



## **Pro-Life Safety Net Support for the First Thousand Days After Birth**

### **State Spotlight: Georgia**

*Information current as of December 2025.*

## **1. Care Coordination and Pregnancy Support**

### **1.1 Pregnancy Support**

#### [Positive Alternatives for Pregnancy and Parenting Grant Program](#)

This is Georgia's alternatives-to-abortion program. The state provides grant funding to pregnancy help organizations that provide life-affirming pregnancy support services. This program is run in partnership with a nonprofit organization, [Life Resources of Georgia](#). Life Resources of Georgia makes sure that the state agencies' programs provide life-affirming services only.

### **1.2 Care Coordination**

No applicable and/or known programs.

### **1.3 Miscellaneous**

#### [Fatherhood Program](#)

This program is run by the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Child Support Services. It aims to help noncustodial parents avoid court appearances by providing employment services that help these parents find employment to comply with their child-support order and achieve self-sufficiency. Some other services include:

- Driver's license reinstatement.
- Child support services.
- GED enrollment.
- Job training.
- Job search/placement.
- Emotional wellness courses.

- Support order modification, where applicable.

## 2. Women's Health

### *2.1 Prenatal and Postpartum Medical Care*

No applicable and/or known programs.

### *2.2 Prenatal and Postpartum Support*

#### Evidence-Based Home Visiting (EBHV) Program

Georgia's EBHV program is available in 27 counties that are served by 18 local implementing agencies. One of the major funding streams for Georgia's EBHV program is the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) block grant. Georgia's MIECHV funds are distributed by the Georgia Department of Public Health and support home visiting services for pregnant women and families with children up to five years old. This program focuses on families living in at-risk communities for poor maternal and child health outcomes. Other funding streams for Georgia's EBHV program include Title V, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention (CANP) funding, and state funding streams. Collectively, these funding streams support three EBHV models:

- **Healthy Families Georgia** - This program, operating in seven counties, specifically focuses on creating and supporting relationships between children and their caregivers. Eligible participants include low-income households, single parents, and at-risk families such as those with a history of abuse, substance abuse, mental health issues, or domestic violence. Pregnant women and families with a child up to 3-months old may enroll. The services are then provided through the child's fifth birthday. When a woman is pregnant, she receives hour long home visits every other week throughout her pregnancy and then weekly from birth to 6 months.
- **Parents as Teachers** - This program, operating in 10 counties, focuses on educating parents on healthy child development. Eligible participants include children with special needs, families at risk for child abuse and neglect, low-income families, teen parents, first-time parents, immigrant families, and parents with mental health or substance use issues. Families can enroll in this program throughout pregnancy and up until their child's third birthday. Services continue until the child reaches kindergarten. Services include hour-long home visits every other week and monthly group meetings for parents.
- **Nurse-Family Partnership** - This program, operating in one county, focuses on promoting healthy pregnancies for low-income, first-time mothers. Mothers can enroll before their 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. Services continue until the child turns two. . Trained nurses teach mothers about self-efficacy, personal growth, attachment, and healthy parenting choices. Services include home visits weekly in the first month of enrollment, every week for six weeks following birth, every other week from six weeks until the child turns 20 months, and then monthly thereafter.

## [Perinatal Health Partnership](#)

This program promotes the perinatal health of pregnant women and their infant children by helping them access perinatal services through home-visiting services. This program provides services from pregnancy until the baby turns one. Providers monitor women for warning signs and complications between provider appointments. There are two components to this program: maternal (pregnancy and postpartum care) and infants (nutrition and development). It focuses on serving pregnant women with high-risk conditions (hypertension, preeclampsia, diabetes, twins, prior preterm delivery, prior second-trimester miscarriages, comorbidities, etc.) that could increase the risk of poor pregnancy outcomes. Infants with a recent Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) discharge, very low birth weight (VLBW) or low birth weight (LBW), early delivery, positive maternal screening for substances at delivery, or suspected of being diagnosed with congenital syphilis or HIV are the target participants for this program.

## [HB 1010 \(2024\)](#)

This legislation, signed by Gov. Brian P. Kemp in April 2024, expanded the state employees' parental leave from three weeks to six weeks. This policy applies to parents who have given birth, adopted, or are taking care of a foster child.

## [WIC Breastfeeding Services](#)

Georgia's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits and services include breastfeeding counseling, peer counselor support, and nutrition education.

