



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

### **State Spotlight: South Dakota**

*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**

#### **[Strong Families South Dakota](#)**

This is the South Dakota government's official resource portal for families to connect with social services and different forms of financial assistance. It has sections for "Caring for Baby" and "Parenting Help" that list out state government programs and educational resources for parents to sign up for and utilize.

#### **[Life.SD.gov](#)**

This resource portal was created in 2022 by the state government [on the day](#) (June 24) that *Roe v. Wade* was overturned. It provides web users with links to support programs related to pregnancy, parenting, financial assistance, childcare, and nutrition assistance.

#### **[First 1000 Days](#)**

This is the Department of Health's website/initiative that shares resources and educational materials related to caring for children in their first 1,000 days of life. The website has a list of resources and programs available to families and their children

## 2. Women's Health

### *2.1 Prenatal and Postpartum Medical Care*

#### Prenatal Care Program

This is a health assistance program separate from Medicaid that is solely dedicated to the medical care of unborn children whose mothers are ineligible for Medicaid because of their citizenship status. It was created by legislative mandate in 2016 ([HB 1110](#)) and revised in 2019 ([SB 30](#)). All other Medicaid eligibility requirements apply to this program. Abortion is prohibited by law from being covered by this program except in the case of a medical emergency ([28-6B-8](#)).

#### SD PLAN: Prepare, Learn, Advocate, Navigate

This is South Dakota's family planning program. The program helps men and women in South Dakota receive pregnancy care and services related to other family planning issues. PLAN workers staff clinics that provide South Dakota residents, regardless of their income, with family planning services. Costs for patients are determined by family size and income. There are eight PLAN clinics throughout the state. A non-exhaustive list of services includes:

- Birth control
- Pregnancy testing and planning
- STI and HIV testing
- Basic infertility services
- Yearly exams
- Breast and cervical cancer screenings
- Referral services to specialists
- Education and counseling regarding family planning issues

### *2.2 Prenatal and Postpartum Support*

#### WIC Breastfeeding Education

South Dakota's WIC program provides counseling and advice to breastfeeding mothers. The program also supplies breast pumps to breastfeeding moms going back to work or school.

#### Bright Start Home Visiting Program

South Dakota's home visiting program, "Bright Start," is predominantly funded by federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program dollars and utilizes the Nurse-Family Partnership model. Some home visiting sites in the state are funded by federal Medicaid and TANF dollars. The program's services are administered by the South Dakota Department of Health's Office of Child and Family Services who partner with three nonprofit organizations: Black Hills Special Services Co-op, Children's Home Society of South Dakota, and the South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care. The Nurse-Family Partnership model provides pregnant, first-time moms with in-home visits by Bright Start Nurses who help participants prepare for childbirth, access prenatal care, and learn about child development. Nurses also educate mothers on safe

sleep practices, the benefits of breastfeeding, and about the available social service programs for pregnant mothers. Income limits are considered during the eligibility determination process. The funding for this program was [significantly expanded](#) in FY2023. Before the 2022 legislative action that increased the program's funding, the program's services were only available in seven counties; but because of increased funding for the program, it is now available statewide.

### [Pregnancy Care Program](#)

This case management program was developed by the South Dakota Department of Health. Its focus is providing babies with the best start in life and providing mothers with the maternal care they need during and after pregnancy. To be eligible for this program, one must call their local Child and Family Services or Public Health Alliance Office to schedule an initial prenatal risk assessment. That assessment determines if the woman is eligible for the program's case management services. The program partners with community health offices across the state to provide services such as:

- Prenatal services that offer risk assessments of pregnant women, monthly home visits with a nurse during pregnancy and one time after a baby is born, education on healthy pregnancies and healthy child-rearing, and referral services.
- Infant mortality prevention strategies, including guidance on safe sleep practices, the importance of immunizations, breastfeeding, depression screenings for mothers, healthy nutritional habits, and the early detection of developmental delays or other health issues in children.
- Parenting support and education through access to workshops, support groups, parenting guidance from healthcare experts, and parenting classes.
- Community collaboration that involves working with community organizations and health care providers to create a unified support network for pregnant women, their families, and children.

