

Gov. Pritzker to File Federal Waiver to Expand Medicaid Coverage During COVID-19 Pandemic

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During the administration's daily press briefing on the state's response to the coronavirus pandemic, Governor JB Pritzker announced that his administration will file a federal waiver to expand Medicaid coverage as COVID-19 continues to spread and affect the daily lives people across the nation.

"With the federal government's newly declared state of emergency, under the Stafford Act my administration is filing a request for a federal waiver to allow our Medicaid

program to more freely respond to the COVID-19 crisis by expanding medical services,” **said Governor JB Pritzker.** “During this crisis my administration is working to ensure that those who fear that they may be getting sick have access to the testing and treatment that they need without being saddled with costly medical bills for their care.”

Building on the state’s earlier measures to help working families through the expansion of unemployment insurance and calls for utilities to halt shut-offs and late payment fees, the Pritzker administration started working on the waiver application as soon as the federal government declared a national emergency and activated the Stafford Act.

If the federal waiver is approved, the state will be able to expand Medicaid services through the addition of new medical providers, increased access across the state and ramped up services to many of the state’s most vulnerable populations.

The state of Illinois continues to use every tool at its disposal to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect the general public — including banning mass gatherings, closing schools and strongly encouraging social distancing practices.

Those experiencing symptoms should call a health care provider who will help arrange medical treatment without putting others at risk of exposure.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has a statewide COVID-19 hotline and website to answer any questions from the public or to report a suspected case: call 1-800-889-3931 or visit [IDPH.illinois.gov](https://idph.illinois.gov).