



## TEXAS HEALTH STEPS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND MEDICAID RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SCHOOL NURSES

### How does a family apply for Medicaid?

- Application may be made at [www.yourtexasbenefits.com](http://www.yourtexasbenefits.com) or by calling 2-1-1 or 1-877-KIDS-NOW.
- The same application is used to apply for both Medicaid and CHIP.
- Children who were lawfully-admitted to the U.S. are potentially eligible. Medicaid/CHIP eligibility will not affect the child's chances of becoming a U.S. citizen.

### How does a family know if they have been approved for Medicaid?

- Each individual in the family approved for Medicaid will receive a plastic ID card (called *Your Texas Benefits Medicaid card*) in the mail with his or her name and Medicaid ID number.
- Applicants can check the status of their application or request a replacement card at [www.yourtexasbenefits.com](http://www.yourtexasbenefits.com) or by calling 1-855-827-3748.
- Recipients will also get a replacement card automatically if their program benefits change or if they change medical or dental plans.

### How does a child access Medicaid benefits and services?

- Most Medicaid benefits are delivered through managed care medical and dental plans. Managed care medical and dental plans vary throughout the state. Medicaid recipients who do not know which medical or dental plan they are enrolled in can call 1-877-847-8377 (1-877-THSTEPS) for help. Medicaid recipients may also call the Enrollment Helpline at 1-800-964-2777 to find out which health plan they are on. Otherwise, recipients call their medical or dental plan for assistance.
- Upon approval of their application, Medicaid recipients must enroll in a health plan and choose a primary care medical provider. They must also enroll in a dental plan and choose a dental provider, also known as a "main dentist."
- Medicaid recipients may change their primary care medical provider or main dentist by contacting the medical or dental plan shown on their plastic ID card.
- More information on the medical and dental plans available in your area may be found at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/questions-about-your-benefits>

## What is Texas Health Steps (THSteps)?

- THSteps is health care for children birth through age 20 who have Medicaid. THSteps provides free medical and dental checkups, preventive care, and medically necessary treatment.
- THSteps medical checkups also include the administration of all required childhood immunizations, laboratory tests, and vision and hearing screenings.
- Children older than 3 years of age are due for a THSteps medical checkup annually and dental checkups twice a year. Children younger than 3 years of age require more frequent medical checkups and require dental checkups every 6 months beginning at 6 months of age.
- Checkups should be scheduled based on the ages indicated on the THSteps Medical Checkup Periodicity Schedule, which can be found online at <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps> .
- Children who are 14 years of age or younger must be accompanied to THSteps medical checkups by a parent, legal guardian, or other authorized adult. The individual accompanying the child must wait for the client while the appointment takes place.
- For more information on THSteps medical checkups go to <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps/medical-providers>.

## What dental benefits does a child receive through the THSteps Program?

- Medicaid enrolled children birth through 20 years of age receive dental services through THSteps, including preventive services and early detection and treatment of dental health problems.
- Dental services include the establishment of a dental home upon enrollment in Medicaid. The Medicaid recipient will be asked to select a dental plan and a main dentist.
- Services include dental health checkups every six months, beginning at 6 months of age, fluoride varnish and sealants, fillings, crowns, braces, and other medically necessary treatment. Some dental services require prior authorization.
- Children who are 14 years of age or younger must be accompanied to THSteps dental checkups and other dental services by a parent, legal guardian, or other authorized adult. The individual accompanying the child must wait for the client while the appointment takes place.
- For more information on THSteps dental services go to <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps/dental-providers> .

## How does a family locate a provider who conducts THSteps checkups?

- Call the managed care medical or dental plan to locate THSteps medical and dental providers.
- Call THSteps toll free at 1-877-847-8377.
- Go to <http://www.tmhp.com/Pages/default.aspx>, “Looking for a Provider?”

## Will Medicaid cover a sports physical?

- No, sports physicals are not a benefit of Medicaid. If a child is due for a THSteps medical checkup, the information needed for sports physicals may be obtained during a THSteps medical checkup. Parents should check with the school to see if the checkup is scheduled during the school’s required time frame and, if so, bring the form for the sports physical with them to the provider for completion at a regularly scheduled checkup.
- Some of the managed care medical plans offer sports physicals as a “value added” benefit for their members. Parents or caregivers should check with their child’s medical plan.

