



## **State Support for the First Thousand Days After Birth**

### **State Spotlight: Mississippi**

*Information current as of December 2025.*

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

### **1.1 Pregnancy Support**

No applicable and/or known programs.

### **1.2 Care Coordination**

#### **[Mississippi Access to Maternal Assistance \(MAMA\)](#)**

This is Mississippi's safety net website for pregnant and postpartum women that was created because of the passage of [SB 2781](#) in 2023. The website/mobile app is run by the Office of the Attorney General and was launched in 2024. It is a centralized website and mobile app that pregnant and postpartum women can visit to sign up for social service and benefit programs. The website includes public and private resources available through the Mississippi Department of Health, Mental Health, Human Services, Child Protection Services, and Employment Security; the Office of Workforce Development; and the Division of Medicaid.

## **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 \(EBHV\) Programs](#)**

One of Mississippi's home visiting programs, Parents as Teachers (PAT), is federally funded through (Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program funds and run by the state. Expectant parents and parents with young children under the age of five receive home visits.

Trained visitors teach parents about child development and how to develop parent-child relationships as well as help parents get their children ready for school and connect families with other state benefit programs. The home visitors also provide pregnant and parenting families with information on healthy pregnancies and deliveries, breastfeeding support, and safe sleeping conditions. Under this program, enrollees receive 12 to 24 visits per year depending on the families' needs.

The second Mississippi home visiting program "[Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies](#)" is for mothers in all 82 Mississippi counties with identified health risks. Health risks for the mother include:

- Chronic illness such as diabetes or hypertension
- Substance abuse
- Inadequate housing
- Being a victim of domestic violence/abuse
- Being age 19 or younger and pregnant
- Health risks for infants include:
  - o Preterm birth
  - o Low birth weight

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies' team members help pregnant and parenting moms:

- Find medical homes for both mother and baby
- Get enrolled in public assistance programs
- Receive health education services such as the identification of PPD and healthy infant development
- Receive home visits by a nurse care manager after the baby's birth

Eligibility requirements include meeting both of the following requirements:

- Mom or baby (up to age one) has certain medical or emotional conditions that put the pregnancy or health of the child at risk
- Be Medicaid-eligible (must be referred by a medical provider or community member) or meet priority risk criteria (may refer oneself or be referred by a medical provider or community member)

### [Perinatal High Risk Management Infant Services System \(Medicaid Program\)](#)

This voluntary program helps pregnant and postpartum women on Medicaid find maternity or childcare, connect with specialty physicians, and provide health education and counseling. This program also does home visits and refers women to programs like WIC, non-emergency transportation (see section 4.1), etc. To be eligible, a woman must have one or more positive risk factors on the PHRM/ISS perinatal screening form as identified by a physician, nurse practitioner, or certified nurse midwife.

### [Breastfeeding Information and Support](#)

The state's WIC program provides breastfeeding enrollees with peer counselors, designated breastfeeding experts, and breast pumps, shells, and/or nursing supplements. Breastfeeding

moms participating in Mississippi's WIC program also receive a deluxe food package and receive WIC benefits for a longer period than non-breastfeeding WIC participants.

### [Breastfeeding Laws](#)

Women, by state law, have a right to pump during meal or break times at work. The law also notes that the woman's employer must provide a separate space for pumping other than a bathroom.

## *2.3 General Medical Care for Women*

### [Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program \(BCCSP\)](#)

This program provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings as well as diagnostic testing to low-income women across Mississippi. Pap smear exams are available at selected health department clinics, community health centers and participating private providers. Mammograms are available through contracted providers. Women ages 40 to 49 are eligible for mammograms when special funding is available, and special exceptions are made to the age requirements when women ages 21 to 39 receive prior approval to get a mammogram or pap smear. [The target populations](#) for this program include uninsured, underinsured, and minority women as well as women in the age ranges described above who have never been screened for breast or cervical cancer. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- Have income at or below 250% of FPL
- Be a Mississippi resident for at least 12 consecutive months
- Meet enrollment age requirements:
  - o Pap smear- ages 21 to 64
  - o Mammogram- ages 40 to 64
  - o Breast or cervical cancer diagnostic services (mammogram, ultrasound, and breast and cervical biopsies)- ages 21 to 64

### [Medicaid](#)

Medicaid in Mississippi provides health coverage to eligible Mississippi residents who meet the income guidelines and are U.S. citizens or have satisfactory immigration status. There are various Medicaid programs available in Mississippi for individuals and families, each with their own additional requirements. Below are [several groups](#) that are eligible for Mississippi Medicaid.