## [Charlotte's Law \(HB 1090\)](#)

In August 2020, Gov. Kemp signed HB 1090 into law. This bill mandates that every woman employee has the right to paid breaks to pump breast milk. Employers are required to provide "reasonable break time" to employees who wish to pump at the worksite during work hours without making the employees use paid leave time to do so.

## [1<sup>st</sup> Care](#)

This is a home visiting program focused on making sure every newborn in Georgia, especially those at risk of experiencing medical, social, developmental, or neurological problems, has access to a trained public health nurse. This nurse educates, assesses, plans interventions, and refers to participating children as the appropriate services. All these services are provided at the infant's home.

## *2.3 General Medical Care for Women*

### [Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening \(BCCS\)](#)

This program provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings to uninsured or underinsured Georgia residents who meet income criteria. Cervical cancer screenings are available to women ages 21 to 64 or 65 and older if not enrolled in Medicare Part B. Breast cancer screenings are available to women ages 40 to 64. Individuals under 18 may also be eligible for free or low-cost HPV immunization. Screening services include:

- Clinical breast exam
- Mammogram
- Pelvic exam
- Pap test
- HPV test
- Diagnostic testing of abnormal results

## Georgia Breast Cancer Genomics Project

The project is a collaboration between the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Georgia Center for Oncology Research and Education. The project provides a free online screening tool to assess hereditary risk for breast and cervical cancer. It helps users quickly identify if they should be referred for screenings and genetic counseling. It is available to women of all ages in the state of Georgia.

## Medicaid

Medicaid in Georgia provides health coverage to eligible Georgia residents who meet the income guidelines and are U.S. citizens or have satisfactory immigration status. There are various Medicaid programs available in Georgia for individuals and families, each with its own requirements. Below are several eligibility groups that are eligible for Georgia Medicaid.

- [Pregnant women](#) - Pregnant women are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid as long as they meet certain family size and income limits (at or below 225% of the FPL).<sup>1</sup> With the passage of [SB 338](#) in May 2022 and CMS' subsequent approval of Georgia's extension request in October 2022, postpartum Medicaid coverage for women was extended from six months to one year. Pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid are enrolled in the state's [Right from the Start Medical Assistance Group](#).
- [Parents and Caretakers](#) - Parents with children (under the age of 19) living in their home who also meet resident, citizenship, and income requirements are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid. Income limits can be found [here](#).
- [Planning for Healthy Babies Waiver](#) - This family planning demonstration waiver provides free family planning services to eligible Georgia women ages 18-44. Eligible members must be a Georgia resident, have a family income at or below 216% of the FPL.<sup>2</sup> This waiver covers only family-planning related services such as annual exams, follow-up visits, pap smears and pelvic exams, birth control, multivitamins, select vaccines for women ages 18-20, and education and counseling services.
- [Women's Health Medicaid](#) - This is a limited-coverage program that pays for cancer treatments for uninsured or underinsured women who have been diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through the state's BCCS program. Other eligibility requirements for this program include being under the age of 65, holding U.S. citizenship or being a lawfully admitted immigrant, and meeting the income limit (at or below 200% of the FPL).

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid

- [Georgia Pathways to Coverage](#) - Georgia has not expanded Medicaid through the traditional Affordable Care Act route. However, it does provide low-income adults with healthcare coverage through a 1115 waiver. To be eligible for this program, one must be ages 19-64, have a family income at or below 100% of the FPL, not be eligible for other Medicaid programs, and participate in 80 hours per month of qualifying activities. Some covered services include family planning services, mental health services, doctor visits, and hospital stays. Examples of qualifying activities [include](#) full or part-time employment, job training, job-readiness assistance programs, community services, educational activities, etc.

In 2023, Gov. Kemp [signed SB 106](#), the “Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Act,” into law. This legislation created a three-year pilot home-visiting program, [Planning for Healthy Babies](#), to be administered through the Georgia Department of Community Health. The pilot program monitors the physical and mental health of pregnant Medicaid mothers living in rural, underserved areas by utilizing digital technology to monitor things like fetal positioning, maternal heart rate, and maternal blood pressure. The goal of this pilot program is to help mothers get access to quality prenatal care, improve birth outcomes, reduce the number of preterm deliveries in the state, and decrease infant and maternal mortality in the state. The program started in FY2024. A component of the pilot program is the Planning for Healthy Babies waiver described above. [Two other components](#) of this program include inter-pregnancy care (IPC) and Resource Mother services. IPC services include primary care, substance abuse treatment services, dental services, a Resource Mother, and a nurse case manager for women with babies weighing less than three pounds and five ounces (a Very Low Birth Weight baby, VLBW) for 24 months. Resource Mother services help mothers enrolled in the state’s traditional Medicaid program care for their VLBW baby for 24 months with the aid of a trained case manager. To be eligible for IPC or Resource Mother services, women must have a family income at or below 211% of the FPL.

