



Quick Links:

[Website](#) | [Donate](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Children's Champion

• February 17, 2021 •
Tennessee Justice Center

MORE YOU KNOW

Tennessee's Katie Beckett Program Update

The [Katie Beckett program](#) is for children under age 18 with disabilities and/or complex medical needs who are not Medicaid eligible because of their parents' income or assets. TennCare began accepting applications for the program in November 2020. In January 2021, TennCare and the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) released a report stating they received [849 applications](#) for the program and had already enrolled [290 children](#).

This was great news for the public, but it was not for many families who are still waiting for a decision on their application or even those who have been enrolled. **Of the 290 children enrolled, only 6 of those children are enrolled in Part A.** Part A is for children with significant severe disabilities who qualify for institutional level of care and gives them full TennCare benefits and up to \$15,000 in home and community-based services. There are approximately 300 Part A slots. **The other 284 children enrolled are currently in Part B.** Part B will provide up to 2700 children with severe disabilities who qualify for at-risk level of care a stipend of up to \$10,000 to help cover services not covered by their insurance. Part B does not provide full TennCare benefits.

Some of the children enrolled in Part B have been approved for Part A. They can not enroll in Part A at the moment because they qualify in Tier 2 of Part A. Tier 1 is for children who have the most complex medical or behavioral needs and are at risk of institutionalization if they do not receive care around the clock. Tier 2 is for children who have complex medical, behavioral, or functional needs but their needs are not as severe as Tier 1. TennCare is currently giving children who qualify for Part A Tier 1 priority in Part A enrollment. **Children who qualify for Part A Tier 2 are being placed on a waiting list and are being enrolled in Part B for now.** With at least 570 families still waiting for a decision, it is not clear when Part A Tier 2 slots will open for families.

For more information on the program, check out the [Katie Beckett 101 webinar with TJC's Katie Ann Twiggs and Family Voices of Tennessee's Sara Scott](#). If you need help applying or want to share your concerns, contact the Tennessee Justice Center at 1-877-608-1009.

ICYMI

- **Reopening of Federal Marketplace** - President Biden issued an [executive order](#) January 28, 2021 calling for the Federal Marketplace to reopen for a special enrollment period from February 15 to May 15. This gives people another chance to sign up for Affordable Care Act (ACA) plans or change their current coverage. Apply from now until May 15th on [healthcare.gov](#)
- **TJC Press Release**- In addition to reopening the Marketplace, President Biden's January 28th [executive order](#) called for states to reexamine any policies and waivers that reduce affordability of coverage or financial assistance. This includes harmful waivers like Tennessee's Medicaid block grant. Read Michele Johnson's, Executive Director of TJC, press statement [here](#).
- **New Story Blog**- Check out [Tina Claxton's story](#) and learn why she is against the Medicaid block grant.
- **Block Grant Webinar**- Last month, Kinika Young and Gordon Bonnyman at TJC hosted a webinar where they went over the impact TennCare's new Medicaid Block grant may have on enrollees. [View the recording.](#)

- **Covid-19 Vaccine Page-** TJC recently launched a new page which shares information on how to access the COVID-19 vaccine including a step-by-step flyer on how to locate the vaccine in your area. [Check out the new page.](#)
- **Recent News**
 - [Child Medicaid Enrollment Grew by 10% during the Pandemic in 2020](#)
 - [Tennessee Says It Won't Track Immigration Status For Vaccinations](#)
 - [Affordable Care Act's Medicaid Expansions And Child Support Outcomes](#)
 - [Biden Administration Moves to End Work Requirements in Medicaid](#)
- **TN Disability Survey-** Please [share your thoughts](#) on the best ways of connecting individuals with disabilities, their families, and disability professionals with the information and services they need. Everyone who completes the survey can request free resources and be entered into a drawing for one of 100 gift cards (\$20 each). The study is a collaboration between the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center UCEDD, Tennessee Disability Pathfinder, and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. [Complete this survey](#)

LOOKING FORWARD

Federal updates

COVID-19 Relief Package

The COVID relief package signed into law in December was a critical “down payment” that provided some of the most urgently needed relief to struggling families and the economy. But the package left key needs unaddressed, and important measures like expanded unemployment benefits are set to expire too soon. The Biden-Harris “American Rescue Plan” is a [\\$1.9 trillion Covid Relief package](#). The House is currently assembling a [final bill](#) based off the Biden-Harris plan and House Committee decisions. **It includes \$1,400 stimulus checks, \$400 per week Federal Unemployment boost, \$15 per hour Federal Minimum Wage, and proposes a decrease in ACA plan premiums to no more than 8.5% of enrollee’s income.** The bill also includes a 5% boost in federal Medicaid matching rate funds for two years for the traditional Medicaid program for states that have not expanded yet and choose to do so. **Tennessee could get [\\$1.7 billion dollars](#) if it expands Medicaid.** The final bill is set to go before the House for a vote by the end of next week. The House will most likely pass the bill. The real battle will be in the Senate. With federal pandemic unemployment assistance set to expire in mid-March, time is of the essence to provide additional COVID relief for struggling families. Congressional leaders need to work together to quickly pass comprehensive COVID relief.

