



MINIMUM ESSENTIAL HEALTH COVERAGE FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

October 2016

Under the Affordable Care Act, certain parents or caretaker relatives living with a dependent child under the age of 19 are required to enroll the child in qualifying health coverage, called minimum essential coverage to be eligible for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program). This policy change will be implemented beginning on October 1, 2016.

Who will this policy change affect?

This policy change applies to those parents and caretaker relatives who are ages 19-64, who live with a dependent child under the age of 19, and whose income ranges from 69% to 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) known as the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Adult category within Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

Learn more about [income guidelines for Health First Colorado \(Colorado's Medicaid Program\)](#) on the Eligibility Partners' FAQs and Training page under "Medicaid and CHP+."

What type of health coverage counts as minimum essential coverage?

Examples of minimum essential coverage include Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+), private health plans through Connect for Health Colorado, and health insurance through a job.

Read more about plans that count as coverage at Healthcare.gov/fees/plans-that-count-as-coverage/.



Who is considered a dependent child?

A dependent child is a child who lives with a parent, legal guardian, caretaker relative or foster parent and is either under the age of 18, or is 18 and a full-time student and is expected to graduate by age 19.

Do all children living in the home need to be enrolled in minimum essential coverage, in order for a parent or caretaker to be eligible under the (MAGI) Adult category within Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program)?

Yes, all children living with the parent or caretaker must be enrolled in minimum essential coverage for a parent or caretaker to be eligible under the MAGI-Adult category.

What if the child lives with the custodial parent, but it is their non-custodial parent that provides minimum essential health insurance coverage for the child. How does that impact whether the custodial parent qualifies for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program)?

If the child living with the custodial parent is already enrolled in minimum essential coverage, the custodial parent must report the child is enrolled in minimum essential coverage to avoid being denied or terminated for health insurance benefits from Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program). As long as the child is enrolled in minimum essential coverage and it has been reported on [Colorado.gov/PEAK](https://colorado.gov/PEAK) or to a county or other eligibility site, it does not matter which parent provides the coverage.

How will this change impact a parent or caretaker relative who is currently enrolled in the (MAGI) Adult category within Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), but whose dependent child is not enrolled in minimum essential health coverage?

The parent or caretaker relative's Health First Colorado coverage will be terminated if the adult does not make sure that the dependent child in the home is enrolled in minimum essential coverage and the coverage is reported. Before their coverage is terminated, they will receive a Verification Checklist (VCL) giving them ten days to report health coverage for their child. If they do not report that their child is enrolled in

minimum essential coverage by the due date on the VCL, they will be sent a Notice of Action (NOA) terminating their Health First Colorado benefits.

If a child is exempt from the requirement to have minimum essential coverage, does the policy still apply?

Yes. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have confirmed that if a dependent child under the age of 19 years old living in the home does not have minimum essential coverage, the parent or caretaker relative will not be eligible in the MAGI-Adult category for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program). This policy is not impacted by the fact that there are individuals who are exempt from the requirement to pay a federal tax penalty if they do not have minimum essential coverage. Even though these individuals are exempt from the federal tax penalty, the dependent child of an exempt parent or a caretaker would still need to have minimum essential coverage for the parent or caretaker to be able to enroll in Health First Colorado.

Some examples of those who are exempt from the tax penalty for not enrolling in MEC, include those with certain religious exemptions, members of a health care sharing ministry, individuals not lawfully present, and incarcerated individuals.

Will a parent who otherwise qualifies for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) MAGI-Adult category be given an opportunity to enroll and report minimum essential coverage for their dependent child before the parent is denied/terminated?

Yes, the parent will receive a Verification Checklist (VCL) asking the parent if the child is enrolled in minimum essential coverage. The parent will have ten days to provide this information. If no information is received after the 10 days the parent or caretaker relative will be denied or terminated for health benefits through Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

Can the parent or caretaker relative reapply for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), if they get denied or terminated for health benefits because their dependent child is not enrolled in minimum essential coverage?

Yes, the parent or caretaker can reapply for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) at any time but must still meet all eligibility requirements, including coverage for their dependent child under the age of 19, to be eligible for health benefits.

If a parent or caretaker has an undocumented child living in the home, does the policy still apply?

Yes, all dependent child under the age of 19 are required to enroll in qualifying health coverage, called minimum essential coverage for a parent or caretaker relative to be eligible for the (MAGI) Adult category within Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

Will this policy change affect those who apply for Emergency Medical Services (EMS)?

A parent or caretaker relative whose citizenship status is undocumented will have to meet all other eligibility requirements for the MAGI-Adult category to qualify for EMS. If there is a dependent child living in the home, the child must be enrolled in minimum essential coverage (MEC) for the parent or caretaker relative to be eligible to receive EMS.

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What options are available for undocumented individuals to purchase private health insurance?

To qualify for the (MAGI) Adult category within Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), a parent or caretaker relative is required to obtain private health insurance for their undocumented child living in the home. Below are some resources where a parent or caretaker relative might be able to get health insurance:

Employer-based Health insurance: If the person is employed, and their employer offers employee health benefits, they *may* be able to sign up without showing proof of immigration status for themselves and their family (if family coverage is offered).

Student Health Insurance: If the person is a student attending college or a university, they can purchase a health insurance policy from the school without being questioned about immigration status.

Private Health Insurance: Undocumented individuals are usually directed to purchase health insurance "off-exchange" or through the private sector. They are told to contact an insurance company directly, or an insurance broker/agent, since they cannot purchase health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado.

Are undocumented immigrants allowed to purchase health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado?

No. Someone who is undocumented is *not* eligible to purchase insurance through Connect for Health Colorado.

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