Those who would otherwise be eligible for Medicaid apart from their citizenship status can receive Medicaid coverage for [emergency services only](#).

Lastly, in Georgia, eligible children under the age of 19 are automatically enrolled in Medicaid if they are already receiving SNAP, TANF, WIC, or Childcare and Parent Services (see section 7.1). This benefit is called [Express Lane eligibility](#).

For more information on disability-specific Medicaid programs, see section 6.1, section 7.2 for child-specific Medicaid programs, section 7.4 for adoption-specific Medicaid programs, and section 7.5 for foster-care specific programs.

## 3. Finances, Work, and Education

### 3.1 Help Paying Bills

#### TANF

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is Georgia's federally funded monthly cash assistance program that contains an employment services requirement for low-income families with children under 18, children over 18 and attending school full-time, and pregnant women. For families to receive monthly cash benefits, families must cooperate with the Georgia Department of Human Services' Division of Child Support Services and the program's work requirement. Other eligibility requirements can be found [here](#). TANF's [work requirement](#) in Georgia is that able-bodied adults are required to participate in 30 hours of work activities per week or 20 hours if the household has a child under the age of six. Approved work activities include one or more of the following:

- Full or part-time employment (unsubsidized)
- On-the-job training
- Work experience
- Community service
- Job search and job preparation
- Vocational training

#### HB 129 (2023)

Signed in 2023 by Gov. Kemp, this legislation expanded the eligibility for the TANF program to include pregnant women with no "born" children.

#### Cash Assistance to Medicaid, PeachCare for Kids, SNAP, and/or TANF Recipients

In 2022, Gov. Kemp allocated \$1 billion to the Department of Human Services to provide cash assistance of up to \$350 to active enrollees in Medicaid, PeachCare for Kids, SNAP, and/or TANF. Georgia children in foster care and children whose parents receive adoption assistance are also eligible for the program. One must have been enrolled in one of the programs as of July 31, 2022, to receive benefits.

### 3.2 Employment Support

#### SNAP Works

This is SNAP's voluntary employment and training program. It provides most SNAP recipients with vocational training, work support services, and job search/preparation services.

#### TANF Subsidized Employment Program

This is a voluntary, time limited state work program that provides Georgia residents who are TANF and non-TANF participants with the opportunity to gain paid, real life work experience. The TANF program pays the \$29,520 salary of the employed individual, not the private employer. Recipients must meet all the following eligibility criteria:

- Have a household income below 300% of FPL
- Have a minor child living in the home
- Be a U.S. citizen or legally authorized to work in the U.S.
- Be able to pass a background check
- Satisfactory completion of required training and satisfactory performance ratings

### *3.3 Education and Training*

No applicable and/or known programs.

### *3.4 Financial Advice or Education*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 4. Material or Legal Support

### *4.1 Transportation*

No applicable and/or known programs.

### *4.2 Food and Nutrition*

#### WIC

The federally funded Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provide nutritious foods, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support to pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women as well as to infants and children under five years old. Unborn children are counted in the family total when determining eligibility. [Eligibility requirements include](#) meeting all the following requirements:

- Being a Georgia resident.
- [Meeting income guidelines.](#)
- Being nutritionally at risk (anemic, overweight, low birth weight, underweight, inadequate daily intake).

#### SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a federally funded program run at the state level. It provides monthly benefits to low-income families to assist them with the cost of food as well as nutritional education assistance. The program also provides employment and training opportunities for enrollees. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- U.S. citizen or qualified alien.
- Complying with individual or household work requirements.
- Household's monthly income doesn't exceed the income limits based on the number of people who live in the household.

## Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP)

This program is a one-time payment for food assistance to low-to-moderate income families whose property was damaged by Hurricane Helene. To be eligible for this assistance one must meeting all the following criteria:

- Be a resident of or work in a county declared by FEMA to be in a state of emergency.
- Not currently receiving regular SNAP benefits.
- Suffered property less related to the disaster.
- Meet income limits.

