthcare.gov (or at the Marketplace) now?

A: No. You still have active health insurance through January 31, 2018. There are no changes to FAMIS benefits right now. If FAMIS does end, you will receive a written notice and suggestions on your next steps to obtain other Health Insurance at that point as this will be a qualifying event.

Q: What is a Special Enrollment Period?

Or

Q: What is a qualifying event?

A: A Special Enrollment Period is when you have a right to shop for health insurance outside of the Open Enrollment Period because of a Qualifying Life Change Event. Examples of Qualifying Life Change Events are: marriage, the birth of a child, and **loss of coverage**. Qualifying Life Change Events can happen throughout the year, and allow you to enroll in a plan even if it is outside of the annual Open Enrollment Period. **Loss of FAMIS coverage will count as a qualifying Life Change Event.**

Q: What is the Open Enrollment Period for Virginia?

A: Each employer and private health insurance plan, including Healthcare.gov has Open Enrollment Period's which run different times during the year. The Healthcare.gov open enrollment period comes once a year. This year, the Open Enrollment period is November 1st through December 15th. FAMIS members **do not** need to shop for private health insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace during the Open Enrollment Period as they continue to be covered by FAMIS through this time. However, if the FAMIS program ends, it would be a qualifying event and they will be allowed to enroll during a Special Enrollment Period. If that happens, we will send you more information about how to do this.

Q: How will I know what is going on?

A: You may hear on the news when Congress acts. They will report when Congress finally "reauthorizes" or funds CHIP. When that happens, it will allow Virginia to keep the FAMIS programs running. You can check our website or call back to Cover Virginia for updates as well. Finally, you will also get another letter telling you if Congress has provided the funds and that FMAIS will not close.

Q: Who should I contact to express my concern.

A: It is up to Congress to continue the funding for CHIP. You may wish to contact your Senator or Representative with your concerns. To figure out who your Congressional representatives are and how to contact them go to: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>