



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

### State Spotlight: Nebraska

*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

#### Preparing for Pregnancy and Beyond

This is a state-run online resource that provides public educational resources on pregnancy, adoption and parenting as well as links to financial assistance programs. The website was created as part of the state's "Culture of Life" initiative [spearheaded by Governor Patten](#) in July 2024.

#### Nebraska Resource and Referral System (NRRS)

This is a state-funded database that houses contact information for and links to public agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide social services to Nebraskans in need. It is run by the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Center on Children, Families, and the Law.

#### iServe Nebraska

This is Nebraska's state-run benefits portal that is a one-stop place for Nebraskans to browse and sign up for public assistance programs.

### 1.3 Miscellaneous

#### Responsible Fatherhood Initiative Programs

Nebraska's TANF program (see section 3.1) partners with Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska through sub-award agreements as well as the Charles Drew Health Center to provide fatherhood mentorship programs in the state. The Charles Drew Health Centers offers programs in Douglas County while Lutheran Family Services offers programs in six counties and four communities.

across the state. TANF-eligible fathers and non-TANF eligible fathers can participate in these programs, and non-custodial, unemployed and underemployed fathers are encouraged to participate. These fatherhood programs focus on helping fathers strengthen relationships with their children, partner, spouse, or co-parent and helping non-custodial fathers become economically self-sufficient. The program's sub-award recipients also partner with nonprofit organizations in the state such as Legal Aid of Nebraska and RISE to help formerly incarcerated fathers reenter society and be involved in their children's lives. Income must be below 200% of the FPL.

## 2. Women's Health

### 2.1 Prenatal and Postpartum Medical Care

No applicable and/or known programs.

### 2.2 Prenatal and Postpartum Support

#### Breastfeeding Laws

The [Nebraska Fair Employment Practices Act](#) requires businesses with 15 or more employees to provide "reasonable accommodations" for breastfeeding employees. "Reasonable accommodations" include allowing the employee to take longer or more frequent breaks and having a separate location (besides a bathroom) for them to pump and store breastmilk. Lastly, the state of Nebraska [mandates](#) that all schools (middle, high, and postsecondary schools) with pregnant and parenting students make accommodations for student mothers to breastfeed and attend prenatal medical appointments as well as pediatric appointments.

#### [Nebraska Prenatal Plus Program](#)

As a result of the passage of [LB 857](#) in April 2024, this program was created to cover the costs of nutrition counseling, health education, breastfeeding support and case management services for Medicaid eligible mothers who are at risk of an adverse birth outcome (prematurity, low birth weight, etc.).

#### [LB 905 \(2022\)](#)

This legislation, signed into law by Governor Ricketts in April 2022, revised the state's Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Practice Act and the Medicine and Surgery Practice Act so that they both included mandatory perinatal and postnatal mental health screenings as an included service.

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

Nebraska's home visiting program, [N-MIECHV](#), is federally funded with Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program funds and run by the state. It utilizes the Healthy Families America home-visiting model and is a voluntary support program for pregnant and parenting families of children from birth to age five. This program is aimed at serving high-risk families, especially those who are dealing with poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse, teen parenting, or are military families. Home visitors come to participating families' homes and [use](#) the

Abusive Head Trauma prevention education curriculum, The Crying Plan, and the Nebraska Safe Sleep Environmental Checklist to educate families on caring for newborns and young children.

## ***2.3 General Medical Care for Women***

### **Every Woman Matters Screening Program**

This program provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings as well as diagnostic testing to low-income, uninsured women across Nebraska. The program provides breast ultrasounds, diagnostic mammograms, surgical consultations, and breast biopsies as well as colposcopies. This program also provides heart disease and diabetes screening via blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar checks. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following criteria:

- Be a female
- Be Uninsured
- Be ages 21 to 64
- Meet [income guidelines](#)
- Be U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- Be a Nebraska resident

### **Vaccines for Adults**

This program reimburses providers who offer free or reduced cost vaccines to adults that can't afford to pay for vaccines or do not have insurance that covers immunizations. Vaccines covered by this program include Tdap, Influenza, and Covid vaccines.