There are four phases for applicants residing in different counties to sign up for aid.

## Special Nutrition Programs

National School [Breakfast](#) Program and [National School Lunch](#) Program

These federally funded programs operate at the state level in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions and provide free or reduced cost breakfasts and lunches to children each school day.

- [Seamless Summer Option](#) : This federally funded program allows state school districts to provide students (under 18 or above 18 with a disability) with meals during the summer and other vacation periods if they are enrolled in the National School Breakfast or Lunch programs.
- [Afterschool Snack Program](#) : This program offers free snacks to students enrolled in after-school enrichment programs. This program is a component of the National School Lunch program.

### Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

This is a federal grant given to elementary schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. A high priority is given to schools with a high percentage of students who are eligible for reduced costs or free meals. The program provides fresh fruit or vegetables as snacks that are provided outside of regular school meals. All students in enrolled schools receive these snacks.

### Special Milk Program

This program provides milk to children in schools and childcare institutions that are not enrolled in other federal meal service programs. There are three options: the pricing program with free option, the pricing program without free option, and the non-pricing program.

### The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

TEFAP is a federally funded program that provides states with 100% American grown foods which are allocated to participating food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens. Low-income individuals and families can then go and receive supplemental food boxes from these entities. These supplemental food boxes contain three to five days' worth of food. Monthly income limits apply.

### Child and Adult Care Food Program

This federally funded program is run by the state and provides reimbursable meals to childcare centers who take care of children through age 12 in lower income areas. Adult care centers who

care for disabled adults or those over 60 also are eligible for this program. Emergency shelters and after-school programs are also eligible.

### *4.3 Clothing, Household Goods, and Baby Supplies*

#### Car Seat Mini Grant

This is a component of the Department of Public Health's Child Occupant Safety Project. The grant gives funding to county health departments and their community partners to distribute car seats and educational materials on how to properly install car seats and booster seats to eligible families.

### *4.4 Housing, Shelters, and Maternity Homes*

#### Betsy's Law

[This bill, signed into law](#) by Gov. Kemp in 2022, made it easier for maternity supportive housing residences to be registered by the state thereby increasing the number of residences that could provide free housing and wraparound services for pregnant and postpartum women. These residences are homes (run by nonprofit organizations) that can house up to six pregnant women 18 years or older and their minor children during the women's pregnancy and up to 18 months postpartum.

#### Crisis Respite Apartments

These state-funded apartments provide housing for those who need temporary housing and are either transitioning from jail/prison or who are ready for discharge from a psychiatric inpatient setting, but their residential housing is not ready.

#### Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP is a federally funded program run at the state level. This assistance program helps low-income families with heating/cooling costs as well as energy crisis costs. Eligibility requirements include:

- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.
- Applicants' total gross annual household income needs to be at or below 60% of the state's median income.
- The applicant needs to have full responsibility for paying heating costs for the primary heating source.

#### Weatherization Assistance Program

This program is funded by the federal LIHEAP program. It helps low-income individuals and families save money on their utility bills by weatherizing their homes to conserve energy. Examples of weatherization practices include air and duct sealing; insulating the walls, floors, and attics; lighting improvements; etc. To be eligible, a family's income must be below 200% of the FPL. Preference is given to the elderly, disabled, and families with children.

## *4.5 Legal Support*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 5. Mental Health

### *5.1 Addiction Recovery*

#### [Ready to Quit/Georgia Tobacco Quit Line](#)

This hotline will provide callers (13+ years of age) with referrals to web-based quitting services, services specifically for pregnant and postpartum women, cessation services that address the use of all tobacco products, a free 4-week supply of nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) for Georgia residents (i.e. gum or patches) and referrals to community resources. The hotline is available in multiple languages and is available by phone, text, or a web-based chat.

### *5.2 Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Trafficking Recovery*

No applicable and/or known programs.

### *5.3 Mental Health*

#### [Georgia Crisis and Access Line](#)

This is a 24/7 statewide toll-free call center for individuals struggling with mental health issues to access referral and scheduling services as well as crisis services. This call center can dispatch mobile crisis teams and provide over-the-phone intervention services.

#### [The Respect Institute of Georgia](#)

This nonprofit organization partners with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and supports participants in developing life skills after experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues through a three-to-four-day training program. The organization also provides participants with independent living opportunities, opportunities to share their stories with civic stakeholders, and continuing education programs.