## *2.3 General Medical Care for Women*

### [All Women Count!](#)

This is South Dakota's Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program. It provides free mammograms, pap smears, and other gynecological exams and screenings to eligible South Dakota women. Services provided by this program are available at participating doctor's offices, mammography units, family planning clinics, and other health clinics. Eligibility requirements include meeting all the following [requirements](#):

- Being a woman ages 30-64 years old for Pap smears and ages 40-64 for mammograms (mammograms are available for women ages 30-39 with preauthorization from their healthcare provider)
- Being without insurance or having insurance but unable to pay the deductible or co-payment
- Are currently not covered by Medicaid or Medicare Part B
- Meeting income limits
- Meeting citizenship/residency requirements (are a South Dakota resident or get healthcare services in South Dakota)

## Medicaid

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

- Pregnant women: Pregnant women are eligible for full-coverage Medicaid if they meet certain family size and income limits. The state submitted a change to the State Plan Amendment in early 2023 requesting that postpartum Medicaid coverage be extended from 60 days to 12 months. This request was [approved](#) in summer 2023.
  - o In addition to the routine pregnancy care covered by the full coverage Medicaid program, some pregnant women (less than 32 weeks of gestation) are eligible for additional pregnancy coverage through the [BabyReady Program](#), a case management program. It provides additional coverage for prenatal checkups and services, care coordination, health education services, as well as labor and delivery services. If eligible and enrolled, women are covered until 12 months after the baby is born.
  - o [The Unborn Children Prenatal Care Program](#) is a limited coverage program that covers pregnancy-related services only. These services include prenatal care, labor/delivery services, hospitalization services related to delivery, pregnancy-related ambulance services, and services related to medically necessary hospitalizations caused by pregnancy-related issues that could harm the health of the unborn child.
- 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.
- 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 another Medicaid eligibility category or have any other type of insurance.
- All Women Count! enrollees: Those who are diagnosed with breast and/or cervical cancer through the state's All Women Count! program are eligible for Medicaid coverage for their treatment if they meet income and citizenship/residency requirements and are uninsured.
- Individuals with Chronic Renal Disease: Those experiencing chronic renal failure who can't afford to pay for the cost of lifesaving care and treatment are eligible to have their treatment services covered by Medicaid if they are not covered by a third party payer, meet citizenship/residency requirements, have an income at or below 150% of the FPL, and meet resource limits.

See section 6.1 for more information 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.

## 3. Finances, Work, and Education

### 3.1 Help Paying Bills

#### TANF

South Dakota's federally funded TANF program is run by the state and provides monthly cash assistance to eligible low-income families with children to help cover essentials like housing, food, and clothes. South Dakota's TANF program has a work requirement. Benefit amounts depend on family size and living arrangements.

### 3.2 Employment Support

#### Employment and Training (E&T)

SNAP's Employment and Training Program helps SNAP participants with a work requirement prepare for employment and find a job. The free services provided by this program include job seeking skills and training as well as educational services. This program can also help SNAP participants complete their GED and participate in industry-specific training programs. Lastly, the program can provide participants with financial assistance for tuition, transportation, work-related expenses, and childcare.

#### TANF Work Program

TANF's Work Program helps TANF participants with a work requirement prepare for employment and find a job. The free services provided by this program include job seeking skills and training as well as educational services. This program can also help TANF participants complete their GED and participate in industry-specific training programs. The program can also provide participants with financial assistance for tuition, transportation, work-related expenses, and childcare. Lastly, the program provides milestone incentive payments for maintaining employment. Eligibility requirements include being a TANF applicant or recipient.

