



**PRESS STATEMENT**  
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Contact: Wendy Patton  
wpatton@policymattersohio.org  
614.582.0048

## **New Medicaid restrictions threaten health care for 315,000 Ohioans**

**Federal approval of work requirement waiver will reverse progress**

Federal approval today of the Ohio Department of Medicaid's request to waive standard Medicaid rules and allow the state to impose rigid work requirements threatens health insurance coverage for [hundreds of thousands](#) of Ohioans covered under the Medicaid expansion.

"This policy will [erode the Medicaid expansion](#), hurting low-wage and seasonal workers in construction, retail, food service and hospitality," said Wendy Patton, Senior Project Director for Policy Matters Ohio. "[Research](#) shows that additional reporting or administrative burdens create barriers to eligible people retaining coverage. Many working and even [disabled people](#) who are supposed to be exempted will lose coverage because of reporting requirements."

Low-wage jobs in Ohio's [largest occupational](#) categories [do not reliably](#) give workers the 80 hours per month that the new eligibility requirement would impose, while [irregular schedules](#) often prevent workers from holding multiple jobs. Almost half ([46 percent](#)) of low-wage workers enrolled in Medicaid could lose coverage one or more months a year, which is particularly dangerous for people with chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, depression and addiction.

Only one state has actually implemented this policy. In Arkansas, which has about a quarter of the population of Ohio, [18,000](#) people lost coverage in the first seven months of the policy.

Administering the new eligibility criteria will cost Ohio's 88 counties an estimated [\\$378 million](#) over the waiver period, yet the state has not appropriated funds for administration. [Hospitals](#) anticipate waves of disenrollment, higher administrative costs and disruption of care. Federal funds that Medicaid expansion draws into Ohio create [54,000](#) jobs; loss of federal Medicaid expansion funds with decline in enrollment would hurt this employment.

"This new administratively burdensome requirement will [limit access](#) to care, which is counter to the very purpose of Medicaid," Patton said. "The state budget should include language to eliminate the work requirement."

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*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute  
with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.*