



Churn Toolkit: Policy Approaches to Reducing Churn

Choosing Tailored Policy Solutions

Churn is a multifaceted issue with a variety of causes. In order to address the issue effectively, we need to understand the factors that contribute to churning within a given Medicaid program and implement policies targeted toward those specific factors. If we undertake policy change without first identifying the drivers of churn in a state, we run the risk of choosing tactics that will fail to improve the situation.

The following table lays out some key drivers of churn and policies that are suited to address each of these factors. This table is by not meant to be an exhaustive or exclusive list of solutions; rather, it is meant to illustrate potential approaches to solving some problems contributing to churn. Some of these policies may already be in place in your state; for example, you can click on the links for express lane eligibility and continuous eligibility to find out whether these policies are in place in your state. For more detailed information about these issues, please see our paper, “[Beyond Enrollment: Ensuring Stable Coverage for Children in Medicaid and CHIP](#).”¹

Problem	Policy approach
Complicated renewal process	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal forms written at too high a literacy level • Renewal forms available in too few languages • Confusing or conflicting information sent to families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust renewal materials to more appropriately meet the linguistic and cultural needs of families • Renewal assistance available by phone and in person
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices and forms mailed to out-of-date addresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic notices emailed to families • Address confirmation by phone or email before paper forms mailed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete or improperly completed paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express lane eligibility²—Data from other benefit systems (such as SNAP or TANF) used to determine Medicaid eligibility • Continuous eligibility³—Once a child is deemed eligible, he or she remains eligible (coverage cannot be lost) for a specified period of time, e.g., 12 months • Administrative verification⁴ of income—Parents do not have to supply pay stubs or other paper documentation of income to verify their statement of eligibility (can be implemented at application and/or renewal)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income fluctuations make income certification difficult or inaccurate Frequent but brief income-related eligibility changes are common 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous eligibility⁵ (e.g., 12 month or birth to age 5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arbitrary renewal deadline that is difficult for family to remember 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align renewal date with a meaningful date (e.g., child's birthday, last day of month in which child's birthday occurs) Engage provider community in alerting families about upcoming renewal deadlines, offering renewal assistance
Premiums and premium lock-out periods	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premium amounts are burdensome to families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce or eliminate monthly premiums
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missed premium payment results in disenrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorten or eliminate premium lock-out periods, the amount of time a child can have their Medicaid/CHIP suspended for non-payment of premiums
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child prevented from reenrolling as punitive measure, even if premiums are paid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure state is complying with the Affordable Care Act (ACA)—ACA requires that children be allowed to reenroll as soon as premiums are paid in full or after 90 days, whichever comes first
Low perceived value	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onerous application/renewal process burdens parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express lane eligibility⁶ Continuous eligibility⁷ Administrative verification⁸
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited geographic access to providers Wait times to obtain appointments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase reimbursement for Medicaid providers Incentives to practice in underserved areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents not sure how to use their child's insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and promote consumer assistance programs in your state

This document is part of a toolkit on churn. Visit [this page](#) for more information and resources.

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¹ <http://neach.communitycatalyst.org/issue/connecting/asset/Childrens-Insurance-Churn-8-12-13.pdf>

² http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/eligibility/express_lane.html

³ <http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/eligibility/continuous.html>

⁴ <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Paperless-income-verification.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/eligibility/continuous.html>

⁶ http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/eligibility/express_lane.html

⁷ <http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/professionals/eligibility/continuous.html>

⁸ <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Paperless-income-verification.pdf>