#### Career Connector

This is a job training and seeking program that helps low-income individuals submit job applications, create cover letters and resumes, and prepare for interviews. Services are provided by employment specialists who also connect individuals with needed social services. This program is available to those on Medicaid who reside in Pennington or Minnehaha counties. Others may be eligible for this program even if they are not on Medicaid as the department responsible for administering this program can provide individualized employment training services.

### 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

#### Medicaid Transportation Options

South Dakota's Medicaid program covers transportation costs for Medicaid recipients to go to medical appointments and in some instances to pick up prescriptions, durable medical equipment, and optical supplies. South Dakota Medicaid also covers the cost of an adult who accompanies a child (20 years old or younger) to a medical appointment if the adult must be present for the medical service to occur or according to the transportation service. There are four types of Medicaid-covered transportation in South Dakota:

- Ambulance (ground or air) for life threatening emergencies.
- Secure Medical Transportation, i.e. non-emergency transportation for those who need a wheelchair or stretcher to move around to go to a medical appointment or to pick up glasses/contacts, durable medical equipment, or prescription drugs.
- Community Transportation involving public transportation to non-emergency medical appointments or to pick up glasses/contacts, durable medical equipment, or prescription drugs.
- Non-Emergency Medical Travel. Medicaid recipients who must travel to medical appointments or pick up glasses/contacts, durable medical equipment, or prescription drugs outside their city of residence can be reimbursed for mileage. Recipients can also be reimbursed for meals and lodging if overnight travel is necessary and the provider is 150 miles away from their city of residence.

### 4.2 Food and Nutrition

#### WIC

This program is funded by the federal government but run by the South Dakota Department of Health. 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 income guidelines and being a South Dakota resident.

#### SNAP

This program is funded by the federal government but run by the state. It supplements low-income families' monthly food budgets. The amount of assistance a person/family receives in the form of a monthly payment is based on families' size, income, and expenses. Eligibility requirements include can be found [here](#).

#### Special Nutrition Programs

##### National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

These federally funded programs are run by the state and provide needy children with free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunches at participating schools.

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

This federally funded program is run by the state and provides reimbursable meals to childcare centers (located in a home) that take care of children under 13 years of age or adults with disabilities. Group day care homes must be located in a residential building.

#### [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 does. The program is by invitation only.

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

This federally funded program is run by the state and provides free meals to children and adolescents 18 years or younger in participating communities and day camps.

#### [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 locations. These supplemental food boxes contain three to five days' worth of food. Monthly income limits apply.

#### [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.

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

#### [Child Safety Seat Distribution Program](#)

The South Dakota Department of Social Services provides child safety seats to income-eligible parents across the state.

#### [Pack 'N Play Distribution Program](#)

The Office of Child and Family Services within the South Dakota Department of Health, as well as WIC offices across the state, provides low-income and qualifying families with pack n' plays (i.e., safe sleep environments).

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

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

This program helps eligible low-income families pay some of their heating costs in the winter. Eligibility and assistance depend on household size, income, type and cost of heating, and location. Payments are made directly to the energy supplier on behalf of the LIHEAP recipient.

## Weatherization Assistance Program

This program helps low-income individuals and families save money on their utility bills by weatherizing their homes to conserve energy. Weatherization services are provided for free by four community action programs in the state that receive funding from the Department of Social Services. Eligibility requirements include having an annual household income up to 200% of the FPL as well as getting written permission from landlords for the work to be done as well as a contribution from the landlord. Households with children under 19, disabled individuals, and the elderly are given priority during this program's allocation process.

## Section 811

This federally funded housing assistance program is for very low-income South Dakotans with a disability who utilize Medicaid long-term care services and need rental assistance. This program also provides case coordination services. The program is run by the South Dakota Housing Department. There are 10 rental projects participating in the state. To be eligible one must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- A South Dakota resident with a disability living in a nursing home, hospital, or group home, or transitioning foster youth
- Eligible for other community-based long-term services provided by South Dakota's Medicaid program
- Part of a household with one person who is at least 18 but younger than 62 and whose income is at or below 30% of the area's median income
- Able to pass a background check and not be a sex offender

## Tenant Based Housing Choice Vouchers

This is a federal housing assistance program, otherwise known as Section 8, that pays some or all rental costs for eligible households directly to property owners.

