



HEALTH CARE PAUSE

States say they've been shut out of Medicaid amid Trump funding freeze

The freeze is said to ensure funding aligns with Trump's political ideology.

BETH MOLE – JAN 28, 2025 2:56 PM |

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The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services office, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, stands in Woodlawn, Maryland, U.S., on Dec. 28, 2010. Credit: Getty | Jay Mallin



TEXT SETTINGS

Amid the Trump administration's abrupt, wide-scale freeze on federal funding, states are reporting that they've lost access to Medicaid, a program jointly funded by the federal government and states to provide comprehensive health coverage and care to tens of millions of low-income adults and children in the US.

The funding freeze was announced in a memo dated January 27 from Matthew Vaeth, the acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, and was first reported Monday evening by independent journalist Marisa Kabas. The freeze is intended to prevent "use of Federal resources to advance Marxist equity, transgenderism, and green new deal social engineering policies," Vaeth wrote. The memo ordered federal agencies to complete a comprehensive analysis of all federal financial assistance programs to ensure they align with the president's policies and requirements.

"In the interim, to the extent permissible under applicable law, Federal agencies must temporarily pause all activities related to obligation or disbursement of all Federal financial assistance, and other relevant agency activities that may be implicated by the executive orders..." Vaeth wrote.

Illinois was the first state to report that it had lost access to Medicaid. According to the Chicago Sun-Times, Gov. JB Pritzker's office expected the freeze to go into effect at 5 pm Eastern Time today but found the state locked out this morning. The Times noted that Medicaid covered about 3.9 million people in Illinois in 2023, including low-income adults, children, pregnant people, and people with disabilities.

In a post Tuesday afternoon on the social media platform Bluesky, Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) reported that all 50 states have since lost access. "My staff has confirmed reports that Medicaid portals are down in all 50 states following last night's federal funding freeze," Wyden wrote. "This is a blatant attempt to rip away health care from millions of Americans overnight and will get people killed."

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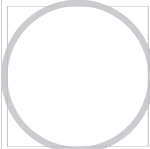
Around the same time, Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) posted on social media site X that his state, too, had lost access. "Can confirm. Connecticut's Medicaid payment system has been turned off," he wrote. "Doctors and hospitals

cannot get paid. Discussions ongoing about whether services can continue."

As of October 2024, Medicaid provided health coverage to over 79 million people across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Of those, over 37 million (47 percent) were children—enrolled in either Medicaid's Children’s Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) or enrolled in the Medicaid program.

According to a 2023 analysis by KFF, Medicaid provides a critical safety net to a significant swath of Americans. In 2021, Medicaid covered 1 in 4 children and 8 in 10 children in poverty. It covered 1 in 6 adults and about half of adults in poverty. Medicaid paid for 41 percent of births in the US, covered nearly half of all children with special health care needs, and supported 5 in 8 nursing home residents.

According to Reuters, the White House has said that mandatory programs such as Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food assistance would be exempt from the freeze. In a briefing Tuesday, reporters asked White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt about whether Medicaid was cut off as part of a funding pause and whether she could guarantee that individuals on Medicaid would not be affected. Leavitt responded: "I'll check back on that and get back to you."



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