- Pregnant women - Pregnant women are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid as long as they meet certain family size and income limits ([up to 194% of the FPL](#)). With the passage of [SB 2212](#) in 2023 and CMS' subsequent approval of the state's extension request in December 2023, postpartum Medicaid coverage for women was extended from 30 days to one year.
- Parents and caretakers/relatives- 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.

- BCCSP Enrollees - This Medicaid program covers breast and cervical cancer treatment for women, under the age of 65, diagnosed through the state's BCCSP (see above). The income limit for this eligibility group is at or below 250% of the FPL.
- [Family Planning Waiver](#) - This program waiver provides limited Medicaid coverage for family planning services for women and men ages 13-44. This waiver covers one annual visit and subsequent visits for birth control supplies, but no more than four visits total per year. To be eligible for this waiver, one must have an [income at or below 194% of the FPL](#), be able to reproduce, and not have any other type of insurance.

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

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

### [STD/HIV Prevention Program](#)

This is a screening and condom distribution program that supplies all local county health departments with free condoms for dispensing. It is run by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

## 3. Finances, Work, and Education

### *3.1 Help Paying Bills*

#### [TANF](#)

This federally funded, state-run program provides monthly cash assistance to eligible low-income families with children under the age of 18 to help cover essentials like childcare, transportation, housing, food, and clothes. This program gives families a monthly payment for up to 60 months when participants are out of work. [Other eligibility requirements include](#) meeting all the following requirements:

- Have monthly income at or below the gross monthly income limit for their household size
- Have no more than \$2,000 in resources excluding a home and car
- Participate in the TANF work program (exceptions exist for this requirement)

#### [Access Mississippi](#)

This is a state-run portal that Mississippi residents can use to sign up for and renew public benefit programs such as WIC and TANF.

## *3.2 Employment Support*

### TANF Work Program

This program helps TANF participants prepare to join or return to the workforce or enroll in high school, GED classes, or vocational education and create a success plan and participate in job training programs. The program provides a monthly transportation stipend to help cover the cost of getting to work or school, assistance with childcare payments through the Child Care Payment Program (see section 7.1), and assistance for work-related expenses like uniforms. Exemptions from the state's work requirements are granted to those who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Have a disability
- Have a complicated pregnancy in the third trimester
- Are over age 60 or under 18
- Are the caretaker of an ill or disabled person
- Are temporarily disabled
- Are in domestic violence victims (documented by a physician and law enforcement records)
- Are in substance abuse treatment
- Care for a child under one year old

### Workforce Training and Education programs

The Mississippi Department of Human Services provides funding to partner organizations that provide workforce training and education programs to low-income families looking for work and to become self-sufficient. Funding goes towards adult education classes, career and technical education, and job training.

### Skills2Work

This is SNAP's voluntary employment and training program. It works with partner organizations to help SNAP recipients receive job training services and eventually a job that will enable them to become self-sufficient. A support specialist helps participants determine career interests, identify potential obstacles to career goals, and provide them with workforce skills training. Similarly to the TANF Work Program, Skills2Work helps pay for participants' transportation, childcare, work or school-related supplies. This work program also provides participants with classes to obtain their GED and a monthly stipend of \$80. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- Receive SNAP benefits in Mississippi
- Be between the ages of 18 and 59
- Sign up for work through Mississippi Works (job application portal)
- Receive no TANF benefits

## *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*

#### Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)

This is a Medicaid benefit that provides Medicaid beneficiaries with transportation to non-emergency medical appointments. This service is regulated by the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

### *4.2 Food and Nutrition*

#### WIC

This program is funded by the federal government but run by the state. It provides healthy foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and their children (up to age 5) who are at nutritional risk. [Other eligibility requirements include](#) meeting all the following requirements:

- Meet income guidelines
- Woman, infant, or child must be at medical or nutritional risk as determined by a nurse or nutritionist (anemia, underweight, overweight, or poor diet)
- Be a Mississippi resident

#### SNAP

This program is funded by the federal government but run by the state. It provides supplemental assistance to low-income families' monthly food budgets. To receive SNAP in Mississippi, one must be a resident of the state and a U.S. citizen or qualifying immigrant whose household income meets the program limits. Those who typically qualify for SNAP include those who work for low wages, are unemployed, work part, receive other assistance payments, or are elderly or disabled and live on a limited income. In Mississippi, eligible college students can receive monthly SNAP payments as well.