## Security Deposit Assistance Program

This program provides eligible applicants in emergency situations with security deposit funding to prevent homelessness. This program can also secure permanent housing for those in transitional housing as well as help low-income families move to a more affordable rental property. The funding for this program is provided by the South Dakota Housing Department and is allocated to subrecipient public housing authorities and nonprofits across the state which then allocate the funds to eligible applicants on a [first-come, first-serve basis](#). Funding is prioritized for organizations or housing authorities that focus on homelessness prevention. There are [currently](#) 10 participating housing authorities and nonprofits in the state.

## Community Home Improvement Program

This program provides low-interest home improvement loans to eligible borrowers for their single-family homes by working with participating lenders. The maximum household income for this program is \$114,120 for a household of two or \$133,140 for a household of three or more.



## [Emergency Solutions Grant Program](#)

This is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to South Dakotans with a household income below 30% of the area's median income who would be homeless or at risk of losing their housing without assistance.

## [Sustainable Housing Incentive Program](#)

This federally funded program provides financial assistance to South Dakotans with a household income below 50% of the area's median income. The program is specifically for households that are at the greatest risk due to poor rental history, homelessness, former incarceration, mental or physical disabilities, substance abuse disorders, recently transitioning from foster care, or being a disabled veteran.

## [Governor's House Program](#)

This program provides affordable, low-maintenance, and energy efficient housing to eligible, low-income South Dakota residents. The program makes available to developers two-bedroom or three-bedroom prefab homes that the developers can build in clusters in a way that still allows low-income residents to live independently and buy a home. Priority is given to low- to moderate-income seniors and disabled people. To be eligible, applicants must meet income and other financial guidelines and consider the home provided by this program to be their only residence. The house has to be in South Dakota.

## [Grants for Grads](#)

This program provides 5% of a potential homebuyer's loan amount as a grant that can go towards the buyer's downpayment and/or closing costs. The program is specifically for those who recently graduated college and are seeking to buy their first home in South Dakota. To be eligible one must meet all the following requirements:

- [Meet income limits](#)
- Be purchasing a principle residence that is in South Dakota
- Be a first-time homebuyer
- Be purchasing a home that is less than \$250,200
- Be a recent graduate who earned a degree from an accredited college recognized by the U.S. Department of Education within the last 60 months

## [Downpayment Assistance](#)

This program provides a Fixed Rate Plus loan to those buying a home in South Dakota who need assistance with a down payment and closing costs. The loan can cover 3-5% of the downpayment and closing costs. The program also provides homebuyers with a 0% interest rate second mortgage with no additional fees.

## [Repeat Homebuyers](#)

This program helps South Dakotans who have been helped by another state housing assistance program buy another home in the state by providing a low-fixed rate mortgage, downpayment and

closing cost assistance, and reduced mortgage insurance. To be eligible one must meet all the following requirements:

- Have an income less than \$122,640 for a family of two or less than \$143,080 for a family of three or more
- Be purchasing a home that is less than \$460,000
- Have a minimum credit score of 620

### Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program

This is an incentive program for owners, construction companies, and investors to build and rehabilitate houses for low-income households. The program offers a reduction in tax liability to owners and a return worth either 4% or 9% of the cost of building low-income units, depending on the project type.

## *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*

### Let's Be Clear SD

This is a project created by the South Dakota Department of Health, funded by the CDC, and Department of Social Services, funded by SAMHSA, to help address opioid abuse in South Dakota. The [effort](#) helps individuals find and connect with care coordination, social support, counseling, and treatment service referrals.

