

**Joint Task Force on Affordable, Accessible Health Care
October 28, 2021**

Policy Option: Medicaid Post-Partum Expansion

Description

To help improve maternal health and coverage stability and to help address racial disparities in maternal health, a provision in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 gives states a new option to extend Medicaid postpartum coverage to 12 months via a state plan amendment (SPA). This new option takes effect on April 1, 2022 and is available to states for five years.

Under current law, states must provide continuous coverage to Medicaid enrollees through the public health emergency (PHE) period to be eligible for enhanced federal matching funds under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. States seeking to implement extended postpartum coverage after the end of the PHE but prior to April 1, 2022 must do so through a section 1115 waiver or by using state funds.¹

In Vermont, over 40% of births are funded by Medicaid.

Who will it affect, and how?

Vermont's post-partum coverage is currently at 60 days. The Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) is in the process of conducting an analysis to understand the effects to the state if Vermont opted to expand coverage to the full 12 months.

State Activities

Twenty-seven states have adopted or proposed legislation to seek federal approval for the expansion through a SPA or 1115 waiver.

¹ <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-postpartum-coverage-extension-tracker/#:~:text=Postpartum%20Medicaid%20extensions%20in%20these%20states%20include%20continuous,income%20that%20would%20make%20them%20ineligible%20for%20coverage.>