### **Medicaid**

Medicaid in Nebraska provides health coverage to eligible Nebraska residents who meet the income guidelines and are U.S. citizens or have satisfactory immigration status. There are various Medicaid programs available in Nebraska for individuals and families, each with its own additional requirements. Below are [several groups](#) that are eligible for Nebraska Medicaid. Income limits for most eligibility groups can be found [here](#).<sup>1</sup>

- Pregnant women- Pregnant women are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid as long as they meet certain family size and income limits (up to 199% of the FPL). With the passage of [LB 227](#) in 2023 and CMS' subsequent approval of the state's extension request in December 2023, postpartum Medicaid coverage for women was extended from 60 days to 12 months.
  - o [599 CHIP](#)- This program is for pregnant women (and their unborn children) who make too much money to qualify for the traditional "pregnant women" eligibility group but not enough to afford private insurance. This program only provides coverage for prenatal care and pregnancy related services including labor and delivery. The income limit for this program is at or below 202% of the FPL. Women's

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<sup>1</sup> The 5% difference between the stated income limits for different eligibility groups within the Nebraska document and the amount listed in this document is because the Nebraska document didn't account for the 5% disregard that applies to Medicaid eligibility groups.

immigration status is not considered for this program, meaning non-citizens can qualify for this program.

- Parents and caretakers/relatives- Parents with children (under the age of 19) living in their home who meet resident, citizenship, and income requirements (up to 63% of the FPL) are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid.
- Expansion group- Adults, ages 19 to 64, whose income is at or below 138% of the FPL are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid. To be eligible, members of this group must not be enrolled in any other Medicaid eligibility category or have any type of private insurance. This eligibility group receives covered services through the Heritage Health Adult program.
- Every Woman Matters Enrollees- Those who are diagnosed with breast and/or cervical cancer through the state's Every Woman Matters program (see program description above) are eligible to have their treatment covered by Medicaid if their income is at or below 250% of the FPL.

Lastly, 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 for 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.

## 3. Finances, Work, and Education

### 3.1 Help Paying Bills

#### TANF

Nebraska's TANF program, called Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), provides monthly cash assistance to eligible low-income families to help cover essentials like housing, food, and clothes. Families who are able and attain independence are given monthly payments must participate in the Employment First program if able to work. There is no time limit for monthly payments if the caretaker(s) receiving assistance is not the parent(s) of the child or if the parent(s) is disabled or otherwise unable to work. Eligibility requirements for parents or caretakers include meeting all the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen or qualified immigrant
- Meet income limits
- Live in same household as the child (there are a few exceptions)
- Cooperate with Child Support services
- Assign support rights to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- Cooperate in the creation of a Self-Sufficiency contract
- Ineligible for the Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD) program

## Emergency Assistance

This program provides assistance to families in emergency situations that threaten the health or wellbeing of an eligible child and family. Emergency assistance must be used for shelter, relocation, or non-medical transportation expenses. Income and resource requirements apply and there must be a child in the home to receive assistance.

## *3.2 Employment Support*

### Employment First Program

This is the state's TANF work-requirement employment program which helps TANF enrollees find and maintain jobs. TANF enrollees who can work must do so to receive TANF benefits. Obtaining a GED, going to trade school, going to college, and participating in job training programs are all considered "work activity" under this program and satisfy enrollees' TANF work requirement. This program provides supportive services for those enrolled to help cover expenses for clothing, education and training, transportation, employment, medical services not covered by Medicaid, relocation, and vehicle repairs.

### SNAP Next Step and Employment & Training (E&T)

This program helps SNAP enrollees find jobs that pay a livable wage. The Department of Health and Human Services or a third-party partner provides E&T enrollees with a Workforce Coordinator who helps them find employment. Workforce Coordinators not only help with the job search process but also help enrollees prepare for interviews, update their resumes, or find occupational skills training programs. The Department of Labor co-enrolls E&T participants in their Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program so they can receive additional employment services. The E&T program can provide enrollees with transportation assistance, clothing for interviews, and education materials. This program's services are available in 27 of the 93 Nebraska counties.

