

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WAIVERS AND MEDICAID EXPANSION

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Section 1115 Waiver

In use since the 1960s, Section 1115 of the Social Security Act gives states the opportunity to test experimental projects, also known as **demonstrations**, that help achieve the goals of the Medicaid program.

Broadly called “Medicaid waivers”, Section 1115 waivers have been used by nine states to insure low-income adults in their state. Georgia’s decision makers are considering the use of an 1115 waiver to cover our uninsured and low-income friends and neighbors.

States must provide public comment opportunities and respond to those comments before they can approve and implement a waiver to execute a proposed project or demonstration. This is your opportunity to voice your support or concerns about how the waiver may impact you, your family, or your community.

Almost 300,000 adults are stuck in Georgia’s “coverage gap” with no access to affordable health insurance coverage.

There are two ways that Georgia can close the gap:

1. Medicaid expansion
2. Section 1115 waivers

How have states used waivers?

States have used Section 1115 waivers in many different ways, including:

- to expand Medicaid coverage
- to change provider payments
- to create Georgia's Planning for Healthy Babies program

How are waivers different from Medicaid expansion?

While waivers were established in the 1960s, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) gave states the option to expand Medicaid eligibility to include individuals with incomes up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level. Section 1115 waivers give states additional flexibility in their Medicaid programs, beyond the traditional expansion.



Both states that did and did not expand their Medicaid programs may use a Section 1115 waiver. Demonstrations can relate to any goal of the Medicaid program, including changing eligibility requirements or reforming how healthcare providers deliver services.

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