

Medi-Cal: The Foundation of California Kids' Health & a Bedrock of Our State Economy

Medi-Cal — California's Medicaid program — provides health insurance to low-income kids, pregnant women, people with disabilities, parents, other adults, & seniors. Medicaid is a federal-state partnership, with about half of the funding from the federal government. Medicaid funding is open-ended, which means it can step up when needed in response to economic recessions, pandemics, natural disasters, etc.



Medi-Cal is an economic driver for California

Creating a “multiplier effect” in the state economy through help to low-income workers and their families, payments to doctors and hospitals, and indirect impacts on other industries.¹ California's budget relies on federal Medicaid funding.

5.5M

Medi-Cal covers roughly half of California's children.

- Kids in families earning up to 266% of the poverty level (\$68,681 for a family of 3) are eligible for Medi-Cal.² The state's average annual cost of living is almost twice that amount.
- 40% of births are covered by Medi-Cal, helping get kids off to a healthy start.
- Kids can enroll in Medi-Cal regardless of immigration status. The health of undocumented children improved significantly after the state expanded Medi-Cal coverage.³

Medicaid cuts would hurt California kids.

Medicaid is critical to the health and success of our kids and the economic security of families. Federal policy changes or funding cuts could jeopardize children's access to the coverage and care they need to thrive.

Medi-Cal covers the things kids need to grow up healthy



Doctor visits



Immunizations



Prescriptions



Dental check-ups & treatment



Eye exams & glasses



Hearing tests & other types of screenings



Emergency care



Mental health care & substance abuse treatment

Medi-Cal is even more important for kids because there are federal guarantees that they get the care they need, even if those services aren't covered for adults.⁴

Medicaid coverage gives our kids opportunities to succeed, because kids with Medicaid:^{5,6}



Do better in school & miss fewer school days



Are more likely to graduate from high school & go to college



Have fewer emergency room visits & hospitalizations as adults



Earn more money as adults

Kids Across California Rely on Medi-Cal to Stay Healthy

County	Medi-Cal Enrollees Under Age 21	% of Total Population Under Age 21 Enrolled in Medi-Cal
Alameda	156,876	38%
Alpine	More than 22	*
Amador	3,465	45%
Butte	30,532	55%
Calaveras	5,102	55%
Colusa	4,963	73%
Contra Costa	119,762	41%
Del Norte	4,724	69%
El Dorado	15,154	34%
Fresno	234,495	68%
Glenn	6,116	71%
Humboldt	20,027	58%
Imperial	40,854	70%
Inyo	2,226	52%
Kern	216,850	70%
Kings	30,906	62%
Lake	12,946	73%
Lassen	3,564	64%
Los Angeles	1,385,504	58%
Madera	38,109	75%
Marin	19,293	33%
Mariposa	2,066	58%
Mendocino	15,842	69%
Merced	70,180	70%
Modoc	1,372	63%
Mono	1,373	46%
Monterey	89,058	65%
Napa	14,232	47%
Nevada	10,058	49%

County	Medi-Cal Enrollees Under Age 21	% of Total Population Under Age 21 Enrolled in Medi-Cal
Orange	354,491	44%
Placer	31,488	29%
Plumas	2,181	53%
Riverside	425,532	60%
Sacramento	248,740	55%
San Benito	9,207	48%
San Bernardino	411,600	62%
San Diego	380,105	42%
San Francisco	58,389	38%
San Joaquin	141,004	57%
San Luis Obispo	26,628	37%
San Mateo	56,452	33%
Santa Barbara	77,424	57%
Santa Clara	155,029	33%
Santa Cruz	28,952	42%
Shasta	27,195	57%
Sierra	More than 228	*
Siskiyou	6,632	65%
Solano	55,706	48%
Sonoma	53,415	47%
Stanislaus	109,499	63%
Sutter	19,017	66%
Tehama	13,150	70%
Trinity	1,957	64%
Tulare	129,239	78%
Tuolumne	5,369	47%
Ventura	107,345	49%
Yolo	23,524	35%
Yuba	16,419	59%

Statewide: 5.5 million children are enrolled in Medi-Cal, which is 53% of all Californians under age 21.

Note: * designates data that was suppressed due to small cell size.

Sources: (1) Eligible Individuals Under Age 21 Enrolled in Medi-Cal, <https://data.chhs.ca.gov/dataset/eligible-individuals-under-age-21-enrolled-in-medi-cal-by-county>, September 18, 2024. (2) California Department of Finance. Demographic Research Unit. Report P-2B: Total Population Projections by Single Year of Age, California Counties, 2020-2070 (Baseline 2023 Population Projections; Vintage 2024 Release). Sacramento: California. September 2024.

¹ <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/medicaid-financing-the-basics/>, ² <https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/06>. The living wage for a family with 1 adult and 2 kids is calculated at \$128,086, ³ <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/california-sees-health-gains-for-undocumented-residents-after-medi-cal-expansion/>. Coverage for undocumented immigrants is 100% funded by the state, ⁴ <https://www.medicare.gov/medicaid/benefits/early-and-periodic-screening-diagnostic-and-treatment/index.html>, ⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32863441/> ⁶ <https://www.commonwealth-fund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2020/dec/short-term-cuts-medicare-long-term-harm#>, Icons from The Noun Project by Arkinasi, Wilson Joseph, StevJe, Heztasia, Nanang A Pratama, kliwir art, magunkarsa, hazicon, Lfisolé, Jami Carlson, Olifernes Tejeros, and fofetoya.