

Medicaid Coverage of Prenatal Care for Unborn Children, Regardless of the Mother's Immigration Status

In April of 2012, the Nebraska Legislature passed Legislative Bill 599, which reinstates prenatal coverage for low-income unborn children, regardless of a mother's immigration status. The "Questions and Answers" below address some of the important issues relating to this coverage.

Who is eligible for this coverage?

Unborn children are eligible for medical assistance regardless of the immigration status of the mother. *But, the unborn child's family must still be otherwise eligible;* meaning they must meet all the other requirements for medical assistance, like having a certain income. For example, in a family of 4, the unborn child may be eligible only if the family earns about \$3,500 or less per month.

When does this coverage begin?

The effective date for this coverage was July 19, 2012.

How do I apply?

Once pregnant, women can apply for coverage through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services either online at <http://accessnebraska.ne.gov> or through a local office. When you apply, you will be asked to provide several things, including proof of your immigration status. If you do not have an immigration status that makes you eligible for benefits in your own right, then you may indicate on your application that you are applying for the unborn child.

Note that you will have to reapply for coverage every 6 months. So, when you receive a request to re-verify eligibility, be sure that you do so immediately or you may lose coverage.

What services will be covered?

The only services that will be covered are prenatal care and services related to pregnancy. This means that medical services that only affect the mother and do not affect the pregnancy and the health of the unborn child will not be covered.

Will this cover labor and delivery?

Yes. If the unborn child is found eligible, labor and delivery are covered.

Will this cover postpartum care?

No. Once the child is born and the mother is discharged from the hospital, no coverage will exist.

Once my baby is born, will my baby be able to get medical assistance?

Yes. *But once the child is born, you should immediately apply for medical assistance for the child,* because coverage for him or her will not be automatic.

For more information, please contact Nebraska Appleseed.

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