



An Act to ensure equitable health coverage for children (S.740)

Lead Sponsor: Senator DiDomenico

The House companion bill (H.1237), sponsored by Rep. Dave Rogers, was attached to S.740 with the favorable report to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

What does this legislation do?

- Cover All Kids would remove immigration status as a barrier to full MassHealth coverage for children and young adults under age 21 in Massachusetts.

Why is this legislation needed?

- Over 30,000 children and young adults in Massachusetts cannot access the health care they need because of their immigration status.
- The [complex patchwork of programs](#) currently available is difficult for families and providers to navigate. These programs also have strict limits on coverage for services like mental health care, dental services, and prescription drugs. Services such as autism therapy, eyeglasses, durable medical equipment, and home-based care, are not covered at all.
- Inadequate coverage can lead to worse health outcomes and use of more expensive care through emergency departments or longer hospital stays.
- [Twelve states](#) passed similar policies: California, Washington, Oregon, Illinois, New York, Washington D.C., New Jersey, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maine, Connecticut, and Colorado. ***Massachusetts and New Hampshire are the only New England states that continue to restrict Medicaid eligibility for all children based on immigration status.***

Why is this a health equity issue?

- MassHealth covers many of the [state's most underserved](#) residents, but the program leaves out certain immigrants, even if they meet all other eligibility criteria.
- Coverage barriers put additional stress on immigrant families, who already face [health disparities](#) and challenges accessing care that meets their language and cultural needs.
- Comprehensive coverage is especially important for children and youth with [chronic conditions and disabilities](#), including mental health concerns.
- Medicaid coverage in childhood has been shown to [improve lifelong health, educational outcomes and earning potential](#).
- Immigrant families are more likely to experience [uninsurance and interruptions in coverage](#). Over 98% of U.S.-born citizen children compared to 82% of non-citizen children in Massachusetts have continuous health coverage.
- The Legislative [Health Equity Taskforce](#) endorsed Cover All Kids, and expanding MassHealth all residents who are otherwise eligible regardless of immigration status is one of the [Health Equity Compact's priorities](#).

Cover All Kids is supported by a [growing coalition](#) of over 50 community-based organizations, advocacy groups, health care and service providers and other stakeholders.

For more information, please contact Suzanne Curry at Health Care For All: scurry@hcfama.org.