### *5.4 Abortion Recovery and Healing*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 6. Disability Assistance

#### [Georgia Pediatric Program](#)

This program serves eligible children under 21 years old who are medically fragile and in need of medically necessary skilled nursing care. The program provides skilled nursing care and/or personal care support to enrolled members. Eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

## Disability-Specific Medicaid Programs

Georgia Medicaid offers Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers to individuals who require full, comprehensive coverage and additional long-term support services that allow disabled individuals to live at home instead of in a long-term care facility. Some of the [core additional, long-term care services](#) include care coordination, personal support with daily living activities such as bathing and eating, home health services, the provision of emergency response systems and durable medical equipment, and respite care. Georgia HCBS waivers include:

- [Comprehensive Supports Waiver \(COMP\) and New Options Waiver \(NOW\)](#): These two waivers offer HCBS services to those with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Some qualifying conditions include cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. To be eligible for these waivers' services, one must require a specific level of care. The COMP waiver is for individuals with more intensive care needs, whereas NOW participants have less of a need for intensive services. The COMP waiver is for those five and older who need an ICF/IID level of care while the NOW waiver is for those of any age who need an ICF/IID level of care.
- [Independent Care Waiver \(ICWP\)](#): This waiver is for those aged 21 to 64 with severe physical disabilities or a brain injury which necessitates a nursing or hospital facility level of care. Other eligibility requirements for this waiver include being medically stable but at risk of placement in a hospital or nursing facility.
- [Elderly and Disabled Waiver \(EDWP\)](#)- This waiver is for individuals 65 and older and individuals under 65 with physical disabilities who meet a nursing facility level of care.

[Aged, blind, and disabled](#) adults can also receive full Medicaid coverage through the state's Medicaid program. There are 19 classes of assistance for this population. One's living arrangement, income, marital status, etc. determine which class of assistance they are eligible for.

Another disability-specific Medicaid program administered by the state of Georgia is the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act ([TEFRA](#)) program, otherwise known as the Katie Beckett program. This program is for children eighteen years old and younger with disabilities who want to live at home but qualify for institutional placement in a hospital or intermediate care facility. This program provides full Medicaid coverage and additional program-specific services. The income limit for this program is three times the current SSI payment rate, and there are additional resource limits. In some instances, families will pay a monthly premium, and in others, TEFRA will pay for the full cost of the services provided. Some services covered by this program include physical, occupational, and speech therapy, outpatient behavioral health counseling, nursing services, etc. The child's income, not the family's, is considered for eligibility purposes. Furthermore, eligibility for this program is not based on the child's medical diagnosis, but rather on the level of care the child requires.

The [Autism Spectrum Disorder Medicaid program](#) provides coverage for ASD services (assessment and treatment services) for Georgia residents under the age of 21.

Lastly, in Georgia, those who are disabled but are working, can buy coverage through the state's Medicaid program. Other eligibility requirements for this coverage group [include](#) all of the following:

- Having a disability that meets the Social Security Administration's definition of disability.
- Having a disability income between \$600-699 per month.
- Being a Georgia resident.
- Being at least 16 years old, but less than 65 years old
- Meeting resource limits
- Having a monthly income less than 300% of the FPL

## [Babies Can't Wait](#)

This is a federally funded program and is Georgia's early intervention program that offers coordinated services for infants and toddlers with special medical and developmental needs. Services include early identification and screening of children with developmental delays and medical conditions, supporting family members to enhance child development, and improving the development of children from birth to age three. Any child from birth to three, regardless of their family's income, is eligible for this program if they meet either one of these requirements:

- Having a diagnosed physical or mental condition that is known to result in a developmental delay (blindness, Down syndrome, autism, spina bifida, etc.).
- Having a diagnosed developmental delay confirmed by qualified professionals.

## 7. Care for Children

### 7.1 Childcare

#### [Childcare and Parent Services \(CAPS\)](#)

This program aids low-income families with the cost of childcare. Eligibility requirements include meeting all of the following criteria:

- Georgia resident.
- Child must be 12 years old or younger, or 17 years old or younger if child has a qualifying disability.
- U.S. citizen or qualified alien.
- Child must be up to date on immunizations.
- Parents must be working or attending school or training programs.
- Family's gross applicable income can't exceed 50% of the state median income.