### NE Works

This is a state-run and supported resource that helps registered users find work, create a resume, apply for unemployment insurance, and find training programs near them.

## *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 benefit is included in all three plans offered by Heritage Health, Nebraska's Medicaid care coordination program. MTM is the company used by the Molina Healthcare and Nebraska Total Care plans while the United Healthcare plan utilizes Modicare as its transportation broker.

### 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 criteria:

- Being a Nebraska resident
- Be a U.S. citizen or qualified immigrant
- Meet household income limits

#### 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. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following criteria:

- Being a Nebraska resident
- Be a U.S. citizen or qualified immigrant
- Meet household income limits

### Special Nutrition Programs

#### National School Lunch and School 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.

- Seamless Summer Option- This program provides free meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks) to qualified low-income areas during summer vacations or school vacations longer than 10 days. This program is only available through school systems that participate in the National School Lunch or Breakfast programs. Service sites are located within school districts where at least 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-cost meals.
- Field Trip Meals- Schools that participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs can offer portable free field trip meals to all students, regardless of eligibility.

- [Afterschool Snack Program](#)- This program reimburses after school activity programs or childcare institutions that provide qualifying children with nutritious after-school snacks.

#### [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 Nebraska, this program is sponsored by school districts, local government agencies, camps, private nonprofit organizations, and public organizations.

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

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.

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

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

#### [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 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.

#### [Summer EBT](#)

This program is a federally funded and income-based program that gives low-income families a \$120 benefit during the summer to buy food for their children when they are not in school. The benefits can be used in any store that accepts EBT cards. This benefit is available to qualifying families in addition to the summer meal programs listed above. Enrollment in this program is often automatic if the child is already receiving free or reduced-cost meals at their schools through the School Breakfast and Lunch programs. Other groups of children are eligible for this program, [including](#) children in one or more of the following groups:

- School-aged children participating in SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid programs
- Migrant children
- Children in foster care
- Children who are homeless

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

This is a federally funded program run by the state and 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.

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

No applicable and/or known programs.

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

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

This federally funded program provides financial assistance to families to cover the costs associated with heating and cooling their home. The program is administered through the state's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The program can also provide crisis assistance to utility providers to help families avoid having their utilities turned off due to an inability to pay their bill as well as pay for furnace or central air conditioner repairs and replacements as well as the purchase of a window air conditioner unit. The state's Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) also receives LIHEAP funds from the federal government and uses them to provide eligible residents with weatherization services that lower their energy bills as well as heating and cooling repair and replacement assistance. [Eligibility requirements for DHHS LIHEAP services include](#) meeting all the following requirements:

- Having an income at or below 150% of the FPL
- Being a U.S. citizen
- Being a Nebraska resident
- Being responsible for the payment of home energy utilities

Different eligibility requirements apply to NDEE LIHEAP services. The NDEE must be contacted to learn about eligibility requirements.

### Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

This is a federally funded program that is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, and it provides financial assistance to eligible households whose water (drinking or wastewater) is disconnected because their bill is past due. Financial assistance comes in the form of a one-time payment paid directly to utility service providers and can cover standard utility charges, deposits, and reconnection and penalty fees. Financial assistance cannot cover equipment repair or replacement costs. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following requirements:

- Having an income at or below 150% of the FPL
- Being a U.S. citizen
- Being a Nebraska resident
- Being responsible for the payment of water utility services
- Having disconnected water services or a past due balance

## 4.5 Legal Support

No applicable and/or known programs.

# 5. Recovery and Mental Health

## 5.1 Addiction Recovery

### Tobacco Free Nebraska

This is the state's tobacco cessation program which houses the state's Quitline Services program. It is funded by the federal government (CDC) and the Nebraska legislature which received funding from the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. The state's [Quitline services](#) provide Nebraska residents with text, web-based and phone coaching services operated by counselors who can provide callers with free nicotine replacement therapies.

