

## Health and Health Care

**Medicaid Matters:** The Medicaid program helps families gain access to medical coverage, helping them meet health care needs as they arise without the burden of financial instability. Many doctors and hospitals in Arkansas are also helped by Medicaid, as it lowers the number of uninsured patients who are seen but are unable to pay for the services. Medicaid helps ensure access to health care services in rural and underserved communities because unpaid medical bills put significant financial strain on medical providers who work in those communities.

**Coverage for All Children:** Access to care is vital for children's health and development. The benefits of coverage begin before birth with prenatal care and extend throughout childhood for preventive, primary and acute care. During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, the number of children covered by Medicaid increased by 37,000 children between March 2020 to and October 2021. Families need access to affordable coverage for their children, even when the pandemic ends.

**Coverage for Adults:** Adults covered by Arkansas Medicaid have increased by 111,881 since the beginning of the public health emergency. During the same time, the number of adults in the Medicaid expansion group increased by more than 72,000.

### What to Ask Candidates

- With the looming end of the Public Health Emergency, how will you protect access to health care coverage for children and families' since we already have a backlog of Medicaid applications?
- How will you ensure that all of Arkansas's children and families have access to high quality, yet affordable, health care going forward?
- What will you do to improve the health of Arkansas's children and families?
- How will you work to improve maternal and child health outcomes such as low birthweight babies in Arkansas?

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## Health Insurance Coverage in Arkansas