#### [2019 LIFE Act](#)

Signed in 2019 by Gov. Kemp, Georgia's heartbeat law went into effect in June 2022 after the *Dobbs* decision and then again in November 2022 after being blocked by the courts for a few months. In addition to the law's heartbeat provision, it also stipulates that expectant mothers who give birth after the law's enactment date and who have maintained documentation of pregnancy-related

expenses are eligible to receive reimbursement from the baby's father. [Another stipulation of the law](#) is that unborn children are eligible for the Georgia individual income tax dependent exemption.

### [Afterschool Care Program](#)

This program is run by the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services but is federally funded. It provides funding to nonprofit organizations and public agencies that provide reduced cost or free childcare to low-income or foster-care families.

## *7.2 Children's Health Care*

### [Children's Medical Services](#)

This federally funded program supports families caring for children with special medical needs. It connects children and families with resources and health services.

### [Children 1<sup>st</sup>](#)

This is the (free) single point of entry for all DPH Child Health Programs for children at risk of poor health outcomes or developmental delays (birth through 5 years old) and helps those children get connected with early intervention services. This is also the referral service for the Babies Can't Wait, Children's Medical Services, Early Hearing Detection and Intervention, and 1<sup>st</sup> Care programs. The program provides home visiting services to administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaires developmental screening tool for children birth to 5 years old as well as monitoring services for children not eligible for early intervention programs.

### [Newborn Screening Program](#)

This program ensures that all newborns born in Georgia hospitals have blood screening, hearing screening, and critical congenital heart disease screening directly after birth and before being discharged from the hospital.

- [Early Hearing Detection and Intervention](#) - This program ensures that all Georgia babies are screened for hearing loss before 1 month of age. It is typically done before the baby is discharged from the hospital. The program also includes referrals (for medical care if the baby has hearing loss) and care coordination services.

### [Scoliosis Screening](#)

Scoliosis screening is required for all students in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades who attend public school in Georgia. The screening can take place at a licensed doctor's office in the state, the local health department, or at school (by a school nurse).

### [Medicaid for Children](#)

Georgia residents under the age of 19 can qualify for full-coverage Georgia Medicaid if they meet the [meet immigration or citizen guidelines](#) and meet [income guidelines](#). For children ages zero to one, the family income limit is at or below 210% of the FPL. For children aged one through five years

old, the family income limit is at or below 154% of the FPL. Lastly, for children aged six through 18, the family income limit is at or below 138% of the FPL.<sup>3</sup>

Georgia's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment ([EPSDT](#)) benefit provides health coverage for well-child visits and diagnostic screenings for all children with actual or potential health issues, who are enrolled in Medicaid and under 21. This mandated Medicaid benefit screens children with actual or potential health problems to treat them before they develop permanent disabilities. Preventive health services are also available to Medicaid-eligible children under 21.

### [PeachCare for Kids](#)

If a child's (aged zero through 18) family income is too high to qualify for traditional Medicaid but too low to pay for private insurance, they may qualify for Georgia's CHIP program, PeachCare for Kids. Eligibility requirements include meeting all of the following eligibility criteria:

- [Meet income limits](#) (at or below 252% of the FPL).<sup>4</sup>
- Be a U.S. citizen or be in satisfactory immigration status.
- Not be eligible for other Medicaid programs.

[This program](#) now provides 12 months of postpartum coverage. Other eligibility criteria can be found [here](#).

### [Vaccines for Children](#)

This is a federal program run by the CDC and administered at the state level. States enroll qualified physicians to serve eligible children and provide them with routine vaccines that they otherwise would not be able to afford and receive. Doctors participating in the program are provided with free vaccines and administer them to eligible Georgia resident children (under the age of 19). Other eligibility requirements include meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Medicaid enrolled
- Uninsured
- Underinsured (seen in FQHCs and Rural Health Centers)
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Enrolled in the PeachCare for Kids Program

## *7.3 Family and Parenting Education*

### [Early Head Start and Head Start](#)

These federal programs are run by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and focus on promoting school readiness. Early Head Start is for qualifying low-income children up to age three as well as their families. The program is an early education and care program that also provides social, health, mental health, dental, nutrition, and home-visiting services. Head Start is an early education and care program for low-income aged three to mandatory school age as well as

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

their families. The program provides social, health, mental health, dental, nutrition, and home-visiting services. Eligibility requirements for both programs include:

Family's income is at or below FPL or the family is eligible for public assistance.

- Homeless children or children in foster care are categorically eligible for the programs.