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

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 5.3 Mental Health

### Nebraska Substance Use Disorder Program Section 1115 Demonstration (Medicaid)

This is a state-proposed change to its Medicaid program that was originally approved by the federal government in June 2019 but reapproved for extension in June 2025. This demonstration allows the state's Medicaid program to reimburse for and cover inpatient psychiatric services provided to those between the ages of 21 and 64 within an institution for mental disease who are suffering from substance abuse disorders.

### Mental Health Board Prescription Assistance Program

This program provides commonly used medications for the treatment of mental illnesses and medications used to treat the side effects of such medications to indigent residents who have been admitted by the Nebraska Mental Health Board for inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment. The medications are free or provided at a low cost through the Lincoln Regional Center Pharmacy or Norfolk Regional Center Pharmacy to eligible individuals. A list of covered medications can be found [here](#). Other eligibility requirements include meeting both of the following requirements:

- Being in active recovery from a mental illness
- Proving one is not insured by Medicaid/Medicare or private health insurance

### Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC) and Crisis Program

This is a state and federally funded residential mental health treatment facility that provides intellectually or developmentally disabled patients with psychological, medical and developmental services. Within the facility there are several Intermediate Care Facilities that can provide care in

residential, vocational, and other community-based settings. This center also provides day services to those who do not need the level of care that residential care provides. The facility has a recreational activity center that allows retired participants to engage in volunteer projects, exercise, participate in music therapy, and engage in other leisure activities. The BSDC Crisis Stabilization and Community Reintegration Program provides mental health services to those enrolled in Medicaid home and community based developmental disability waiver programs. The Crisis program allows participants to stay between 30 and 180 days at a specialized unit where they receive intense treatment and transition services.

### [Nebraska Family Helpline](#)

This hotline can be reached at 888-866-8660 and serves as a single 24/7 contact point that is supervised by licensed mental health professionals. The hotline is a partnership between the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the nonprofit organization, Boys Town. Operators assess immediate safety needs, identify the level of a behavioral health crisis, and make recommendations or referrals to appropriate social services and resources. Lastly, operators can connect families with Family Navigator Services which helps families get access to behavioral health assistance more quickly.

### [Rural Response \(Farm\) Hotline](#)

This hotline can be reached at 800-464-0258 and is specifically for those in mental health care and legal aid deserts because of their rural location. The hotline's operators provide the same mental health services as the Nebraska Family Hotline (described above) but tailor those services to the specific needs and struggles of farmers and ranchers. The hotline also provides financial and legal assistance as well as disaster relief. This hotline is a partnership between the Nebraska Department of Health and Services and a coalition of farm and faith-based organizations.

### [Public Psychiatric Hospitals](#)

The state's Department of Health and Human Services directly runs two public psychiatric hospitals in Lincoln and Norfolk. These hospitals provide both general and forensic psychiatric services. They also offer the Sex Offender Program which provides mental health treatment for those with a history of sexually deviant behavior.

### [Youth Treatment Programs](#)

Substance abuse and mental health treatment programs are performed at Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers in Lincoln, Kearney, Hastings, and Whitehall. Each center offers different models of treatment and different opportunities for youth patients to engage in group therapy, on and off-campus activities, and healthy relationships curriculums. The Whitehall location is specifically for male youth, ages 13 through 18, who struggle with substance abuse disorders and/or have engaged in sexually harmful behavior as well as their families.

## ***5.4 Abortion Recovery and Healing***

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 6. Disability Assistance

### Disabled Persons and Family Support Program

This program assists individuals of all ages who have chronic disabilities preserve their family unit by enabling the disabled family member to live independently and/or remain or become employed. An applicant's disability must be diagnosed by a licensed medical professional for them to be eligible for the program. The program provides approved enrollees with up to a \$400 monthly payment (\$4,800 annually). One's monthly payment depends on their income, household size, and resources. The program can also modify one's home and vehicle and provide services related to disability-related counseling, housekeeping, medication management, and obtaining adaptive equipment. Lastly, the program can help enrollees obtain medical, surgical, therapeutic, diagnostic, and mental health services. Income eligibility guidelines apply.

