



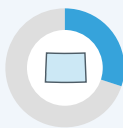
## Medicaid Matters to Colorado's 3rd Congressional District (CO-03)

### Colorado's Medicaid program (Health First Colorado) is a lifeline across the Western Slope and Southern Colorado

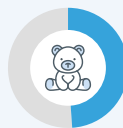
Health First Colorado provides health coverage for children, working families, veterans, vulnerable seniors, people with disabilities and many more people in the Western Slope and Southern Colorado.<sup>1</sup>

Health First Colorado serves as the core financial backbone of the Western Slope and Southern Colorado's health care systems, paying for care and services at local clinics and hospitals and serving as a critical engine for the local economy.

### In CO-03, Health First Colorado Serves:



A total of 194,000 people — **30% of all residents** in the district; CO-03 has the highest Medicaid enrollment in the state.<sup>2</sup>

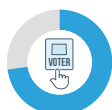


A total of 75,000 children — **49% of all children** in the district.<sup>3</sup>



A total of **37,800 seniors** and **people with disabilities**.<sup>4</sup>

**Over 1 million Coloradans will lose health coverage and access to care if Congress cuts or caps Medicaid funding, forcing the state to offset budget holes by throwing people off coverage, cutting provider reimbursement, and/or eliminating essential health services.** Any cut to Medicaid is a direct attack on the health and financial security of people living on the Western Slope and in Southern Colorado and runs counter to the will of the vast majority of voters from across political parties who want Congress to continue to guarantee coverage for low-income people through Medicaid.<sup>5</sup>



A total of **71% of voters** want Congress to continue to guarantee coverage for low-income people through Medicaid.<sup>6</sup>

## Protecting Medicaid Means:

### CHILDREN IN CO-03

Have access to newborn care, checkups, care for diabetes and asthma, and more.

Stay healthy and ready to learn, miss fewer school days, are more likely to graduate, and earn more as adults.<sup>7</sup>



### FAMILIES IN CO-03

Have access to cancer screenings, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and diabetes and blood pressure medications.

Have less risk of medical debt and eviction and can better afford to buy groceries or pay rent.<sup>8</sup>



### SENIORS IN CO-03

Have access to nursing home care, transportation to medical appointments, and home health services.

Stay healthy and receive needed care in their homes and communities.



## Medicaid keeps families and veterans in CO-03 healthy and working

Many low-wage jobs either do not offer health coverage or offer coverage that is unaffordable. Medicaid provides health coverage for workers at these jobs so they can remain healthy and earn income for their families.

- **At least 61,000 low-wage workers** in the district are covered by Health First Colorado.<sup>9</sup>
- Nationwide, **92% of adults** covered by Medicaid either work, care for a family member, have an illness or disability, or attend school.<sup>10</sup>

Medicaid also provides affordable care for veterans with complex health needs, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries and chronic pain. While veterans can go to Veterans Health Administration facilities, they need health coverage to help pay for their care. For many veterans, Medicaid provides this coverage.

## Medicaid is the bedrock of health care systems across the Western Slope and Southern Colorado

**Health First Colorado keeps hospitals in the district open.** It pays for at least 20% of all hospital services at 13 facilities across CO-03, encompassing hospitals in Alamosa, Cortez, Craig, Fruita, Glenwood Springs, Gunnison, La Jara, La Junta, Pueblo, Rangely, Rifle, and Trinidad.<sup>11</sup> For example, Medicaid pays:

- 42% of all hospital services at Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center.
- 28% of all hospital services at St. Mary-Corwin Hospital.
- 27% of all hospital services at Grand River Health.
- 23% of all hospital services at Family Health West Hospital.<sup>12</sup>

*Cutting Medicaid would make our country's affordability crisis much worse for families in Colorado who already face significant health care costs.*

If Medicaid is cut, hospitals will treat more uninsured people and the amount of uncompensated care will increase. A total of 7.5% of the district's residents are already uninsured — increased losses in patient revenue will put all hospitals across the Western Slope and Southern Colorado at risk.<sup>13</sup>

Health First Colorado also plays important roles in accessing behavioral health care and nursing home care. **Colorado has the second-highest prevalence of mental health and substance use issues of any state**,<sup>14</sup> and opioid-related deaths cost the state an estimated \$16 billion in health care costs and lost productivity.<sup>15</sup> **Medicaid is the largest payer for mental health care, substance use disorder treatment**, and other community services to curb the opioid epidemic and care for people with mental illness.<sup>16</sup> Health First Colorado also covers 3 in 5 nursing home residents in Colorado.<sup>17</sup>

## **Medicaid stabilizes Colorado's state and local economies**

**Medicaid is the largest source of federal funding for Colorado, accounting for 66% of the federal funds received by the state.**<sup>18</sup> Medicaid dollars ensure Colorado can deliver essential health care without depleting resources reserved for other essential services, including public safety, transportation, housing and education.

