



PRESS RELEASE

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Florida Health Justice Project Applauds Governor Ron DeSantis for Signing Bill Extending Medicaid Postpartum Coverage to One Year for New Mothers

(Miami, Florida)—June 3, 2021 – Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’s signing of a bill extending Medicaid's postpartum coverage to one year, up from just 60 days, marks the beginning of improved health outcomes for the state's new mothers and their families.

The measure was a priority of outgoing House Speaker Chris Sprowls, who championed the legislation with bi-partisan support in the Florida House and Senate. The law becomes effective July 1 when the rest of the budget takes effect.

The extension is expected to extend comprehensive health coverage to 52,000 Florida moms annually, resulting in better care and outcomes for mothers and, as a result, their newborns. Medicaid plays a critical role as the largest payer of pregnancies with close to half of all births in Florida financed by Medicaid.

Mothers may experience complications in the postpartum period, some resulting in death, including strokes, high blood pressure, and substance abuse disorders. Postpartum depression is not uncommon, affecting one in eight mothers, with negative impacts on their children’s cognitive and social-emotional development.

Extending coverage will improve maternal and infant health and decrease disparities, as well as help improve access to family planning services.

Florida Health Justice Project, a non-profit advocacy organization, led the statewide coalition seeking to extend Medicaid postpartum coverage, with the goals of improving healthcare access and addressing long-standing disparities in outcomes.

Florida ranks 49th in the nation for women's access to health care. The March of Dimes gave Florida a D+ in its 2020 Report Card for maternal and infant health indicators.

Florida Health Justice Project is eager to support the state's implementation plan to ensure that the extension is well known, well understood, and well utilized.

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Florida Health Justice Project (FHJP) recognizes that access to quality and affordable health care is a human right and engages in comprehensive advocacy to expand healthcare access and promote health equity for Florida's most vulnerable and marginalized residents. www.floridahealthjustice.org