

# EXTEND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO ONE YEAR POST-PARTUM

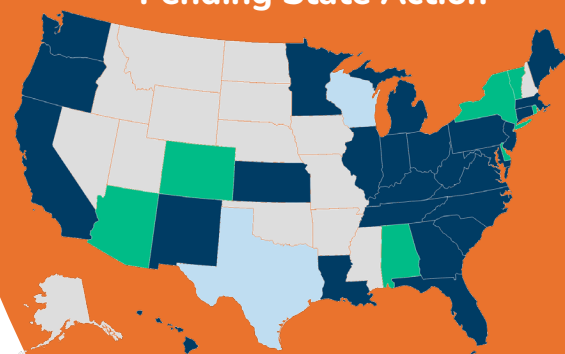
Women who qualify for Medicaid because of pregnancy are only covered up to 60 days following the birth of their child or post-partum. The 2021-2023 biennial budget approved an additional 30 days of coverage pending approval of a federal waiver, but many mothers need care beyond this coverage window. **WPHCA encourages Wisconsin lawmakers to authorize submission of a State Plan Amendment to extend Medicaid coverage for women to one year post-partum.**

Medicaid coverage is associated with improved access to health care, less delay in obtaining health care, better self-reported health, and reductions in mortality. Women need a range of health care services following the birth of a child, especially as many pre-existing chronic conditions such as hypertension or diabetes can worsen with pregnancy. **Women also need continued coverage to address anxiety, depression, and substance abuse that can also be exacerbated by the stresses of caring for an infant.** As maternal mortality rates in the country continue to rise, consistent access to care and trusted relationships with providers are key to lowering and combating racial disparities in maternal and infant death in Wisconsin.

- In 2021, Wisconsin Community Health Centers provided 868 deliveries and 2,693 pre-natal visits. 45% of Community Health Center patients are of child-bearing age, 15-44 years old.
- **30% of maternal deaths (excluding suicide and drug overdose) occur between 43 days and 365 days following delivery.** In addition, researchers estimate 1 in 7 pregnant women experience perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, which frequently extend beyond Medicaid's current 60-day post-partum coverage period. A recent study found that postpartum women and other people who had extended coverage **used three times the number of mental health and substance use disorder services and were much more likely to seek preventive care when they had coverage in the postpartum period.**
- The Congressional Budget Office found that **about 45% of women became uninsured** after losing coverage when the 60-day window closed.
- **Maternal mortality rates for Black women in Wisconsin are 5 times higher than White women and 3.2 times higher for Latino women than White women.** These are some of the worst outcomes in the nation.

WPHCA urges Wisconsin policymakers to join the 35 states who provide or are planning to provide a full year of Medicaid coverage for pregnant women. **If passed, approximately 6,300 Wisconsin women would gain access to critical health services.**

## Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Extensions: Approved and Pending State Action



Source: Data KFF analysis of approved & pending 1115 waivers, state plan amendments, and state legislation as of November 10, 2022.