



American Rescue Plan Vaccines and Health Care

The health of the American people must come first. We cannot get “back to normal” and revive our economy until we address the major public health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now is the time to increase vaccinations and testing, ensure access to health coverage, promote health equity, and invest in behavioral health. When the American people are healthy, our economy will follow.

Vaccines and Testing

Vaccines and testing are essential to slow the spread of COVID-19. The American Rescue Plan Act contains billions in funding to get vaccines into Americans’ arms more quickly and provide crucial supplies, testing, and staffing to stop the spread of COVID-19. The bill includes:

- \$50 billion for testing, genomic sequencing of variants, and contact tracing efforts, as well as manufacturing and procurement of PPE
- \$20 billion for improving vaccine administration and distribution
- \$10 billion for the Defense Production Act to procure essential PPE and other medical equipment
- \$8 billion for public health workforce development

Health Coverage During the Pandemic and Beyond

Between March and September 2020, [**as many as 3 million**](#) Americans lost their employer-sponsored health insurance. Americans must have affordable health insurance and access to care during and after this unprecedented public health crisis.

The American Rescue Plan Act will ensure access to health coverage by:

- Lowering or eliminating health insurance premiums for millions of Americans who buy insurance through the marketplaces through increased tax credits, reducing premiums by potentially thousands of dollars each year

- Providing incentives for states to expand Medicaid by increasing federal supports, which could provide health insurance coverage to nearly 4 million Americans, including 640,000 frontline or essential workers, if expanded nationwide
- Subsidizing 100% of premiums for COBRA continuation coverage to help people who experienced job loss maintain their health coverage
- Providing \$8.5 billion in provider relief to help struggling rural health care providers and ensure access to care in rural areas

Click [HERE](#) to See How Premiums Would Decrease in Your State

Click [HERE](#) for How Expanding Medicaid Would Benefit Current Non-Expansion States

Health Equity

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clearer than ever that we must address racial and ethnic disparities and promote health equity. A disproportionate number of people of color have been diagnosed with, hospitalized by, or died from COVID-19, and communities of color currently have lower vaccination rates.

The American Rescue Plan Act will work to address systemic inequities through a \$25.2 billion investment in underserved communities and communities of color, including:

- \$7.6 billion for community health centers, Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alikes, and Native Hawaiian Health Centers
- \$3.3 billion for the Indian Health Service
- \$1 billion for emergency assistance for children, families, and workers through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program
- \$500 million for nursing home strike teams to manage COVID-19 outbreaks and another \$200 million for infection control in nursing homes
- \$276 million to protect the elderly and fight elder abuse
- \$150 million for the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

- \$50 million for the Title X Family Planning Program
- Allowing states to provide Medicaid coverage for one year postpartum to address the maternal health crisis disproportionately affecting communities of color
- Increased federal support through Medicaid for home- and community-based services

Behavioral Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of many Americans, further straining mental and behavioral health and substance use disorder services that have been historically underfunded. The American Rescue Plan Act aims to increase access to mental health and substance use disorder services, treatment, and prevention with \$4 billion in funding, including:

- \$3 billion for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Community Mental Health Block Grants
- \$420 million for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics
- \$420 million to the Indian Health Service for behavioral health services
- \$140 million to develop a program to support providers' mental health and decrease burnout of providers and public safety officers
- \$100 million to the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program to train behavioral health paraprofessionals, such as peer support specialists
- \$80 million in new grants for community-based and behavioral health organizations
- \$80 million for the Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program and an additional \$50 million to support youth suicide prevention
- \$10 million for the National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network