Cutting Medicaid would make our country's affordability crisis much worse. Americans from all backgrounds just voted for economic security, imploring their representatives to lower costs on everyday needs, including health care. Cutting Medicaid would be a direct betrayal of constituents by making health care more unaffordable. **Families on the Western Slope and Southern Colorado already face significant health care costs:**

- **82% of people living in Western Colorado** are worried about affording health care.
- **31% of people living in Western Colorado** had to deplete savings, take on debt, or sacrifice basic necessities to obtain medical care.
- **61% of people living in Western Colorado** skipped needed care due to cost.<sup>19</sup>

**Congress has the responsibility to stand with families in Colorado and across the country by protecting Medicaid and opposing any attempts to weaken this essential program.**

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Rhiannon Euhus, Alice Burns, and Robin Rudowitz, “Congressional District Interactive Map: Medicaid Enrollment by Eligibility Group,” KFF, March 11, 2025, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/congressional-district-interactive-map-medicaid-enrollment-by-eligibility-group/>.
- <sup>2</sup> Euhus, Burns, and Rudowitz, “Congressional District Interactive Map.”
- <sup>3</sup> Families USA analysis of data from Euhus, Burns, and Rudowitz, “Congressional District Interactive Map” and U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, “Age and Sex,” American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2023, accessed February 10, 2025, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S0101?q=S0101&g=500XX00US0803>.
- <sup>4</sup> Euhus, Burns, and Rudowitz, “Congressional District Interactive Map.”
- <sup>5</sup> Grace Sparks, Robin Rudowitz, and Ashley Kirzinger, “Public Opinion on the Future of Medicaid: Results From the KFF Medicaid Unwinding Survey and KFF Health Tracking Poll,” KFF, June 4, 2024, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/poll-finding/public-opinion-on-the-future-of-medicaid-kff-medicaid-unwinding-kff-health-tracking-poll/>.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, Center for Children and Families, “How Medicaid Supports Student Success,” accessed March 11, 2025, <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2025/01/09/how-medicaid-supports-student-success/>.
- <sup>8</sup> David U. Himmelstein et al., “Prevalence and Risk Factors for Medical Debt and Subsequent Changes in Social Determinants of Health in the US,” *JAMA Network Open* 5, no. 9 (2022): e2231898, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2796358>; Raymond Kluender et al., “Medical Debt in the US, 2009-2020,” *JAMA* 326, no. 3 (2021): 250–256, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2782187>.
- <sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, “Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type by Work Experience by Sex,” American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B27012, 2023, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT1Y2023.B27012?q=B27012&g=500XX00US0622>.
- <sup>10</sup> Jennifer Tolbert et al., “Understanding the Intersection of Medicaid and Work: An Update,” KFF, February 4, 2025, <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/understanding-the-intersection-of-medicaid-and-work-an-update/>.
- <sup>11</sup> “Hospital Cost Tool,” National Academy for State Health Policy, last updated February 7, 2025, <https://tool.nashp.org/>.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, “Selected Characteristics of Health Insurance Coverage in the United States,” American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S2701, 2023, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S2701?t=Health+Insurance&g=500XX00US0622>.
- <sup>14</sup> “The State of Mental Health in America: Data & Rankings: Prevalence Data,” Mental Health America, 2024, <https://mhanational.org/the-state-of-mental-health-in-america/data-rankings/prevalence-data/>.
- <sup>15</sup> Steven L. Byers, “Colorado’s Fentanyl Problem and the Economic Costs,” Common Sense Institute, June 18, 2024, <https://www.common Senseinstitute.us.org/colorado/research/housing-and-our-community/colorados-fentanyl-problem-and-the-economic-costs>.
- <sup>16</sup> “Behavioral Health Services,” Medicaid.gov, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, n.d., <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/behavioral-health-services/index.html>; “How Medicaid Helps People With Substance Use Disorders,” Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, accessed on February 29, 2025, <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/2025/02/19/how-medicaid-helps-people-with-substance-use-disorders>; “Medicaid is Vital to Colorado’s Children,” Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, February 2025, <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Medicaid-is-Vital-to-Colorado-s-Children.pdf>.
- <sup>17</sup> “Medicaid in Colorado,” KFF, August 2024, <https://files.kff.org/attachment/fact-sheet-medicaid-state-CO>.
- <sup>18</sup> Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, “Medicaid Is Vital.”
- <sup>19</sup> “Colorado Survey Respondents Struggle to Afford High Health Care Costs; Worry About Affording Health Care in the Future; Support Government Action Across Party Lines,” Healthcare Value Hub, August 2024, [https://www.healthcarevaluehub.org/application/files/7717/2202/1978/Final\\_CO\\_Affordability\\_Brief.pdf](https://www.healthcarevaluehub.org/application/files/7717/2202/1978/Final_CO_Affordability_Brief.pdf).

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MCD2025-09CO-03