



# Utah Medicaid Before and After the Medicaid Expansion

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**When the Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act in June of 2012, it made the Medicaid expansion optional to the states. As Utah leaders weigh their options, it may be helpful to know what Medicaid looks like today and how the program will change in 2014.**

## Medicaid Today

Medicaid is a healthcare program that provides health coverage for lower-income people, families and children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. It is jointly financed by states and the federal government.

Utah currently provides Medicaid or CHIP (healthcare specifically for children) coverage to:

- children in families with incomes up to 200% Federal Poverty Line or FPL (\$38,180 for a family of 3);
- pregnant women up to 133% FPL (\$25,390 for a family of 3);
- seniors and people with disabilities generally up to 100% FPL (\$11,170 per person); and
- parents up to 44% FPL (\$8,400 for a family of 3).

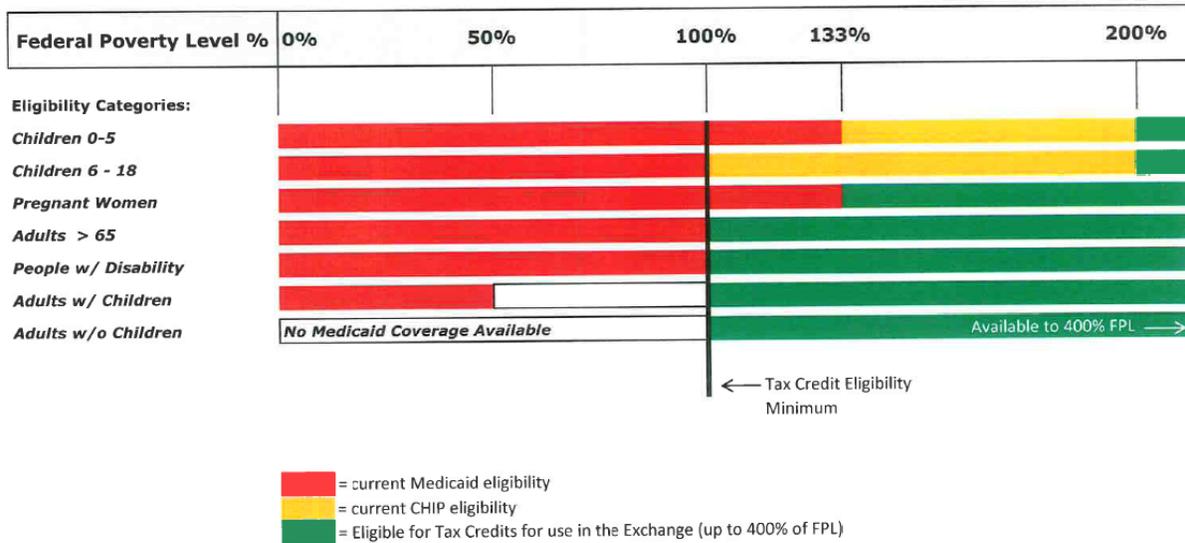
Full Medicaid coverage is not provided to childless adults at any income level.

## The ACA and the Medicaid Expansion

When the coverage provisions of the ACA kick in starting in 2014, more comprehensive and affordable coverage will be available through the private market along with premium subsidies to help moderate income Utahns (from 100%-400% FPL). The idea is to bring all Americans into the insurance system. For those without an offer of coverage in the workplace or who cannot afford their portion of the premium, Medicaid is the most cost-effective coverage option, and this is why the Affordable Care Act included a Medicaid expansion for adults with household income less than 133% of poverty. The Medicaid expansion brings *all* non-disabled adults, parents and childless, under age 65 into the coverage system at 133% of poverty level. Low-income parents would be in the same plan as their kids because kids' eligibility for Medicaid would be at 133%, no matter the age of the child. Pregnant women, already covered at 133% of poverty would no longer lose their coverage postpartum.

Here's the problem: When the Supreme Court upheld the ACA it made the Medicaid expansion optional to the states. If Utah joins with its neighboring states and Republican-led states, and opts into the expansion, those with the greatest need for health care will get it. If Utah rejects the expansion, we will have significant gap in coverage. The graph below depicts this coverage gap (in white).

Income Limits for Medicaid, CHIP and Tax Credit Eligibility  
No Medicaid Expansion Scenario



Source: Utah Department of Health

### Why should Utah expand Medicaid?

Nearly 400,000 Utahns have no insurance. Private insurance options within reach of some low wage earners have high deductible plans covering catastrophic events, with little or no coverage for preventive care. According to a recent study published by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, expanding Medicaid will allow 189,000 Utahns families to access to quality healthcare coverage. Plus, the federal government will pick up 100% of the cost of coverage for three years, phasing down to 90% by year 10. Refusing the expansion means refusing over \$5 billion in federal funds.