

Commonwealth of Virginia

Department of Medical Assistance Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 10, 2024

Contact: Mary Olivia Rentner

vamedicaidmediarequests@dmas.virginia.gov

Virginia Medicaid to Provide 12 Months of Protected Coverage for Children

Children will receive continuous care for a year following the date of their enrollment in Medicaid or FAMIS regardless of household changes, with limited exceptions.

RICHMOND – The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) announced that children below the age of 19 enrolled in Virginia's Medicaid and Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) programs will receive a 12-month period of protected coverage effective January 1, 2024. DMAS currently serves more than 800,000 Virginian children.

Previously, a child's eligibility was reevaluated any time a change occurred, such as an increase in household income, and coverage ended if they no longer met all eligibility criteria. Now, in accordance with a federal provision applying to every state, children are enrolled for a 12-month continuous coverage period regardless of changes, with limited exceptions.

The continuous coverage period begins on the date of enrollment or the last renewal. An annual renewal, or reevaluation of eligibility, is conducted at the end of the continuous coverage period and a new 12-month coverage period will be granted if the child remains eligible.

"I am so proud of all the work that has been done so that we can provide continuous coverage for children across the Commonwealth," said **DMAS Director, Cheryl Roberts**. "Children are the largest eligibility group served by Virginia Medicaid. Protected coverage will grant peace of mind to hundreds of thousands of families and will improve the health and well-being of Virginia's children during childhood and beyond. This change is a true testament to the Commonwealth's commitment to improving the lives of the people who live here."

Virginia's Medicaid and FAMIS programs provide full-benefit health coverage to children who are under the age of 19 and have a household income within certain limits. Medicaid

also provides coverage to certain categories of children, such as those in foster care and children with Developmental Disability waivers. There are no monthly premiums or out-of-pocket costs when getting care, such as copays for doctor appointments or prescriptions.

Providing uninterrupted access to essential health services will improve the health of Virginia's children, ease the administrative burden on providers and agency employees, and provide consistency for families.

There are limited exceptions that can end coverage before the 12-month protected period is over, including the child's representative requesting an end to coverage.

Changes that no longer impact eligibility until the end of the child's continuous coverage period include increases in household income, loss of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), loss of eligible immigration status, and a FAMIS-enrolled child obtaining other qualifying health coverage.

Learn more on the [CoverVA website](#). For questions, additional help, or language assistance services or large-print, Medicaid and FAMIS members are encouraged to call Cover Virginia at 833-5CALLVA (TDD: 1-888-221-1590).

DMAS remains committed to its mission: to improve the health and well-being of Virginians through access to high-quality health care coverage.

###