### SD QuitLine

The nonprofit organization QuitLine partners with the South Dakota Department of Health to provide tobacco cessation and prevention services to South Dakota residents. All services provided are free to South Dakota residents 13 years old or older. QuitLine provides enrolled participants with phone or video coaching as well as "Quit Kits" with medications (gum, patches, or lozenges) to help participants quit using tobacco.

### Supported Housing for Addiction Recovery Empowerment (SHARE)

This model of housing provides recovering South Dakotans with a safe living environment and support as they recover from a substance use disorder. Housing locations are drug-free environments where multiple people in recovery live and recover together outside of a formal treatment setting. The state contracts different non-profit housing organizations to provide housing for eligible residents and the Department of Social Services provides financial assistance to those

deemed eligible for assistance by the Department's Division of Behavioral Health. Eligibility requirements to live in one of these housing locations include meeting both of the following criteria:

- Being 18 or older with a substance use disorder (may include a co-occurring mental illness)
- Being unable to live independently because of a substance use disorder

Some program locations accept adults and children.

### [Behavioral Health Resources and Assistance for Medication](#)

This resource helps South Dakotans find financial support for psychotropic medications used to treat substance abuse disorders and other medications used to treat mental illness. Eligibility is dependent on the applicant's household income and expenses. The resources are mainly for low-income residents who otherwise would not be able to afford the medications needed to treat their substance disorder or mental illness without aid.

### [Treatment Courts](#)

Treatment courts are specific types of intervention courts that help individuals with substance use and mental health disorders transition from the criminal justice system back into society. The different types of South Dakota treatment courts include Drug Court, DUI Court, Veterans Court, and Mental Health Court. These courts are composed of multi-disciplinary teams such as judges, treatment providers, prosecutors, and other attorneys.

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

No applicable and/or known programs.

## ***5.3 Mental Health***

### [Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program](#)

This inpatient program provides treatment services for individuals 18 years old or older with a persistent mental illness that severely impedes daily living (keeping a job, interacting with others, etc.). Those who receive this program's services are transferred from Adult Acute Psychiatric or Geriatric Nursing home programs to this program's inpatient facilities.

### [Adult Acute Psychiatric Program](#)

This stabilization program provides care coordination services to South Dakota residents 18 years old or older with severe mental health issues. Program providers conduct an initial assessment and then develop a treatment plan for the individual so that they can be discharged and start treatment. Admission to this program can come from a mental health involuntary commitment, court order, or voluntary commitment when beds are available at participating locations. Financial assistance is available through the South Dakota Department of Social Services.

### [Adolescent Acute Psychiatric Program](#)

This inpatient program provides psychiatric services to children aged 12-17 who have been diagnosed with a severe emotional disturbance by a mental health professional and would benefit from an inpatient environment rather than less restrictive treatment environment. The program

develops a treatment plan and stabilizes the child until they are ready to transition back home. Admission to this program can come from a mental health professional's referral for involuntary commitment, juvenile court order, or voluntary commitment by a legal guardian.

## *5.4 Abortion Recovery and Healing*

No applicable and/or known programs.

## 6. Disability Assistance

### South Dakota Birth to Three

This is South Dakota's Early Intervention program that helps children from birth to 36 months old with developmental delays and disabilities as well as their families. 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/delay. Early intervention teams can be composed of service coordinators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, social workers, mental health professionals, etc. Children can be referred to this program if they live in the Davison, Hanson, McCook, Minnehaha, Sanborn, Turner, Miner, Lake, Moody, and Brookings counties. Those that do not live in these counties can apply through the South Dakota Department of Education.