### Special Nutrition Programs

#### National School Lunch and Breakfast Program

This federally funded program is run by the state and provides needy children with free or reduced-cost breakfasts and lunches at participating schools.

- [Afterschool Snack Program](#) – This is a federally funded program that provides public and private schools as well as childcare institutions with subsidized snacks for after school program. The snacks are provided for free or at a reduced cost to eligible children.

#### [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#)

This is a federally funded program that provides elementary schools with a wider variety of produce than the National School Lunch Program provides.

#### [Special Milk Program](#)

This is a federally funded program run by the state that provides milk to low-income or very low-income children in public and private schools, childcare institutions, and camps that do not participate in other federal child nutrition meal service programs.

#### [Summer Food Service Program](#)

This federally funded program is run by the state. It provides free meals to children 18 years or younger in participating communities and day camps. In Mississippi, this program is sponsored by school districts, local government agencies, camps, private nonprofit organizations, and public organizations.

#### [Child and Adult Food Care Program](#)

This federally funded program is run by the state and provides reimbursable meals to childcare centers who take care of children under 13 years of age or adults with disabilities.

#### [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.

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

#### [The Safe Riders Magnolia Program](#)

This program is run by the Mississippi State Department of Health and educates Mississippi parents (and prospective parents) on child passenger safety. The program also coordinates the distribution of free child safety seats to low-income families.

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

#### [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#)

This federally funded program helps eligible low-income families pay some of their energy costs. It is administered by the state and can also provide a one-time crisis payment to prevent loss of service or to restore service. This program favors helping families with children under the age of six, the elderly, and the disabled. This assistance is available in all 82 Mississippi counties.

#### [Weatherization Assistance Program](#)

This federally funded program, administered by the state, helps low-income families reduce their home heating and cooling bills by weatherizing their homes. Preference is given to families with

children, families who have at least one member with a disability, homes that use a lot of energy or have a high energy burden, and people over the age of 60. Those eligible for this program must have an income within 200% of the FPL.

#### *4.5 Legal Support*

No applicable and/or known programs.

#### *4.6 Miscellaneous*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 5. Recovery and Mental Health

### *5.1 Addiction Recovery*

#### Baby and Me Tobacco Free Program

This tobacco and smoking cessation program is the result of a collaboration between the Baby and Me nonprofit organization and the Mississippi Office of Tobacco Control. It helps pregnant and postpartum women overcome nicotine addiction through the provision of counseling, biomarker feedback, and case management services.

#### The Act Center for Tobacco Treatment, Education, and Research

This initiative provides nicotine cessation programs to Mississippians. It is run by the University of Mississippi Medical Center and partially funded by the Mississippi State Legislature and Mississippi State Department of Health. It provides free programs and services that address nicotine addiction in the state. These services include an initial screening session and six counseling sessions that provide participants with coping strategies, emotional support, and medical therapies such as patches or gum.

#### The Mississippi Tobacco Quitline

This is a tobacco-cessation program of the Mississippi Department of Health for adult Mississippi residents. The program provides individualized coaching by counselors who have a Master's degree, nicotine replacement therapy, and additional online support such as group coaching or personalized plan creation. The Quitline number which provides 24/7 services is 1-800-784-8669.

#### Alcohol and Drug Services Provided by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

The Department's inpatient substance use disorder units are located at Mississippi state hospitals in Rankin County (for women) and Meridian County (for men). The Mississippi Department of Mental Health has specific providers that admit pregnant women and parents with children younger than five years old. All state-certified providers prioritize the admission of pregnant women and IV drug users to their programs or services. Services include:



- Outpatient services
- Intensive outpatient services
- Adolescent intensive outpatient services
- Acute partial hospitalization services
- Clinically Managed Residential Services
- Clinical Managed Low Intensity Residential Services

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

## *No applicable and/or known programs.5.3 Mental Health*

### Mental-Health Specific Medicaid Programs

[Mississippi Youth Programs Around the Clock](#) is a Medicaid program for children with serious emotional disturbances (SEDs) that utilizes a “wraparound” model of care and planning as an alternative to traditional psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTF). This program helps children with SEDs, and their families deal with the child’s complex medical and mental health needs and plan for the child’s future. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following criteria:

- Meet the clinical criteria for admission to a PRTF
- Under the age of 21
- Meet the income requirements for Medicaid
- Not enrolled in CHIP

The [Community Support Program](#) covers services provided to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. To be eligible for this program beneficiaries can’t be enrolled in another Home and Community Based Waiver program and must qualify for the full traditional Medicaid plan. Services include:

- Adult day services
- Employment support
- Living support

### Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs)

These state-funded centers are run at the regional level and exist in every Mississippi county and provide low-income individuals (adults and children) with outpatient community-based mental health, substance abuse, and IDD/DD services. IDD/DD services are limited by region. Recently, Mississippi [received](#) a \$1 million grant from the federal government to transform a number of CMHCs into certified community behavioral health clinics (CCBHCs) which address gaps and barriers to mental health care.

