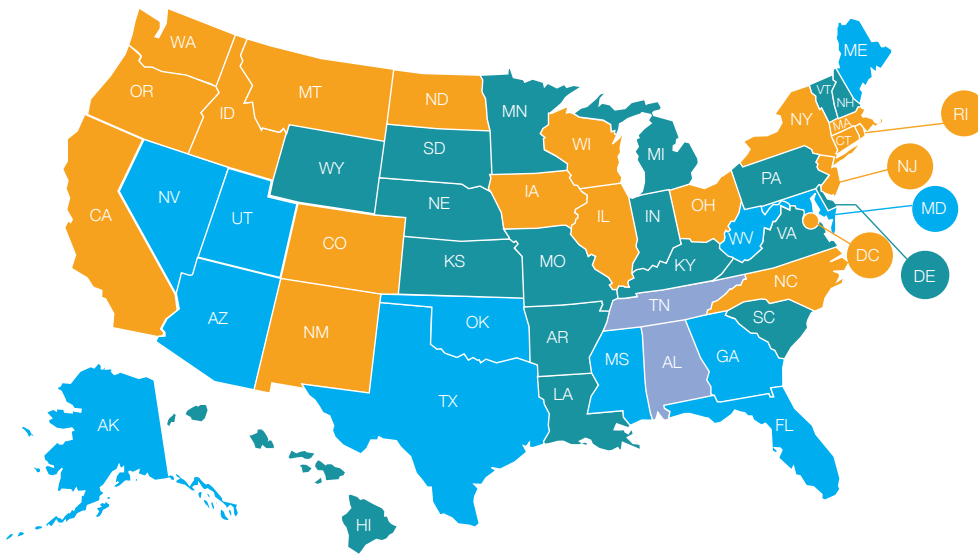


## Congress Must Include An Overall And Dental Specific FMAP Increase In The Next COVID-19 Relief Package To Preserve Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits.

**Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic has caused major disruptions for state budgets and programs. The National Governors Association estimates that states are short over \$500 billion in revenue due to the pandemic, potentially leading to major cuts to public programs. When states are forced to make cuts to Medicaid, adult dental benefits are often targeted because they are not afforded the same statutory protections as children’s dental benefits.

### Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage by State



In 36 states and the District of Columbia, Medicaid programs and Medicaid dental managed care plans provide individuals with affordable coverage for both preventive and extensive dental treatment.

Medicaid adult dental benefits play a critical role in preserving public health, reducing hospitalizations for oral health issues and chronic diseases, and quality of life for enrollees. If states are forced to cut their adult dental benefits, studies show it leads to a sharp increase in dental-related ED visits and a 68% increase in the cost of dental ED visits<sup>1</sup>. In the Medicaid expansion population alone, 15.5 million receive preventive and non-emergency dental care through Medicaid<sup>2</sup>.

The economic impact of COVID-19, is forcing millions of Americans to turn to Medicaid for coverage. **In April 2020, Medicaid enrollment nationwide had already increased 2.8%, with individual state increases reaching 6.5%.** Without federal aid, states will be unable to meet the needs of new and existing enrollees.

## SOLUTION

Congress must include an increase in the FMAP beyond the current expansion of 6.2% under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, with specific funds for preserving dental benefits in the next stimulus package.

- At least the 12% overall increase in the FMAP recommended by the National Governors Association.
- For oral health, at least a 5% dental services specific increase to ensure adequate funding is available to continue dental coverage alongside medical.

<sup>1</sup> Singhal et al. “Eliminating Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage In California Led To Increased Dental Emergency Visits And Associated Costs.” Health Affairs. Project HOPE—The People-to-People Health Foundation, Inc., May 1, 2015. <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2014.1358>.

<sup>2</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation. “Marketplace Enrollment, 2014-2020.” KFF. April 7, 2020. <https://www.kff.org/health-reform/state-indicator/marketplace-enrollment/?activeTab=map>