### Early Development Network

This is Nebraska's Early Intervention Services program and is run by the Nebraska Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. The program helps families with children (from birth to age three) with developmental delays and disabilities. Early interventionist teams provide in-house visits to the child and their family to equip parents as well as childcare providers with the skills to help the affected child work through their disability or developmental delay. Early intervention teams can be composed of service coordinators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, social workers, mental health professionals, etc. To be [eligible](#) for this program, children must be referred to the program by a family member, childcare provider, physician, social worker, or other service provider. This program is a [subprogram of Nebraska's Medicaid program](#).

### Disability- Specific Medicaid Programs

Nebraska 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 a long-term care facility. Nebraska HCBS waivers [include](#):

- NE Family Support Waiver- This waiver is for individuals, ages 0-21, who have autism, intellectual disabilities, or developmental disabilities that necessitate an ICF/IDD level of care. Examples of covered services include respite services, home modifications, and family and peer mentoring.
- NE Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities Services Waiver- This waiver is for individuals of any age who have autism, intellectual disabilities, or developmental disabilities that necessitate an ICF/IDD level of care. Examples of covered services include the installation and provision of personal emergency response systems, vehicle modifications, and benefits counseling.
- NE Developmental Disabilities Day Services Waiver for Adults- This waiver is for individuals age 21 and older who have autism, intellectual disabilities, or developmental disabilities that necessitate an ICF/IDD level of care. Examples of covered services include help with chores, home delivered meals, and respite services.

- NE HCBS Waiver for Aged, Adults, and Children Disabilities- This waiver is for individuals ages 65 and older or for individuals ages 0-64 who have physical disabilities and need a nursing facility level of care. Examples of covered services include adult day health services, extra care for children, and helping individuals build independence skills.
- NE Traumatic Brain Injury- This waiver is for individuals ages 18 and older who have a traumatic brain injury (TBI) that necessitates a nursing facility level of care. Examples of covered services include TBI adult day health, caregiving training, and home modifications.

Aged, blind, and disabled adults can receive full Medicaid through the state's Medicaid program. [The income limit](#) for the aged and disabled is up to 100% of the FPL. Those who are disabled but working can also receive Medicaid through the state's [Medicaid Insurance for Workers with Disabilities \(MIWD\) or MIWD Premium programs](#). To qualify for the standard MIWD program, one's [income](#) must be at or below 200% of the FPL and at or below 250% of the FPL for the MIWD Premium program.

Another disability-specific Medicaid program covered by the state of Nebraska's 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 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.

### [Genetically Handicapped Persons Program](#)

This program provides specialized services to individuals ages 21 and older who have been diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, and/or sickle cell anemia. This program provides diagnostic, consultative, and treatment services. Other eligibility requirements include being a Nebraska resident and meeting income limits.

### [Lifespan Respite Subsidy](#)

This program provides unpaid caregivers of individuals with special needs with a subsidy so they can take a break and care for themselves. Eligible caregivers must meet all the following criteria:

- Provide care or supervision of applicants or recipients with special needs without payment
- Need respite services and/or cannot use respite services while working
- Reside in the same home as the person they care for, and care for the recipient in their home for a minimum of four hours per day from Sunday through Saturday
- Not using respite services while engaged in employment activities

## 7. Care for Children

### 7.1 Childcare

#### Childcare Subsidy

This program provides families with children under age 13 (or over 13 if the child has a disability) with financial assistance to help pay for childcare while parents are working or in school, going to medical or therapy visits for themselves or their children, participating in job training, or are in the state's TANF program. Those that are sick and hurt, with a diagnosis from a physician, can also qualify for this assistance. The amount that families pay for childcare depends on the number of hours parents are working or in school/a job training program, household income, and the state rate of childcare. A family's earned income and unearned income (from child support, SSI, or unemployment) is considered during the eligibility determination process.

