



Recommendations to Improve Access to Medicaid/CHIP Coverage for Idaho Children

Idaho Kids Covered has produced a set of recommendations for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) to support children's access and enrollment in Idaho Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) programs. In September 2023, IDHW completed redeterminations for Idahoans enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP following the end of the continuous coverage provision (known as 'unwinding'). Of all Idahoans disenrolled during the unwinding, 74%¹ were terminated for procedural reasons. Many of the children disenrolled from Medicaid and CHIP are very likely still [eligible](#) for coverage.

As we near the one-year mark from when Idaho completed renewals, focus should be on ensuring eligible children get covered and stay covered. The following recommendations propose strategies IDHW can pursue to improve efficiencies, reduce costs, and strengthen eligible children's access to Medicaid and CHIP.

Recommendations to Improve Children's Medicaid and CHIP Access

A recent 50-state scan found that states are using and/or have available 32 different public tools, resources, and materials pertaining to Medicaid outreach and consumer assistance. Idaho was found to utilize just 12 of these tools, resources, and materials. We recommend IDHW implement additional resources in English and Spanish for outreach and communications to help retain and reconnect eligible children including the following:

1. Conduct back-to-school campaigns to reach and enroll families with children who may be eligible for Medicaid and CHIP.

- Idaho can leverage opportunities as children go back to school, with targeted outreach materials geared towards parents whose children have lost Medicaid or CHIP coverage. Outreach messages should explain that many children remain eligible even if the parent no longer qualifies and action steps for re-enrollment.
- Idaho can use or adapt this [back-to-school toolkit](#) model for organizations, advocates, and providers.

2. Direct outreach to people whose coverage was terminated for procedural reasons.

¹ KFF Analysis of State Unwinding Dashboards and Monthly Reports Submitted to CMS (July 2024) <https://www.kff.org/report-section/medicaid-enrollment-and-unwinding-tracker-overview/>

- Idaho can direct straightforward messages to Idahoans who were terminated that focus on reminders, such as ‘it’s not too late to enroll,’ eligibility levels, coverage options, and easy-to-follow action steps for re-enrollment.
- 3. Develop a communications toolkit that community partners can easily access and share.**
 - Idaho can create a communications toolkit and share it publicly for community partners and providers. The toolkit can include flyers, postcards, and fact sheets that can be shared electronically or printed, and drop-in articles for newsletters or websites. A social media communications toolkit can be shared across digital platforms including Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube distributed among partners and IDHW’s social media platforms. These materials should be made available in multiple languages.
 - **Example:** [Arkansas](#) has a communication’s toolkit that is simple and accessible.
 - 4. Provide a mobile app to assist eligible Idahoans managing their public benefits.**
 - Idaho could offer a mobile app that allows people to apply for and manage their public benefits from their phones.
 - **Example:** [Texas](#) provides benefit enrollees with an app to manage their public benefits.
 - 5. Ensure eligible Idahoans have access to how-to videos and explainers.**
 - Short ‘how-to videos’ can help reduce questions and make enrollment and renewal process easier to understand.
 - **Example:** [Kentucky](#) provides videos and explainers that are especially helpful for audiences.
 - 6. Develop an online screening tool so Idahoans can easily assess if they qualify.**
 - Idaho can develop a screening tool where potential enrollees can test whether they are eligible for Medicaid or other public benefits programs. The screening tool can be added to the agency website or application portal to reduce the number of applications submitted by Idahoans not eligible.
 - **Example:** [Arkansas and Wyoming](#) provide helpful screening tools on their application websites.
 - 7. Increase access to community-based Medicaid enrollment assisters.**
 - Idaho can create a Medicaid assister locator tool to help individuals find help nearest to them. At least 24 states currently have an assister locator

tool and have found it very helpful for people with questions about their enrollment.

- **Example:** [Florida and Texas](#) provide an assister locator tool on their application websites.

8. Provide a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section (FAQs) on the Medicaid website to minimize confusion about the enrollment processes.

- Idaho can create and publish an FAQs section on their Medicaid website to address recurring questions about Medicaid and CHIP. The FAQs can be shared by stakeholders on their websites and social media as well.
- **Example:** [Wyoming](#) provides a helpful FAQ section on their website.

9. Broaden language accessibility on the state's education and application resources.

- Idaho can offer translations of the state's portal and paper applications to broaden accessibility to multiple languages.

10. Include renewal dates on enrollee's online portals and apps.

- Idaho can add and highlight the Medicaid enrollee's renewal date on their online portal and app pages.

Idaho Kids Covered is a statewide network of health care advocates and stakeholders working to support affordable access to health coverage and care for all children in Idaho. Idaho Kids Covered is a project of Idaho Voices for Children. For more information visit Idahokidscovered.org.