

# TennCare/Medicaid Eligibility and Enrollment Facts

- Each year, TennCare is **required by state and federal law** to ensure every individual receiving Medicaid benefits meets the eligibility standards set by law.
- TennCare has a responsibility to the state, federal government and taxpayers to ensure Medicaid services are provided only to those who meet the qualifications established by law.
- As we have communicated over the past few years, TennCare and CoverKids enrollment was inflated for a period of time due to the federally approved decision to suspend the annual eligibility redetermination process while the State worked to implement the myriad of new requirements within the newly enacted Affordable Care Act (ACA). In fact, nearly every state suspended eligibility redeterminations during this time. The result of this pause was that very few members came off the program for more than two years.
- Prior to the implementation of the ACA, TennCare served approximately 1.2 million Tennesseans. This enrollment remained steady for about a decade. After implementation of the ACA, TennCare saw an increase in enrollment to nearly 1.6 million members – **a more than 30% increase**. This was due primarily to the pause in the eligibility redetermination process.
- Due to this pause in redetermination, TennCare and CoverKids had members remain on these programs who no longer actually qualified for benefits and otherwise would have been deemed ineligible through the normal annual redetermination process.
- After this pause in redetermination, TennCare, as required by law, reinstated its eligibility redetermination efforts. TennCare has consistently communicated through various channels that the end of this pause in the required redetermination process would lead to an atypical decrease in enrollment since members who no longer meet eligibility criteria – many of whom would have been deemed ineligible absent the pause in redetermination – would be terminated from the programs.
- Before the redetermination process restarted, TennCare launched a significant outreach effort to encourage members to participate in the redetermination process and provide TennCare with all required information, including any address changes. We worked with our state partners, health plans, and the advocacy community to get the message out through publications, in-person assistance, and a quick easy-to-share [video](#). We also included information on [our website](#) about the process, which included an [instruction guide](#), and information on how to get [in-person assistance](#).

- Today, TennCare enrollment is approximately 1.35 million. While the restart of the required redetermination process as well as an improved economy have resulted in a decrease in the record high level of enrollment, **TennCare enrollment today is still approximately 150,000 members more than it was prior to the ACA. And enrollment includes approximately 60,000 more children than pre-ACA levels.**
- The state experienced similar inflation and subsequent reductions within the CoverKids program with an overall net reduction of about 30,000 members; however, a third of these impacted individuals transferred to the TennCare program.
- The recent decreases in enrollment due to the restarting of required redetermination and the resulting total enrollment in TennCare is completely in line with expectations looking at historical data of members leaving and entering the program.
- There are also other reasons, outside the redetermination process, that a member's Medicaid eligibility would close. For example, TennCare receives many voluntary termination requests and also closes coverage after confirming that a member is actively receiving benefits in another state. Between 2016 and 2018, approximately 60,000 children stopped receiving coverage for a reason other than redetermination. This includes nearly 40,000 children whose families asked for their child to be removed from the program, or who moved out of state.
- TennCare has a robust appeals process for anyone deemed ineligible for benefits and stands ready to assist eligible individuals and families in re-enrolling in the program. Anyone who needs such assistance may contact TennCare at 1-855-259-0701.