

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
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CMS NEWS

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CMS approves Arizona's plan to re-open CHIP program

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that it has approved Arizona's plan to allow new enrollment in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) after enrollment was frozen for several years. Now all states provide CHIP coverage to eligible children.

"Today's approval is a step forward for the health of Arizona children in low-income families," said Vikki Wachino, CMS Deputy Administrator and Director of the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services. "With Arizona's decision, all states in the nation now provide CHIP coverage to any eligible child who applies. More children in Arizona will have access to coverage early in their lives, which helps kids grow into healthy adults and provides parents with the peace of mind that comes from their children having affordable coverage."

Having coverage through CHIP improves children's health and increases their ability to succeed in school. Recent research on Medicaid and CHIP shows that these gains are long lasting, with children who gained coverage experiencing better health, higher educational attainment, and higher earnings as adults.

Beginning on July 26, the state ended the existing enrollment freeze and began accepting new applications. Children ages birth through 18 with income above 133 percent up to and including 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) are eligible to enroll in the state's CHIP, known as KidsCare. Children will be able to access services beginning September 1, 2016.

CHIP covers a broad set of health benefits for children, including dental care, that are often out of reach for many families who cannot afford other health coverage. This is especially true for children with special health care needs, as CHIP programs cover physical, occupational, and speech and language therapies.

The state estimates that approximately 30,000 to 40,000 children will become eligible for coverage in KidsCare.

Families interested in learning more about how to enroll can visit <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Members/GetCovered/Categories/KidsCare.html> or call 1-855-HEA-PLUS (1-855-432-7587).

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