## Can a medical provider use a copy of a student’s vision and hearing screening results from the school?

- Yes, vision and hearing screening is a mandatory component of the THSteps medical checkup. A medical provider may substitute the vision and hearing screening conducted by the school instead of repeating this screening if it was conducted within the past 12 months.
- The medical provider must maintain a copy of the school vision and hearing screening report in the child’s health record.

## Will Medicaid pay for eyewear for children?

- Texas Medicaid provides eyewear when medically necessary for children 20 years of age or younger. There are no limitations on replacements for lost or destroyed eyewear for children.
- Contact the child’s medical plan for Medicaid vendors who will provide eyewear for children.

## What if a child fails a hearing screening and requires a follow-up assessment?

- The Medicaid recipient must contact their primary care provider for further evaluation and, if necessary, a referral to a see an ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialist or other qualified specialist including an audiology specialist.

## What if a family does not have transportation to see the doctor or dentist?

- Medicaid provides transportation assistance called the Medical Transportation Program for families who need to get to and from the doctor, dentist, hospital, or pharmacy.
- Children who are 14 and younger can never travel without an adult. Children who are 15 to 17 years old can travel without an adult if their parent or guardian has filled out a consent form before setting up the trip. To get this form, call the toll-free numbers listed below.
- Other children who can travel without an adult are teens who are parents, children who have been emancipated by a court, and children who have a doctor visit that must be kept confidential.
- For transportation services, contact the Medical Transportation Program.
  - In the Dallas/Fort Worth area: 1-855-687-3255
  - In the Houston/Beaumont area: 1-855-687-4786
  - In all other areas: 1-877-633-8747 (1-877-MED-TRIP)

## How can a parent get help to find services for a child who has special medical needs?

- Case management by licensed social workers or registered nurses is available for Medicaid eligible individuals through Case Management for Children & Pregnant Women. For more information or to locate a case manager, call 1-877-847-8377 or go to <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/caseman/default.shtm>.
- Special equipment and medical supplies are available for children who have a medical need. Contact the member's medical plan to find vendors or go to the advanced provider search at <http://opl.tmhp.com/>.

## Does Medicaid cover mental health or substance abuse programs for children?

- Yes, these services are provided for individuals with Medicaid coverage through the child's medical plan. Children in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid receive services through a Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA). Medicaid recipients must check with their medical plan for a list of behavioral/mental health or substance abuse providers. Children in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid must call the referral line of the LMHA in their area.
- For more information on LMHAs go to <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/adolescent/default.shtm>

## How do children receive their prescription benefits through the Medicaid Program?

- When needed, a 72-hour emergency supply of a prescribed drug may be provided without prior authorization.

- For those enrolled in a managed care medical plan, prescription drug benefits are delivered through the recipient's medical plan. Medicaid recipients should contact their medical plan to locate enrolled pharmacies.
- Children enrolled in traditional fee-for-service Medicaid receive their prescriptions through pharmacies enrolled in the Vendor Drug Program.
- For more information on the Medicaid Vendor Drug Program go to <https://www.txvendordrug.com/>.

## What is ImmTrac2?

- ImmTrac2 is the Texas immunization registry, a free service from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). It is a secure, confidential registry that stores children's, Texas first responders', and first responder family members' vaccine information electronically in one centralized system. Authorized professionals such as doctors, nurses, and public health providers can access clients' vaccination histories. Parental consent is required for inclusion of a child's information in the registry.
- Contact 1-800-252-9152 or go to <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/immtrac/default.shtm> for more information.
- Schools may also enroll in ImmTrac2 to obtain student vaccine records.

## Where can I get more information about a THSteps medical checkup?

- Additional THSteps program information is available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps>.
- Nurses and other health professionals may obtain information from the THSteps Online Provider Education website, <http://www.txhealthsteps.com/>. This site also includes information and access to free online continuing education on various topics related to children's health.

## How can I receive copies of THSteps brochures and program materials to provide to parents and students?

- You may review and order materials online from a resource catalogue of materials at <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps/thsteps-catalog>.
- Materials are available at no charge for eligible organizations, schools, and community-based organizations.
- When placing an order for the first time, email a request for a login and password to [txmailhouse@maximus.com](mailto:txmailhouse@maximus.com).

## How do I request a THSteps presentation for ISD staff or for parents/caregivers?

- You may request a presentation by calling 1-877-847-8377. You may also email [txmedicaidevents@maximus.com](mailto:txmedicaidevents@maximus.com) to request participation in health fairs or other events.
- Or contact your regional THSteps provider relations representative. Information about regional THSteps staff is available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/health-services-providers/texas-health-steps>.

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