## 7.4 Adoption

### Adoption Assistance Program

This program provides adoptive families of special needs children with financial assistance to incentivize the adoption of children who otherwise would remain in the foster care system for extended periods of time. Special needs adoptive children are those who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Have been in the foster care system for more than two years
- Those with a diagnosed physical, mental, or behavioral disability
- A child who is a member of sibling group of two or more placed in the same home for adoption.

Assistance can take the form of:

- Ongoing monthly payments are not to exceed the amount the child receives while in a foster home.
- Medicaid coverage.
- One-time payment not to exceed \$1,500 to assist with legal fees, court costs, and other adoption-related expenses within the foster care system.
- One-time payment not to exceed \$1,500 to assist with legal fees, court costs, and other private adoption-related expenses.
- [Post Adoption Special Services Resource](#) - State funds can be used once or for a time-limited basis for a needed service that a family can't afford and/or the government doesn't cover. Examples of such services include therapy/counseling services, orthodontic services, and respite services.
- Family Intervention Team - This provides counseling services and access to community resources to adoptive families who are struggling to maintain the family unit because of behavioral problems.

### Georgia Families 360° Managed Care for Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, and Juvenile Justice Members

This is Georgia's managed care Medicaid program for those in the Georgia foster care system, receiving adoption assistance, and certain members in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice. Members of this eligibility group receive the benefits offered under traditional full coverage Medicaid plans in the state, but they also receive additional services tailored to their specific population and other care coordinated services. Examples of other services covered by this program include pest control, personal exercise kits, and a free Boys and Girls Club Membership.

## Adoption Tax Credit

Georgia has a one-time adoption tax credit of \$6,000 at the time of the adoption of a foster child. For five taxable years after the first year of adoption, a family can receive up to \$2,000 for qualified foster children. Gov. Kemp signed a [bill in 2021](#) that tripled the credit limit for a family's first year of adoption (from \$2,000 to \$6,000).

## *7.5 Foster, Kinship, and Short-term Care*

### State of Georgia Post-Secondary Tuition Waiver

This is a federally funded program, administered by the state, that waives the tuition and fees of students in good academic standing, who are attending a technical college within the Technical College System of Georgia. To be eligible for this program, one must be a young adult under the age of 28 either in foster care or who has been in foster care. Other eligibility criteria include being a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident who has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) prior to this program's application.

### Medicaid

Former foster care children are eligible for Georgia Medicaid if they were enrolled in Medicaid when they aged out of foster care (until they turn 26 years old). Income is not considered for this eligibility group.

### Connections by 21

This program helps foster youth aging out of the system transition from adolescence to adulthood by providing them with social, educational, medical, and financial resources. To participate in this program, one must attend school or work.

### Independent Living Program

This is a federally funded program administered by the state of Georgia. It is for foster care youth and former foster care youth who left the foster care system or aged out and want to return to the system to request independent living services. The program helps foster youth create life goals, work towards them, and learn to live independently in terms of accessing health care and completing daily living activities. Examples of program services include life-skills classes, support services related to college tours and tuition assistance, emergency financial assistance, etc. Eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

A component of the Independent Living Program is the Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV). The vouchers provide those who are in foster care when they turn 18 and those in the state's kinship-guardianship program with college tuition waivers. Participants can receive up to \$5,000 a year for tuition or other qualified school-related expenses. Other eligibility requirements include:

- Participants must be enrolled in a Title IV, accredited college or vocational/technical training program and make progress toward completion of their degree.
- ETV funds can be accessed for a maximum five years until the participant's 26<sup>th</sup> birthday and the participant must apply annually for the voucher.

## 7.6 Safe Haven and/or Baby Boxes

### [Safe Haven Law](#)

Georgia's Safe Haven allows mothers to anonymously leave their newborns at designated safe haven drop off locations (medical facilities, fire stations, or police stations) up to 30 days after giving birth without fear of prosecution.

## Miscellaneous

### [Choose Life License Plate Program](#)

Choose Life license plates are designed by the Georgia Department of Driver Services and are available for purchase by Georgia drivers. Part of the proceeds from the sale of these plates are donated to life-affirming parenting and medical pregnancy centers in the state.

**This is a non-exhaustive list of programs, current as of January 2026, intended to make information easily accessible to moms and families. Program details are subject to change. Readers should always consult with the appropriate state agency for the most accurate and recent information. The information in this summary is for educational purposes only. CLI does not take a position on the merits of any specific program.**

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