### Program of Assertive Community Treatment Teams (PACT)

These are mobile service teams run by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. They provide mental health services to homeless communities and communities at risk of homelessness who are suffering from mental health or substance abuse issues in their communities or dwelling

places. Each team has a certified peer support specialist and is focused on person-centered, recovery-oriented services.

## *5.4 Abortion Recovery and Healing*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## *5.5 Miscellaneous*

### Safe Sleep

The Mississippi State Department of Health offers counseling, referral services, and training on the prevention of sleep-related deaths to Mississippi parents. The department also supports parents who have lost children to sleep-related deaths.

## 6. Disability Assistance

### Disability-Specific Medicaid Programs

Mississippi 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. Mississippi HCBS waivers [include](#):

- MS Assisted Living Waiver - This waiver provides assisted living services to individuals ages 65 and older and/or individuals with physical or other disabilities ages 21-64 who meet a nursing level of care. It also provides adult residential care for those with an acquired traumatic brain injury.
- MS Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Waiver - This waiver is for individuals ages 65 and older and individuals with physical disabilities ages 21-64 who meet a nursing facility level of care. Some services provided include adult day care, care coordination services, respite services, and home delivered meals.
- MS Independent Living Waiver - This waiver is for individuals ages 65 and older or individuals with physical or other disabilities ages 16-64 who need a nursing facility level of care. Some covered services include environment modifications, the provision of medical equipment, and the provision of personal care attendants.
- MS Intellectual Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver - This waiver is for individuals with autism, intellectual disabilities, or developmental disabilities, of any age, who need an ICF/IDD facility level of care. Some covered services include adult day services, prevocational services, medical equipment, and crisis support.
- MS Traumatic Brain Injury and Spinal Cord Injury Waiver - This waiver is for individuals with a physical disability or brain injury (of any age) who need a nursing facility level of care. Covered services include personal care attendants, respite services, environment modifications, and medical equipment.

Another disability-specific Medicaid program is the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act ([TEFRA](#)) program, otherwise known as the Katie Beckett program. This program is for children 18 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 looks at the child's income apart from their parents' and is three times the current SSI payment rate. 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 as well as outpatient behavioral health counseling and nursing services.

Aged and disabled adults also can receive full Medicaid through the [Healthier Mississippi Waiver](#). This waiver is specifically for those without Medicare, who are otherwise not eligible for Medicaid. The income limit is at or below 135% of the FPL. Participants must be ages 65 and older or have a disability if they are under age 65. Furthermore, those with disabilities but working can receive full-coverage Medicaid through the state's Medicaid program. More eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

### [Early Intervention/Targeted Case Management](#)

This is a case management program for children (from birth to age three) and their families who are enrolled in Mississippi's Early Intervention Program. Services include the development of the child's Individualized Family Service Plan, administrative tasks, and case consultation.

### [Early Intervention \(First Steps\)](#)

This is the state's early intervention program for families with children under three years old who have a diagnosed developmental delay or a condition that will likely cause one. The program provides families with service coordinators and a team of Early Interventionists that help families teach their children how to learn at home and connect the families with emotional and material support.

### [Independent Living Grant](#)

This is a federal grant administered by the Mississippi Office of Special Disability Programs that provides financial assistance and services to disabled individuals so they can stay in their homes. Financial assistance can be used for assistive aids, durable medical equipment, home adaptations, vehicle adaptations, and orthotics/prosthetics. Eligibility requirements include meeting both of the following criteria:

- Must have a severe physical or mental impairment that limits one's ability to get and keep a job
- Cannot receive duplicate services under any other state benefit program

### [State Attendant Care Program](#)

This program provides personal care services to help those with severe physical or mental disabilities with the activities of daily living. It also provides case management services. Eligibility requirements include meeting both of the following criteria:

- Must have a severe physical or mental impairment that limits one's ability to get and keep a job
- Cannot receive duplicate services under any other state benefit program

