

Gov. Pritzker Signs Legislation Making Healthcare More Accessible And Affordable For Illinoisans

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DOWNERS GROVE — Joined by healthcare providers and legislative leaders at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital, today Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation that will help make healthcare more accessible and affordable for Illinois residents that rely on the state's Medicaid system.

“Healthcare is a human right. Here in Illinois, we won’t stop until everyone can access all aspects of it. In recognition of the pandemic that we continue to live in, this legislation expands emergency Medicaid coverage for many months to come. That

means Illinoisans who suddenly found themselves in need of Medicaid coverage in the face of COVID-19 won't find the rug pulled out from under them just because our lives are starting to feel a bit more 'normal.'" said Governor JB Pritzker. "This legislation is a product of our passionately dedicated bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators who are part of the Medicaid Legislative Working Group. I want to thank Leader Harris and Senator Gillespie for championing this Medicaid omnibus bill as well as their colleagues in the General Assembly and the advocacy community who came together to send this bill to my desk."

"This bipartisan bill to improve Medicaid for children, the elderly and families who seek counseling is one of the most important bills we passed this session to continue addressing health disparities," said House Majority Leader Greg Harris (D-Chicago). "Here in Illinois, we will continue working towards access to comprehensive health care as a basic human right. This is the progress that is possible when lawmakers can work in a bipartisan fashion for all Illinoisans."

"Expanding Medicaid coverage will improve health outcomes in communities where it is needed most. By enhancing provider networks and making essential services more available, working families across the state can receive the care they need to keep themselves and their communities healthy," said Senator Ann Gillespie (D-Arlington Heights).

Senate Bill 2294 makes multiple changes to Illinois' Medicaid system including expansion of the program to cover new services and the implementation of new Medicaid-adjacent services by the Illinois Department of Health and Family Services (HFS) and other agencies. The legislation provides:

- Continued Medicaid eligibility through the COVID-19 public health emergency and up to 12 months after it expires regardless of whether federally required or funded
- Medicaid coverage for whole-health programs
- Veteran support specialists so our heroes receive care that recognizes their unique struggles
- Individual and group programs for those seeking help ending their tobacco addiction
- An expansion of mental health resources through the addition of clinical professional counselors and the creation of a comprehensive statewide behavioral health strategy
- A requirement that in-patient status be given to anyone in need experiencing an opioid overdose, ensuring that lower-income residents aren't turned away when they need it most
- New coverage of kidney transplant medications regardless of residency, building on the state's nation-leading efforts to ensure the health of undocumented people

- An expansion of HFS's Medicaid enrollment assistance program through application agents, technical assistance, and outreach grants
- An \$80 million increase in the supportive living facility (SLF) rate — a 10% increase until March 31, 2022 — paid through federal ARPA funds

In addition to signing SB 2294, which takes effect immediately, Gov. Pritzker highlighted that blood supplies are at critically low levels. Hospitals have seen a rising need for blood products, and there is an urgent need for residents to donate. To find a location to donate blood, visit the [American Red Cross website](#) and enter your zip code under the 'Find a Drive' heading.

SB 2294 is effective immediately.