

Medicaid and FAMIS 12-Month Continuous Coverage for Children

Effective January 1, 2024, Virginia Medicaid and FAMIS provide 12-months of continuous coverage to children under 19. This means that the coverage is protected and cannot be reduced or ended during that period, with limited exceptions. An annual renewal, or re-evaluation 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.

What has changed?

Previously, a child's eligibility was reevaluated any time a change occurred, and their coverage ended if they no longer met all eligibility criteria. Now, 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.

Children can move between full-benefit Medicaid categories or from FAMIS to Medicaid but cannot move from Medicaid to FAMIS because this would be a reduction in 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.

What are the exceptions?

There are limited exceptions that allow coverage to end before the full 12-month continuous coverage period is over.

- Turning age 19 (a member's eligibility will be re-evaluated when they turn 19, even if they enrolled or renewed less than 12 months ago)
- Moving out of state
- Death of the child
- Child's representative requests to end the coverage
- The child was enrolled due to agency error or applicant fraud

Children enrolled through Hospital Presumptive Eligibility or with a reasonable opportunity period do not receive continuous coverage because the enrollment is provisional.

Medicaid and FAMIS 12-Month Continuous Coverage for Children (continued)

What are the benefits of Continuous Coverage?

- Continuity of care and uninterrupted access to the essential health and preventive services.
- Improved ability to provide and track preventive services children are entitled to receive under federal law.
- Less turnover or “churn” in eligibility means reduced administrative burden and cost for providers, local departments of social services, and DMAS.
- Continuous coverage also prevents increases in health care costs that can occur when children cycle back onto coverage after a gap and have untreated health conditions.

How can Virginians enroll?

- Online at commonhelp.virginia.gov
- Over the phone at the Cover Virginia Call Center at 833-5CALLVA (TDD: 1-888-221-1590)
- By mailing, faxing or dropping off a paper application to their local Department of Social Services (LDSS) office.

Need help?

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).