#### Childcare Related Legislation

##### LB 856 (2024)

This legislation, signed into law by Governor Pillen in April 2024, makes childcare workers categorically eligible for the federal Child Care Assistance Program (federal childcare aid), regardless of their own income. The goal of this legislation is to increase the number of childcare workers in the state.

##### LB 874 (2024)

This legislation, signed into law by Governor Pillen in April 2024, made changes to the state's childcare licensing requirements to streamline and modify them so it is easier for childcare facilities to open in the state. The legislation also increases safety requirements that childcare facilities must follow regarding blanket use in cribs, acting on reports of child abuse, and the background check requirements for childcare employees.

##### LB 904 (2024)

This legislation, signed into law by Governor Pillen in April 2024, increased the reimbursement rates for childcare providers and created the Intergenerational Care Facility Incentive Grant Program. This grant program allows qualified nursing homes or other care facilities that are certified for Medicare or Medicaid to receive funds from the state to provide childcare in the facility. The purpose of this program is to increase the number of childcare providers in the state and allow senior citizens and children to benefit from each other's company.

##### LB 754 (2023)

This legislation, signed into law by Governor Pillen in May 2023, created two childcare-related tax credits. One tax credit is a non-refundable tax credit for contributions to childcare providers and the other one is a refundable tax credit for parents with child-care expenses. Parents with children in childcare who make under \$75,000 receive a \$2,000 tax credit per child and a \$1,000 tax credit per child if the parents make between \$75,000 and \$150,000.

## 7.2 Children's Health Care

### Newborn Screening Program

All infants born in Nebraska hospitals must be tested for genetic disorders and critical congenital heart disease. Furthermore, all hospitals must offer hearing screening services for newborn babies. If a newborn is suspected to be deaf or hard of hearing they will be referred to the Early Development Network described in Section 6.1. 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.

### Vaccines for Children Program

This is a federal program run at the state level that provides participating doctors' offices with free vaccines to administer to children whose families could otherwise not afford to vaccinate their children. Eligibility requirements include being a Nebraska resident 18 years old or younger and satisfying at least one of the following conditions:

- Being an American Indian or Alaska Native
- Being enrolled in Medicaid
- Being uninsured
- Being underinsured

### Medically Handicapped Children's Program

This program provides specialized health services for children with special health care needs. Services included in this program are care coordination services, diagnostic and consultative services, evaluations done by specialty physicians, and payment of certain, authorized medical services related to the child's chronic health condition. General medical care is not covered by this program. Eligibility requirements include:

- Being 20 or younger
- Being a Nebraska resident
- Being diagnosed with an [eligible chronic medical condition](#) and having an active individual medical treatment plan
- Meeting [income guidelines](#)

### Medicaid for Children

Nebraska residents under age 19 can qualify for Medicaid if they meet immigration or citizenship requirements as well as [income guidelines](#). For children from birth to age one, the income limit is at or below 167%. For children ages one through five, the income limit is at or below 150% of the FPL. For children ages six through 18, the income limit is at or below 138% of the FPL.<sup>2</sup>

Nebraska's Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment ([EPSDT](#)) benefit (otherwise known as Healthy Children and Youth Program) provides health coverage for well-child visits and diagnostic screenings for all children with actual or potential health issues, from birth to age 21

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid

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.

## CHIP

Nebraska's CHIP program provides healthcare coverage for children whose family income is too high to be eligible for Medicaid but not high enough to pay for private insurance. The income limit for Nebraska CHIP is at or below 218% of the FPL.<sup>3</sup>

## *7.3 Family and Parenting Education*

### Early Head Start and Head Start Programs

These are federally funded programs that promote child development in children from birth to age three (Early Head Start) and school readiness for children ages three to five (Head Start) through designated centers and home visits. The program is run by the state's Nebraska Head Start Collaboration Office. The program focuses on emphasizing that parents are their kids' first teachers and creating positive parent-child relationships. This program is available at no cost for children ages three to five who are low-income or homeless. Foster children and children with disabilities/special needs are also eligible. Nebraska uses the federal funds to support center-based services, home-based services, and Early Head Start Child Care partnerships.

