

About the HB23-1300 Feasibility Study



In 2023, the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 23-1300 (HB23-1300) Continuous Eligibility Medical Coverage, which asked the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) to research two areas for potential expansions to Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program) and Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+). The first was how to pay for and deliver health-related social needs (HRSN), like food or housing. The second was options to make it easier for certain children and adults to stay enrolled in Medicaid automatically through a policy called continuous eligibility. HCPF worked with the Colorado Health Institute (CHI) to conduct this research and write this study.

Addressing Health-Related Social Needs

This study explores different types of HRSN services:

- 1. Housing** (e.g. one-time moving costs, rental assistance, permanent supportive housing)
- 2. Food and nutrition** (e.g. home-delivered meals, nutrition counseling)
- 3. Extreme weather** (e.g. air conditioning, portable power supply)
- 4. Social and community support** (e.g. caregiver education, home visiting programs)

For all these services, CHI considered the varying needs of different Health First Colorado and CHP+ members in Colorado, including children and families, people experiencing homelessness, people affected by natural disasters, people impacted by interpersonal violence (IPV), and other Coloradans more likely to need HRSN services.

CHI asked the following questions about the different services within each domain:

- **Population Need.** Do Health First Colorado members need this service?
- **Stakeholder Prioritization.** Do Health First Colorado members, providers, and community partners want or need this service more than others?
- **Cost.** Can HCPF afford to pay for this service over the long term?
- **Evidence of Cost Savings or Avoidance.** Will this service save HCPF money in the future?
- **Precedent to Implement.** Has HCPF or another state agency implemented this service or something like it before?

Table 1 summarizes the answers to these questions for each HRSN service domain. The table indicates whether that criteria is met for each domain as a whole with high, medium, or low evidence, prioritization, cost, or precedent.

Table 1. Feasibility Criteria by Domain

Service Domain	Population Need	Stakeholder Prioritization	Cost	Evidence of Cost Savings or Avoidance	Precedent to Implement
Housing	Medium	High	High	High	High
Food	High	High	Medium	High	High
Extreme Weather	High	Low	Low	Medium	Low
Social Support	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low

Additionally, findings from other states and similar programs already happening in Colorado provide the following lessons:

1. Implementing HRSN services might **save money** in the long term, but not in the short term.
2. Some services are more popular or needed than others, so **service uptake** will vary. In other states, Medicaid members have used food and nutrition services more than other types of services. Additionally, service uptake may start slowly but increase significantly over time.
3. **Different state agencies and partners** will need to work together closely to provide these services through Medicaid. This involves coordinated care navigation networks, data sharing agreements, and shared language and processes.
4. **It is important to build trust** between agencies, key stakeholders in different sectors, and Health First Colorado members to ensure the right services get to the right people.
5. **Food and nutrition services** may be a good starting place for Colorado because there is high need and many state and community partners know how to provide these services.

Expanding Continuous Eligibility

This study also looked at ways to make it easier for certain children and adults to stay enrolled in Medicaid automatically through a policy called continuous eligibility. More information about this research is available in the full study.

Next Steps

Colorado is facing new financial and coverage challenges due to the federal reconciliation bill (H.R. 1) passed in July 2025. H.R. 1 changes are leading to budget cuts and the potential for some Health First Colorado members to lose their Medicaid coverage. These changes also mean that some members will need more help paying for and accessing HRSN. Additionally, the continuous eligibility expansion options described in this study are discontinued by the federal government.

As a result of these policy changes, HCPF is not able to move forward with the recommendations in this report in the short-term. However, in the future, the research and information in this study will be an important resource.

In the meantime, HCPF will continue to focus on keeping Coloradans covered and on working with other state agencies and community partners to build trust and plan for the future.

HRSN Resources

Many HRSN services are already available to Health First Colorado members through different programs offered through HCPF. More information on these programs is available on [HCPF's HRSN webpage](#).



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