### Project SEARCH

This program is administered by the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services and is a partnership between the Department, a business, and a school district that provides a nine-month employment training program for disabled students. The students must be aged 18-21 and be eligible for special education services. Other eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- Have a strong desire to work
- Meet all their high school credit requirements for graduation, certification, or completion
- Be eligible for vocational rehabilitation
- Possess basic and effective communication, reading, and writing skills
- Be able to perform daily self-care tasks
- Have a good attendance record
- Pass a drug test and background check
- Ability to understand safety, take directions, and maintain appropriate workplace behavior

### Business Enterprise Program

This program provides employment opportunities in the food service industry for Mississippians who are legally blind. Opportunities include operating vending machine routes, snack bars, and cafeterias on military bases. Participants receive training in business math, personal care tasks, customer relations, inventory control, etc. Eligibility requirements include meeting the following criteria:

- Be legally blind (<20/200 central vision acuity in the better eye with corrective lenses or a loss of 80% of one's visual field)
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Get certified by the state vocational rehabilitation agency to operate a vending facility

### Preemployment Transition Services

The Mississippi Office of Vocational Rehabilitation runs this program that works with disabled students and their families, schools, and communities to help them explore potential career interests and prepare for adult life. Services include career counseling, peer mentoring, workplace readiness training, college counseling, and opportunities to work part time jobs. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- Be a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, or a documented disability
- Being 14 to 21
- Be enrolled in a recognized educational program

## Transition Services

This program is run by the Mississippi Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Mississippi Department of Education. These state entities partner with local school districts to provide students with disabilities with programs and services that help them transition from being a student to being an adult in the workplace. Services include the Career Exploration and Employability Skills Program, job readiness training, vocational training, and on-the-job training.

## 7. Care for Children

### 7.1 Childcare

#### Afterschool and Parenthood Initiatives

The Mississippi Department of Human Services provides funding to partner organizations that provide afterschool, summer, and parenting programming that focuses on keeping school-age children safe and developmentally prepared.

#### Child Care Payment Program

This program provides financial assistance to families with children to help pay for childcare for working parents or parents in school. A family's payment amount depends on the number of hours parents are working or enrolled in school/a job training program as well as household income. The program serves those who fit one or more of the following criteria:

- Have a low or very low income
- Have a child who has special needs or be a single parent with special needs
- Care for foster children
- Have a spouse deployed in military service
- Are referred to the agency from another public assistance program

More on the program's eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

### 7.2 Children's Health Care

#### Medicaid for Children

Mississippi residents under age 19 can qualify for full-coverage Medicaid if they meet [citizenship or immigration requirements](#) as well as [income guidelines](#). The income of all individuals (such as a legal parent or stepparent) included in "family size" is counted. Newborns (until they are one year old) are included in the pregnant women category in terms of income limits. Children aged one to six must have a family income at or below 143% of the FPL. Children ages 6 through 18 must have a family income at or below 133% of the FPL.

Mississippi's Early 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, from birth to age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. This mandated Medicaid benefit screens children with actual or potential health problems to treat them before they become

permanent disabilities. Preventive health services are also available to Medicaid-eligible children under age 21. Mississippi has an [expansion](#) of Mississippi's Medicaid EPSDT program that covers additional services such as adolescent counseling services, additional office visits, prescriptions, therapy services, in and outpatient services, etc.

### [Mississippi CHIP](#)

If a child's family makes too much money to qualify for traditional Medicaid, they may be eligible for Mississippi's CHIP Program. This program provides full coverage for a lot of the same services that Medicaid does. This program is for children whose family [income](#) is at or below 209% of the FPL.

### [Newborn Screening Program](#)

All infants born in Mississippi's hospitals must be tested for genetic disorders, hearing loss, and Critical Congenital Heart Disease before being discharged from the hospital. If an infant is diagnosed with any of the above, practitioners quickly refer them for or start treatment depending on the infant's needs. It is important to note that while this program is required, parents pay for these services as a part of the cost to deliver their child. However, the state facilitates the program and provides payment options for low-income families. Parents can opt out of these screening services if desired.

### [Early Hearing Detection and Intervention \(EHDI\)](#)

This program helps infants identified as having hearing loss during their newborn screening for hearing loss receive medical intervention and treatment. Infants referred for a hearing diagnosis by three months and infants with confirmed hearing loss by six months receive early intervention services and coordinated services from health care providers such as primary care providers, audiologists, and otolaryngologists.

