



## HEALTH

# Implement multi-year Continuous Eligibility for TennCare or CoverKids until age five.

## WHY

When children are able to maintain consistent health care coverage, they are more likely to be engaged in the health care system and receiving necessary well-child visits, early intervention services and on-time vaccinations.<sup>1</sup>

In Tennessee, in 2021, 4.6 percent of children were uninsured.<sup>2</sup> Of those uninsured, 67 percent or roughly 49,500 children, were eligible for TennCare or CoverKids.<sup>3</sup>

Families with lower incomes are more likely to be employed in jobs with less predictability and prone to temporary fluctuations in income. One study of low or moderate income households found that over the course of the year they experienced 2.5 months where their income fell by 25 percent and 2.6 months where their income rose by 25 percent.<sup>4</sup>

**Implementing Multi-Year Continuous Eligibility until age five will ensure that children get the access to health care they need despite temporary fluctuations in income or application mistakes while also reducing the administrative cost associated with Medicaid Churn.**

**Prior to the Pandemic (FFY2019), 70 percent of CHIP application denials were procedural denials (i.e., incomplete application, missing documentation, missing enrollment fee, etc.).<sup>5</sup>**

**In FFY2020, 9 out of 10 denied applications were denied due to procedural reasons. Of those disenrolled during their redetermination, 81 percent were due to procedural reasons. Among Medicaid redeterminations it was slightly higher at 85 percent.<sup>6</sup>**

**In 2019, the average time between number of days between CHIP/TennCare beneficiaries disenrolling and reenrolling was 68 days.<sup>7</sup>**

**In 2015, the the administrative cost of one person churning once (dis-enrolling and re-enrolling) could be from \$400 to \$600.<sup>8</sup>**

**One in four states have taken steps to implement multi-year Continuous Eligibility.<sup>9</sup>**

Multi-year continuous eligibility is currently in place in two states. Six other states have the program in development and four others have introduced legislation or debated the waiver.