[Tell your TN State Representative and Senator to expand Medicaid E and get affordable coverage to over 300,000 Tennesseans](#)

State updates

Nearly [500 people signed our petition](#) and shared their stories to encourage Governor Lee to get P-EBT benefits out...it worked! The USDA has approved Tennessee's P-EBT plan--benefits are coming! The State estimates it will issue approximately \$645.5 million in benefits to about 765,000 children who have been waiting for benefits throughout the darkest months of the pandemic: October - present. Here's what you should know:

P-EBT BENEFITS ARE COMING!

- October - November will be issued at the end of February
- Remaining benefits for December - June will be issued on a monthly basis until the end of July
- You will receive a new card by mail that will be reloaded every month

Remember to:

1

Update your
address with
your child's school

2

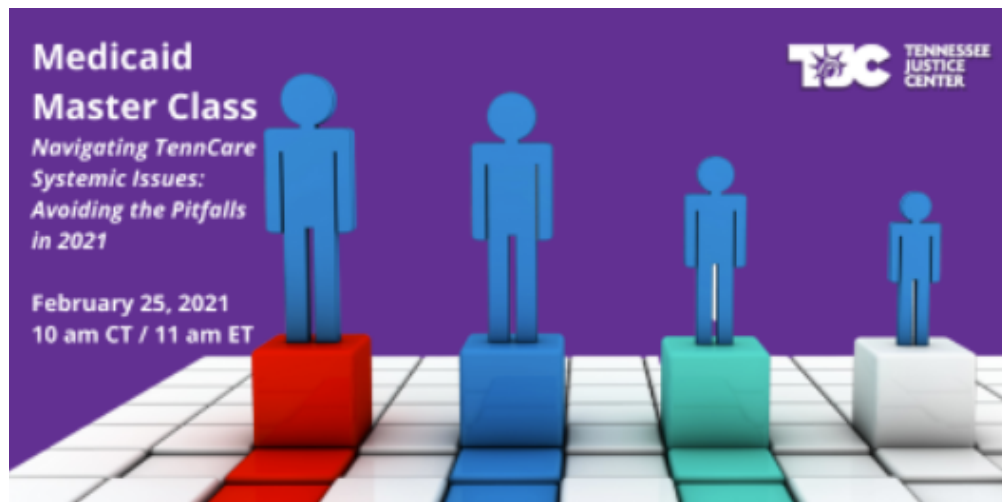
Apply for or update
your child's free/reduced
price school meal
application

For details about eligibility, benefit timeline, and other tips, please visit: [P-EBT – Tennessee Justice Center \(tnjustice.org\)](#)

If you have questions about P-EBT, email TJC at nutrition@tnjustice.org

TJC will send updates on any breaking news regarding P-EBT as we learn about them. [Sign-up for our P-EBT Alerts.](#)

JOIN US



Navigating TennCare Systemic Issues: Avoiding the Pitfalls in 2021

A Medicaid Master Class

Thursday, February 25, 2021

10:00 am – 12:00 pm CST

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Every Medicaid program has its set of problems, and TennCare is no exception. The troubled rollout of the Tennessee Eligibility Determination System (TEDS) has been well documented, and although the state has made progress refining it, many systemic problems still remain. How many? Too many to count! Tennessee Justice Center is actively monitoring over 20 different systemic problems currently affecting enrollees and the uninsured that you should know about in 2021.



TCCY Children's Advocacy Days 2021

March 9th - 12th

9:00am-12:00pm (CST)/10:00am-1:00pm (EST).

[REGISTER HERE](#)



How to Get Immigrants Health Coverage

A Medicaid Master Class

Thursday, March 25, 2021

11:00 am – 12:00 pm CST

[REGISTER NOW](#)

With a growing immigrant population in Tennessee, chances are you have encountered a non-US citizen in need of health insurance coverage.

The complex rules governing eligibility for immigrants can be daunting – especially during a global pandemic. During this 1-hour webinar, TJC's knowledgeable team will discuss the Medicaid programs designed to provide coverage to immigrants including those who are undocumented. Specifically, you will learn how to:

- navigate the 5-Year Bar rule as it applies to Medicaid eligibility including the exceptions
- spot the overlooked Medicaid coverage
- build the record to support the TennCare/CoverKids application
- help immigrants apply for premium tax credits even if they appear to be in the Medicaid Coverage Gap
- use TJC-tested workarounds to overcome enrollment challenges, plus much more.

As a reminder, the Tennessee Justice Center also helps with:

1. Enrollment onto TennCare and CoverKids
2. Service Issues
3. Redetermination Issues

If you ever encounter anyone who is having trouble getting health insurance or getting health services, please call TJC: (615) 255-0331.

If there is any information you would like us to share on your behalf, including events and resources, please reply to this email.

Sincerely,



Kinika Young
Senior Director of Health Policy and Advocacy
Tennessee Justice Center

DONATE

Stay connected:



Tennessee Justice Center
211 7th Ave N
Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37219
United States

outreach@tnjustice.org | 615-255-0331 | <https://www.tnjustice.org>

[Update your subscriptions](#)

{{if IsSentByTargetedEmail}}(Unsubscribing is not supported in previews){end}}

{{Disclaimer}}