### Respite Services for Caregivers of People with Developmental Disabilities

This program, provided by the Department of Human Services, provides services and financial assistance to caregivers of disabled family members. The program can provide financial assistance up to \$600 for the first eligible family member and up to \$200 for each additional family member as well as a respite care worker that the caretaker chooses. Family members who take care of adopted children with or without disabilities can apply for this program as well. [Services](#) provided by the respite worker, intended to give caretakers a break from caring for their family member(s), include meal preparation, helping the care receiver with daily activities, and light housekeeping. Eligible families are those with a child or adult that lives in the caretaker's home and that have one or more of the following verified conditions:

- Developmental disability
- Developmental delay (birth to 3 years old)
- Serious emotional disturbance (children)
- Severe mental illness
- Chronic medical condition (children)
- Traumatic brain injury

### Disability-Specific Medicaid Programs

South Dakota 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. South Dakota HCBS waivers [include](#):

- SD Assistive Daily Living Services Waiver: This waiver is for those 65 and older and those with physical disabilities ages 18-64 who need a nursing facility level of care. Examples of covered services include home modifications, the installation of personal emergency response systems, and personal attendant care.
- SD CHOICES Waiver: This waiver is for those of any age with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need an ICF/IID level of care. Examples of covered services include case management services, residential habilitation, and the provision of specialized medical equipment.
- SD Family Support 360 Waiver: This waiver is for those of any age with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need an ICF/IID level of care. Examples of covered services include respite services, care coordination, and specialized therapy services.
- SD Home and Community-Based Options and Person-Centered Excellence (HOPE) Waiver: This waiver is for those 65 and older and those with physical or other disabilities ages 18-64 who need a nursing facility level of care. Examples of covered services include adult day services, respite care, and adult companion services.

The [Health Home Program](#) provides additional care management and coverage benefits to Medicaid participants enrolled in full coverage Medicaid plans who have chronic health or behavioral health issues. Some qualifying conditions include mental health disorders, substance abuse disorders, and asthma. Some qualifying at-risk conditions include tobacco use, cancer, and depression.

The [Disabled Children's Program](#) provides Medicaid to disabled children in the state whose conditions make them medically fragile and in need of skilled nursing care. Children must be under 19 to be eligible for this program and their disability must meet the Social Security Administration or Department of Social Services definitions of disability. This program is meant to provide health coverage for services performed in the child's home at a level comparable to the level of care needed in a hospital, nursing facility, or intermediate care facility. The child's monthly income must be less than 300% of the SSI standard benefit amount (\$2,901) to be eligible for this program.

[Aged, blind, and disabled](#) adults not enrolled in HCBS waivers can also receive full coverage Medicaid if their income meets benefit rate limits. Those who are employed but disabled and have an income below 250% of the FPL are eligible for Medicaid if they also meet resource limits.

## [Home Again SD](#)

This nonprofit organization partners with the South Dakota Department of Social Services to provide one-time assistance for services not covered by South Dakota Medicaid to allow these individuals to transition from living in a care facility to living independently. The program provides transition services, relocation transportation services, and assistive technology to make homes disability friendly. [Eligibility requirements include](#) meeting all the following criteria:

- Being 18 years old or older
- Being a South Dakota resident
- Being enrolled in Medicaid or having a pending application
- Residing in a nursing facility or ICF/ID facility for 60 or more consecutive days

- Meeting a Medicaid level of care and financial eligibility criteria
- Being willing to reside in a home, apartment, or group home (less than four individuals) upon transitioning
- Being willing to enroll in an existing 1915(c) HCBS Medicaid waiver

## 7. Care for Children

### 7.1 Childcare

#### Child Care Assistance Program

This program provides families with financial assistance to help pay for childcare for working parents or those in school, participating in job training, or in the state's TANF program. This assistance is for families with children under 13 or over 13 if the child has a disability. The amount that families pay depends on the number of hours parents are working or in school/a job training program, household income, and the state rate of childcare. Income eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

### 7.2 Children's Health Care

#### Newborn Screening Program

All infants born in South Dakota hospitals must be tested for genetic disorders and hearing loss. If an infant is diagnosed with a genetic disorder or hearing loss, 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 this requirement. Importantly, South Dakota's Newborn Screening program does not test for Critical Congenital Heart Disease as many other state's newborn screening programs do.

