

## New Mexico extends Medicaid coverage for postpartum care

Written by Staff Reports

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SANTA FE – The Lujan Grisham administration announced on March 30 in a press release that it will expand Medicaid coverage for postpartum care for new mothers by increasing coverage from 60 days to a full year. The enhanced support will begin April 1 and is expected to impact up to 17,000 New Mexicans.

“Extending postpartum care will support better health outcomes for thousands of New Mexico mothers and babies, ensuring a healthier start in life for children across the state,” said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. “My administration will continue to use every available tool to expand access to affordable health care and deliver better outcomes for New Mexico families.”



Gov. Lujan Grisham secured the inclusion of \$14.4 million in the FY23 budget for this expansion of services, funded with support from the Legislature through both federal and state dollars. This support will contribute to improvements in experience and outcomes for both mother, baby, and family, along with potential reductions in future expenditures.

his investment comes as part of a series of programmatic changes and investments in maternal, infant, and child health being made by the Medical Assistance Division, aiming to address populations affected by New Mexico's high poverty rates.

At 72%, New Mexico ranks highest in the nation for babies born under Medicaid coverage. Pregnancy-associated deaths in New Mexico are 4.6 times greater for Medicaid-covered women than those with private insurance. The state also experiences a higher maternal mortality rate of 21.5 per 100,000, compared to the national average of 17.4 deaths per 100,000 live births.

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The expanded care will offer critical support to New Mexican families, as nearly a third of maternal deaths occur in the first year postpartum.

“There is a growing body of evidence, including here in New Mexico, showing that maternal mortality is largely preventable,” said Nicole Comeaux, Medicaid Director for the New Mexico Human Services Department. “Allowing mothers to maintain Medicaid coverage in the year following pregnancy can help us reduce pregnancy-related deaths, maternal morbidity and improve continuity of care for other chronic conditions such as substance use disorder, depression, diabetes and cardiac conditions.”