## *7.4 Adoption*

### Adoption Support

Families of adopted children who meet certain requirements are eligible for adoption support. The child must be both a ward of the state and a U.S. citizen and meet one of the following criteria:

- Being aged eight or older at the time of adoption
- Having a diagnosed disability
- Being in a sibling set of three or more to be adopted into the same home at the same time

Available forms of support can be found [here](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

## Medicaid

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

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

### [Education and Training Vouchers \(ETV\)](#)

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. The program is jointly administered by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. Youth can receive up to \$5,000 per year for tuition or other qualified school-related expenses. Other eligibility requirements for youth include:

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

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

### [Aid to Dependent Children \(ADC\) Relative Payee Case](#)

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services provides grants to dependent children living in the home of a relative, guardian, or conservator. The caretaker can receive payments if they are income eligible, but these caretakers must participate in the TANF employment program, known as Employment First (EF) Program. [Other eligibility requirements include](#) meeting all the following requirements:

- Being a Nebraska resident
- Being a U.S. citizen
- Cooperate with Child Support Enforcement
- Meeting [income limits](#)

## Medicaid

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

### [Bridge to Independence \(B2I\)](#)

This is a voluntary transition program, run by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, that helps foster youth between the ages of 19 and 21 transition from foster care to adulthood. The program provides participants with a case worker who can advise the youth on available resources. Furthermore, participants of this program can also receive Medicaid coverage and monthly housing payments. [Eligibility requirements include](#) satisfying at least one of the following:

- Being a foster youth who has aged out of foster care in an out-of-home placement
- Being discharged into independent living from foster care
- Entering into a guardianship or adoption agreement at age 16 or older

To stay in the program until participants turn 21, they must meet with their Independence Coordinator once a month and be productive in one of the following ways (except if you are medically unable):

- Complete high school or GED program
- Take classes at a college or vocational education program
- Work at least 80 hours per month (20 hours per week)
- Volunteer, intern, or work with a career center
- Provide the Independence Coordinator with written verification every six months that participants are continually meeting the program eligibility requirements

### Foster Care Closet of Nebraska

The nonprofit organization “Foster Care Closet” and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services partner together to offer the Care Closet’s Haven Service. The program provides a clean-living environment while foster youth are waiting for official placements and provides five new outfits including socks, underwear, and seasonally appropriate clothing items such as coats and shoes. The program also partners with foster care agencies in the state to set up pop-up clothing shops for foster youth to shop in.

### Therapeutic Family Care

This program provides care coordination and crisis services to at-risk foster youth who are in the higher tiers of foster care so that the foster youth can remain in the community and not in facility care. The Department of Health and Human Services provides care coordination services and Medicaid-enrolled providers provide crisis behavioral services. Care coordinator services are carried out by licensed mental health practitioners, psychologists, social workers, registered nurses, etc. This program started in 2024.

## 7.6- Safe Haven and/or Baby Boxes

### Safe Haven Law

Nebraska’s Safe Haven Law (R.R.S. Neb. §43-4903) allows parents to surrender babies up to 90 days old to an employee at a designated facility without fear of prosecution. Designated facilities include a Nebraska-licensed hospital, staffed fire station, staffed law enforcement agency, and an emergency care provider. As a result of the passage of [LB 876](#) in 2023, the age of surrender for babies increased from 30 days to 90 days. Furthermore, this legislation also allocated \$65,000 to the Department of Health and Human Services for FY24-25 and \$10,000 each fiscal year thereafter to develop and maintain a public information campaign on the existence of the state’s Safe Haven Law.

## Miscellaneous

### LB 984 (2022)

This legislation eliminates sales and use taxes on feminine hygiene products. Governor Ricketts signed this into law in April 2022.

**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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