



children's
defense fund
texas

Connecting Immigrant Families to Health Care

Michelle Castillo
Cindy Ji

Who We Are



Michelle Castillo

Deputy Director



Cindy Ji

Communications
Director





About CDF

The CDF Leave No Child Behind® Mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.





About RGV Outreach

- **We meet children and families where they are and work with partners who families trust.**
- Partners: Schools, businesses, churches, clinics, child care providers, libraries, WIC clinics, and other community partners.
- We enroll children & families in Medicaid, CHIP, Healthcare.Gov plans, SNAP, & more.



Graciela Camarena



Mary Carreon



Tina Guel

Task: Improve Child & Immigrant Health



Get Covered



Stay Covered



**Cover the
Whole Family**





Get Covered





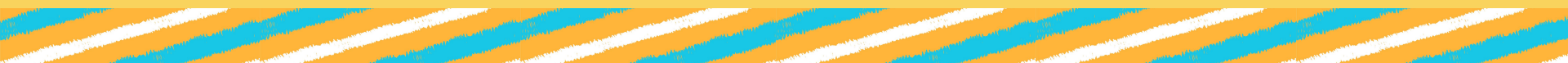
In the chat:
**What do you know about the
public charge rule?**



**My U.S. citizen children receive SNAP.
This affects my ability to become a
legal permanent resident.**

MYTH

FACT





**My U.S. citizen children receive SNAP.
This affects my ability to become a
legal permanent resident.**

MYTH

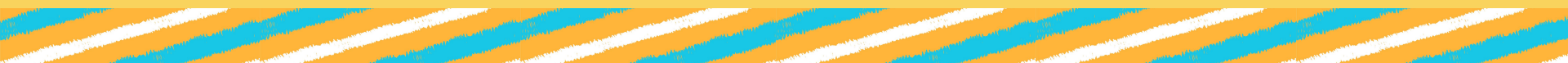
FACT



My U.S. citizen children receive section 8 housing assistance. This affects my ability to become a legal permanent resident.

MYTH

FACT





My U.S. citizen children receive section 8 housing assistance. This affects my ability to become a legal permanent resident.

MYTH

FACT

What is the public charge?

- The “public charge” inadmissibility test has been designed to identify people who may depend on the government as their main source of support in the future.
- The public charge test does not apply to all immigrants –many immigrants are exempt from a public charge test– only immigrants applying for their first visa or a green card.
- Most immigrants who are subject to public charge test are not eligible for the benefits considered, and many benefits are not considered (only cash benefits like TANF or SSI, and long-term institutionalization).





240,000+

Children disenrolled from Medicaid
by their parents, 2017-2020

Every Texan

SEGURO TEXAS

segurotexas.org



Rosario Rodriguez

“Several years ago, when I got my appointment to get my green card, the immigration official asked if I received government help. I answered yes, I had Medicaid and food stamps for my children. He said, I need to cancel my Medicaid and food stamps. I was so excited to finally get my green card, so I told my husband to cancel. The agency told us none of the benefits are for me—they were for my children—so they shouldn’t affect my immigration status. In the end, we canceled Medicaid and SNAP. I got my legal permanent residency. And then I went for a long time without benefits until Obamacare came out. **Had I known my rights, I would’ve acted differently.**”





Biden guts Public Charge Rule, but immigrants still fearful

By: [Sunita Sohrabji](#) - @inquirerdotnet Ethnic Media Services / INQUIRER.net US Bureau / 11:37 AM September 19, 2022



IMMIGRATION

Migrant advocates praise new public charge rule; 14 states file opposing brief

by: [Sandra Sanchez](#)
Posted: Sep 13, 2022 / 07:47 PM CDT
Updated: Sep 14, 2022 / 02:06 PM CDT



In this Jan. 31, 2019, file photo, hundreds of people overflow onto the sidewalk in a line snaking around the block outside a U.S. immigration office with numerous...
[Read More](#)

POLITICS

Texas spurns Biden's effort to roll back Trump-era green card restrictions

BY [REENA DIAMANTE](#) AND [EDEN HARRIS](#) | WASHINGTON, D.C.
PUBLISHED 7:28 PM ET SEP. 14, 2022

The Biden administration is trying to roll back another hard-line immigration policy enacted under then President Donald Trump, a rule that made it easier to deny immigrants green cards if they obtained certain government benefits, like housing vouchers or food aid.

