

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Office of MaineCare Services
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TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

February 24, 2021

Senator Ned Claxton, Chair
Representative Michelle Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 265 – *An Act To Provide Women Access to Affordable Postpartum Care*

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

This letter is to provide information on LD 265, *An Act To Provide Women Access to Affordable Postpartum Care*.

This bill extends from 60 days to 12 months the period of time following delivery of a baby that a woman may be eligible for services under MaineCare through the submission of a waiver or state plan amendment request to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement the provisions of this legislation. In the event the waiver or state plan amendment is not granted, the department is directed to implement the coverage provisions using federal funds, if allowable, and then using the General Fund.

MaineCare is still assessing the impact of Medicaid expansion on postpartum coverage, which has been trending up at 6 and 12 months. This assessment is made more difficult by the pandemic and members' ability to stay on Medicaid longer due to federal Maintenance of Effort requirements extending coverage to the end of the Public Health Emergency.

The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) recently strongly endorsed extending postpartum Medicaid coverage and recommended that Congress act to guarantee 12 months of postpartum coverage for pregnant individuals in Medicaid. The recommendation will be part of the commission's March report to Congress.¹ The House Energy and Commerce Committee also, as of February 11th, marked up budget reconciliation policy to let states voluntarily extend full Medicaid and CHIP coverage for up to one year postpartum.²

Currently, states can only extend coverage beyond 60 days and still receive federal matching funds if they apply for and receive a Section 1115 waiver. Three states (Illinois, New Jersey, Missouri) have applied for some version of postpartum coverage extension waiver, but no state has been

¹ <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2021/02/01/macpac-recommends-one-year-of-postpartum-medicaid-coverage-at-100-match/>

² <https://insidehealthpolicy.com/daily-news/congress-considers-extending-medicaid-postpartum-coverage>

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approved by CMS. Additional states are following suit. California and Texas are using state-only funds to offer more limited benefits to a subset of this population.³

We wanted you to be aware of the above information as you consider this bill going forward. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert, Director
Office of MaineCare Services

³ <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2020/10/02/house-unanimously-passes-bill-to-give-states-option-to-extend-postpartum-medicaid-coverage-to-new-moms/>