

# Life Deserves Support: Protect Health Access for Texas Moms

March 2023

Following the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*, it is vital that citizens and public leaders take steps to ensure that women are supported in pregnancy, childbirth, and child care. Many states have extended Medicaid coverage for women for 12 months after pregnancy. **Texas has not yet taken this step to protect health access for women for the full 12-month period.**

Please join the Center for Public Justice (CPJ) and the Association for Public Justice (APJ) in urging members of the Texas Senate to protect health access for mothers.

[Read and sign the letter to Texas legislators](#)

## Key Points

In 2021, 1 in 4 Texas women of reproductive age were uninsured.<sup>1</sup>

Medicaid for Pregnant Women is available during pregnancy but expires 60 days after the mother gives birth, leaving many Texas moms without access to comprehensive medical and behavioral health care during a critical time.<sup>2</sup>

A legislature-authorized Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (TMMRC) has found that the majority of pregnancy-related deaths in Texas were preventable, many occurring within the first year after childbirth. The Committee also noted persistent racial disparities in health outcomes for Texas women.<sup>3</sup>

The Review Committee's top recommendation for saving mothers' lives was to **increase access to comprehensive health services during pregnancy, the year after pregnancy, and during women's childbearing years.**

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<sup>1</sup> [March of Dimes, Peristats, Data for Texas.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Texans Care for Children, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> [Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee and Department of State Health Services Joint Biennial Report](#), 2022

Extending health insurance coverage for 12-months after pregnancy would enable Texas to access federal matching funds related to the program.<sup>4</sup>

Surveys of Texas women whose pregnancies had been covered by Medicaid found that 64% became uninsured within 3 months of giving birth and remained so.<sup>5</sup> Uninsurance is associated with limited access to preventative and postpartum care services.

### [Read and sign the letter to Texas legislators](#)

#### **Further Reading**

[“The Whole of Life: The Case for Extending Medicaid Benefits for Maternal Health,”](#) Ezra Cracker, Center for Public Justice Shared Justice program. March 21, 2023.

[“In Texas, Medicaid ends soon after childbirth. Will lawmakers allow more time?”](#) Elena Rivera, NPR, March 5, 2023.

[“Should Christians Support Making Birth Free?”](#) Christianity Today, January 25, 2023.

#### **About the Center for Public Justice (CPJ)**

CPJ is a nonpartisan Christian organization engaged in public policy development and civic education. Our mission is to serve God, advance justice, and transform public life. CPJ's Families Valued program advocates for policies and workplace practices that help families flourish. [www.cpjustice.org](http://www.cpjustice.org)

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#### **About the Association for Public Justice (APJ)**

APJ is a nonpartisan organization devoted to civic education, grassroots mobilization, advocacy, and candidate development. [www.apjustice.org](http://www.apjustice.org)

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<sup>4</sup> Georgetown University Health Policy Institute Center for Children and Families, [“Opportunities to Support Maternal and Child Health Through Medicaid’s New Postpartum Coverage Extension.”](#) July 2022

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Ela, Elsa Vizcarra, Lauren Thaxton, Kari White, [“Insurance Churn and Postpartum Health among Texas Women with Births Covered by Medicaid/CHIP,”](#) Women’s Health Issues, 2022.