But Texas and other Republican-led states are vowing to fight the change.

- Immigrant families are listening - but selectively
- Uplift what families need to know
- Include a family-facing takeaway
- Provide context for legal challenges



Stay Covered



In the chat:
**What do you know about the
'Medicaid unwinding' or the 'Public
Health Emergency unwinding'?**

How many people does TX Medicaid need to redetermine?

- A. 500,000
- B. 1 million
- C. 2 million
- D. 3 million



How many people does TX Medicaid need to redetermine?

- A. 500,000
- B. 1 million
- C. 2 million
- D. 3 million**



Children are at risk of losing their healthcare



Families are
rusty, and the
process is
confusing



Many families
have moved



Agencies are
short staffed





3 in 4

Children who will lose Medicaid in
this process but **still be eligible**

Georgetown Center for Children and Families



SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES: AGENCY STAFFING SHORTAGES

- Families have experienced delays in accessing benefits because of agency delays.
- Our team learned that HHSC was processing May applications in October.
- Our team is providing invaluable support to add capacity to the local HHSC agency.





SYSTEMIC CHALLENGE: RED TAPE

Prior to the pandemic, the process of applying and renewing benefits was confusing for families with requests for verification of income often times resulting in gaps in coverage.





CORONAVIRUS IN TEXAS

Looming end of federal pandemic emergency threatens to shake Texas' Medicaid safety net, advocates say

The federal emergency declaration is expected to last through at least mid-October and has kept states from dropping people from Medicaid rolls.

BY KAREN BROOKS HARPER MAY 16, 2022 6 PM CENTRAL

HEALTH

A million Texans are on the brink of losing health care coverage

BY KIMBERLY REEVES | TEXAS
UPDATED 4:11 PM CT JAN. 09, 2023 | PUBLISHED 12:55 PM CT JAN. 09, 2023

What You Need To Know

- Texas added an extra 2 million people to the Medicaid rolls during the pandemic, a cost picked up by the federal government
- Texas now has to "normalize" its Medicaid rolls, returning enrollment to pre-pandemic levels
- Those who are on Medicaid right now are urged to check that their address is updated, information is correct
- Texas wants to have its Medicaid rolls updated by April 1

- Clarity about process and timeline
- Effect on different groups
- Avoid language that causes undue fear and shakes faith in Medicaid
- Include information that families need to act on right now
- And a 'deadline'