### [Vaccines for Children Program](#)

This is a federal program run at the state level, and it provides participating doctors' offices with free vaccines to administer to residents under the age of 19 whose families could otherwise not afford to vaccinate their children. Eligibility requirements for children include being part of one or more of the following groups:

- American Indian or Alaska Natives
- Those who are Medicaid-eligible
- Those who are uninsured
- Those who are underinsured

### [Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](#)

This program provides children (from birth to age 21) with chronic health conditions, medically complex health issues, behavioral health disorders and/or developmental disabilities with health services as well as case management and care coordination services. This program helps families coordinate care with primary care doctors, early education programs, mental health services, hospitals, schools, and specialty physicians. Some chronic health conditions that qualify children

for this program include blood disorders, craniofacial disorders such as cleft lip, neurological disorders, genetic disorders, etc.

## *7.3 Family and Parenting Education*

### Mississippi Head Start and Early Head Start

This is a federally funded program that coordinates with service sites to educate low-income parents of children from birth to age five on child development and school readiness. Head Start typically serves children between ages three and five, and Early Head Start serves infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. The program is free to low-income families at or below federal [poverty guidelines](#). Children whose families receive public assistance, are in foster care, or are experiencing homelessness are also eligible regardless of income. The state's Head Start program is administered by the federally funded Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office.

## *7.4 Adoption*

### Adoption Assistance Program

This federally funded program provides financial assistance to adoptive families of children with special needs. Special needs is defined in section 473 (c) of the federal Social Security Act. The program offers monthly payments, Medicaid healthcare coverage, and one-time payments for adoption-related expenses.

### Medicaid

In Mississippi, children [who are eligible](#) for federal Title IV adoption assistance are automatically eligible for Medicaid (income is not considered). Children who receive benefits from the state's adoption subsidy program (described above), as opposed to the federal adoption assistance program, also qualify for Mississippi Medicaid.

### Adoption Tax Credit

Mississippi provides an adoption tax credit for qualified adoption expenses up to \$10,000 for each child residing in the state and \$5,000 for children residing out of state.

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

### Youth Transition Support Services

This program helps foster youth and young adults (ages 14 to 26) transition from the foster care system to living independently as an adult. The program provides foster youth with transitional living planning, aftercare resource referrals, and post-secondary education support.

### Educational Training Vouchers (ETV) Program

This federally funded program provides college tuition waivers to those who are in foster care when they turn 16 and those in the state's kinship-guardianship program. Youth can receive up to \$5,000

a year for tuition or other qualified school-related expenses. A sampling of other eligibility requirements include:

- Be enrolled in an accredited college or vocational/technical training program and make progress toward completion of their degree
- Apply annually for the voucher

ETV funds can be accessed for a maximum of five years until the youth's 26<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Medicaid

All children in the foster care system in Mississippi are [eligible for Medicaid](#). Former foster care children (until the age of 26) are also eligible for Mississippi Medicaid if they were enrolled in Medicaid when they aged out of foster care. Income is not considered for this eligibility group.

## 7.6 Safe Haven and/or Baby Boxes

### [Safe Haven Law](#)

Mississippi's safe haven law (Miss. Code Ann. §43-15-201-207) stipulates that a parent may relinquish an infant 45 days old or younger at a designated facility without fear of prosecution for abandonment. Designated facilities include hospitals with emergency rooms, baby safety devices, state or local law enforcement agencies, fire stations, a mobile ambulance staffed with firefighters, EMTs, or paramedics, and adoption agencies.

## Miscellaneous

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

Mississippi drivers can purchase a "Choose Life" vanity plate for \$31 from local Mississippi tag officers. Part of the proceeds from each sale go to one of 30 Mississippi pregnancy centers that participate in this initiative.

### [Pregnancy Center Individual Tax Credit](#)

Individuals or families who voluntarily contribute a cash donation to Choose Life Mississippi or Mississippi pregnancy centers are eligible for a tax credit. The tax credit amounts to the lesser of \$400 or the amount of the contribution in any taxable year for an individual and the lesser of \$800 or the amount of the contribution in any taxable year for a married couple filing a joint tax return. The Mississippi Department of Revenue allocates credits every calendar year and are limited to \$1 million per calendar year. This tax credit is a result of the passage of HB 1566 (The Children's Promise Act) in 2018.

**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.**

*This document was compiled by Mia Steupert, Elyse Gaitan, and Tessa Cox.*