



Fact Sheet: KidsCare Expansion & Parents as Paid Caregivers

Updated 2/16/24

KidsCare Increase to Upper Income Limit

Highlights:

- Arizona increased the KidsCare income eligibility limit to **225% of the federal poverty level (FPL)**, up from 200% FPL.
- This means a **family of four earning up to \$70,200** could be eligible for KidsCare.
- With this increase, an **additional 10,000 children** in Arizona could be eligible for KidsCare.

What is KidsCare?

KidsCare is the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in Arizona, which provides health insurance to eligible children (under age 19) who are not eligible for other AHCCCS (Medicaid) programs.

Effective Dates:

- Newly eligible families **may enroll beginning March 1, 2024**.
- Benefits for newly eligible members begin April 1, 2024 (for those who apply in March). Benefits will be effective the first of the month following the month of enrollment.
- Premiums apply. See the [AHCCCS KidsCare web page](#).

Background:

In 2023, the Arizona Legislature passed, and Governor Hobbs signed, a bill to increase the income limit for KidsCare eligibility to 225% of the federal poverty level.

AHCCCS submitted its request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on Nov. 15, 2023 and received approval on Feb. 16, 2024.

Parents as Paid Caregivers

Highlights:

- **Parents of minor children with disabilities** who are enrolled in the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCs) will be able to be paid for up to 40 hours per member per week to provide direct care services to them.

What is Direct Care?

In this program, direct care services include **personal care** (attendant care) and **habilitation services** (see descriptions in the AHCCCS Medical Policy Manual under the [Direct Care Services](#) and [Habilitation Services](#) policies).

For parents who currently provide more than 40 hours per week of paid care services, AHCCCS will be phasing in this 40-hour limit over the next calendar year.

How can parents get paid?

- The number of hours that a parent can get paid to provide care is assessed and determined through the person-centered planning process and must be medically necessary, including meeting the criteria for extraordinary care.
- Parents can provide paid care to their minor children if they meet all the direct care worker requirements in AHCCCS policy including, but not limited to:
 - Be employed or contracted by an agency,
 - Pass direct care worker Level One competency tests, and
 - Comply with Electronic Visit Verification (EVV).

Background:

Initially approved in early 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, paying parents to deliver care services ensured that children with disabilities received medically necessary care at a time when COVID-19 exposure was limiting available direct care workers.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) granted temporary extension of the State’s existing COVID-19 Appendix K authority on Sept. 27, 2023.

AHCCCS received approval on Feb. 16, 2024 from CMS to make the Parents as Paid Caregivers a permanent feature of the ALTCS program.