Cover the Whole Family



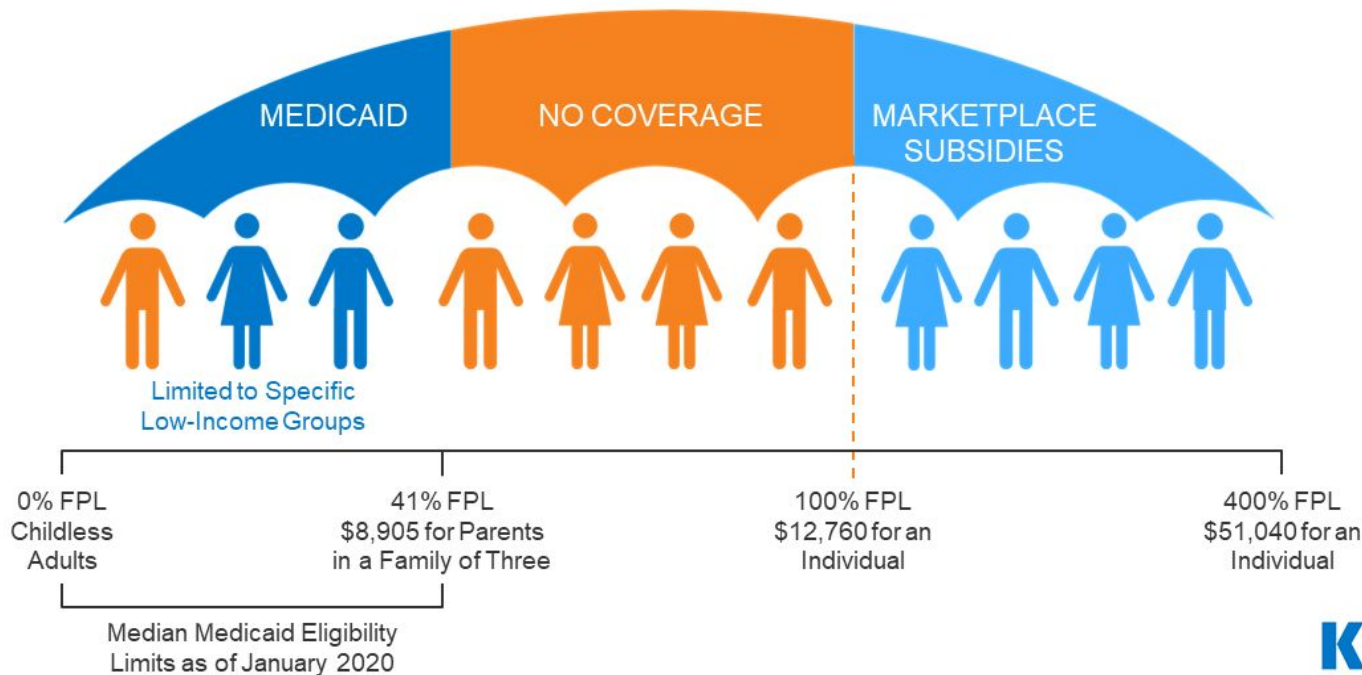


In the chat:
**Where can low-income
immigrant Texans turn to get
healthcare and health insurance?**



Figure 1

Gap in Coverage for Adults in States that Do Not Expand Medicaid Under the ACA



What % of Americans in the coverage gap are people of color?

- A. 51%
- B. 58%
- C. 70%
- D. 74%



Benefits from Expanding Medicaid



Better health
outcomes



Less medical
debt



Fewer rural
hospital
closures



Benefits from Expanding Medicaid



Positive
impact on
state budget



Unlocking
federal dollars



Better
maternal
health



#SICK+FITTX

Trish's Story

- Works as a CNA, making \$1,700 'on a good month'
- A dog bite led to infection, revealing a blood disorder - and saddling her with \$2,000 in debt
- "As a single mother, I'm thinking, 'Oh God, I might not leave this hospital. This might be the last time I see my kid.'"





SYSTEMIC CHALLENGE: HOSPITAL CLOSURES

Our organizing and grassroots strategy is rooted in building power through connecting families' lived experiences to the choices state leaders have made to create the systemic barriers they encounter everyday.

A quarter of Texas rural hospitals at risk of closing as federal COVID support wanes, study finds



Julian Gill, Staff writer

Dec. 1, 2022 | Updated: Dec. 2, 2022 3:12 p.m.



The other Texas drought: Rural healthcare in jeopardy as hospitals



Gov. John Bel Edwards

@LouisianaGov

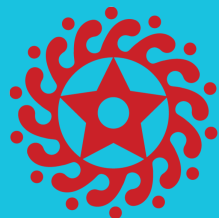
Seven years ago I expanded Medicaid, and unlike our neighboring states that have refused expansion, we have not had a single rural hospital close.

#lagov

Women in Deep East Texas drive over an hour to give birth after the last obstetrics unit in the area closed in 2019. But if closing the unit was hard, reopening it is proving nearly impossible.

BY ELEANOR KLIBANOFF JAN. 5, 2023 5 AM CENTRAL


PARTNERS



THE
AFIYA
CENTER



Texas Organizing Project

YOUNG 
INVINCIBLES



East Texas
Human Needs Network



United Way
of Tarrant County



Life in Community • Vida en Comunidad



Best Practices for Identifying Stories

- Be transparent about deadlines
- Partners on the ground may need 1-2 weeks to identify a family
- Be open on type of story
- Send questions in advance
- Trauma-informed approach
- Send your piece & follow up





**We can connect you with
storytellers, grassroots
partners, and more.**

Michelle Castillo
mcastillo@childrensdefense.org

Cindy Ji
cji@childrensdefense.org

THANK YOU & STAY IN TOUCH!