#### South Dakota Immunization 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 not otherwise afford to vaccinate their children. [To](#) be eligible for free vaccines through this program, children must be aged 18 or younger, South Dakota residents, and also satisfy at least one of the following categories:

- Be American Indian or Alaska Native
- Be Medicaid-eligible
- Be uninsured
- Be underinsured

#### Medicaid for Children

South Dakota residents under 19 can qualify for full-coverage Medicaid if they [meet](#) citizenship or immigration requirements as well as income guidelines.

South Dakota'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, 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.

## [CHIP](#)

This program provides health insurance coverage to children whose families make too much money to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to pay for private insurance. It is for children 18 years and younger who don't have private insurance, meet income guidelines, and are South Dakota residents and U.S. citizens.

## [Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs](#)

South Dakota's Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs program financially supports state and private services that help children with special health care needs and their families navigate their conditions and coordinate care. Services funded by this program include the Department of Human Services Respite Care program, the Sanford Children's Specialty Clinic Patient Navigation Program, Sanford Health Genetics Outreach program, and the Department of Social Services Child Safety Seat Distribution Program.

## *7.3 Family and Parenting Education*

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

This is a federally funded program that coordinates with service sites to educate low-income parents of children aged birth to five on child development and school readiness. Head Start typically serves children between 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 South Dakota Head Start Collaboration Office.

## *7.4 Adoption*

### [Adoption Subsidy Program](#)

This program provides eligible adoptive families with monthly Medicaid or other forms of financial assistance. The amount of assistance given to subsidized adoptive families depends on the current basic foster care rate and whether the child receives other forms of public assistance. This program is mainly a last-ditch effort in circumstances in which the needs of the child results in a limited number of suitable adoptive homes, thus necessitating the subsidizing of an adoptive home as an incentive. The program only services public agency adoptions. Special needs and circumstances can include any of the following:

- A child's age, race, or religion
- Disability status

- A sibling group that needs to be placed together
- A child needing a prosthesis or long-term medical care or therapy
- When adoption by the foster parents with whom the child is living is the only appropriate home for the child to be in adopted into

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

### Independent Living Program

This program helps present or former foster youth, ages 14 to 21, plan for their future outside of the foster care system and transition to adulthood. Community Resource People help these youth access social services available to them and help them find jobs and housing as well as develop life skills.

### Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Funds

This voucher can provide foster youth with up to \$5,000 a year to attend college or vocational school and help cover books, supplies, room and board, tools and uniforms, tutoring, childcare, transportation, etc. Eligibility requirements can be found [here](#).

### Medicaid

In South Dakota, if a child [aged out](#) of foster care and was enrolled in Medicaid at the time of aging out, they are eligible for Medicaid until they turn 26 years old.

## *7.6 Safe Haven and/or Baby Boxes*

### Safe Haven Law

South Dakota's Safe Haven law allows parents to leave their baby under 60 days old with a child placement agency or a designated emergency medical services provider without fear of prosecution. Designated providers include hospital and clinic staff, law enforcement officers, Department of Social Service offices, child placement agencies, EMTs, and firefighters.

## Miscellaneous

### Choose Life License Plate Program

South Dakota drivers can purchase a "Choose Life" vanity plate and part of the proceeds from the sale are donated to the Black Hills Pregnancy Resource Center.

### State Paid Family Leave

As a result of administrative rulemaking in 2023, the state's Bureau of Human Resources expanded paid family leave for state employees from partial pay for eight weeks to full pay for 12 weeks. This benefit applies to births and adoptions.



## SB 75 (2023)

This legislation mandates that South Dakota fathers of children born out of wedlock be responsible for reasonable expenses related to:

- The pregnancy or prenatal care of the child;
- Labor and delivery of the child; and
- Postpartum recovery and any medical complications arising from pregnancy with the child;
- The education, support, or funeral expenses for the child; or
- For any other expenses related to the care of the child that the court deems reasonable

**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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