

May 23, 2023

SENT VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We, the undersigned, urge the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to pause Florida's current Medicaid redetermination process. As of May 16, 2023, data released by DCF shows that of the 461,322 people whose eligibility was checked in April, more than half (54 percent) were terminated. We understand the importance of making sure those who are eligible keep their coverage, while ensuring that those who are no longer eligible receive a proper termination notice. However, **82 percent of those who were terminated, or 205,122 people, had their cases closed due to procedural, or "red tape" reasons, not necessarily because they were determined to be no longer eligible.** Most of the people impacted by this disenrollment are Florida's children and families.

Our organizations have also received reports of Floridians being disenrolled from Medicaid without having received notice from DCF, as was outlined by DCF in the Florida Medicaid Redetermination Plan. One of these individuals is a [7 year old boy in remission from Leukemia](#) who is now unable to access follow-up — and potentially life-saving — treatments. Families with children have been [erroneously terminated](#), and parents are having [trouble reaching the DCF call center](#) for help with this process. Additionally, unclear notices and lack of information on how to appeal contribute to more confusion.

We are alarmed by the data, as well as these anecdotal reports, and strongly urge the administration to pause Florida's redetermination process and conduct a thorough analysis of issues and problems that might be preventing individuals from receiving appropriate notices. Furthermore, we are calling for a pause so that the state can take the time to fill critical vacancies at DCF, provide comprehensive training to DCF staff needed to avoid error, and convey essential information to Florida's families.

As organizations that represent and advocate for the wellbeing of Florida's families, we are deeply concerned about those with serious, acute, and chronic conditions who will continue to lose access to their life-saving treatments during this time, along with people who risk substantial medical debt, or even bankruptcy, as a result of coverage loss. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has projected that three-quarters of disenrolled children will remain eligible for Medicaid. Kids who depend on Medicaid for their coverage are unlikely to have another source of coverage to turn to, and they will become uninsured without systemic fixes.

We recognize that the redetermination process is an enormous task, and that current staff are working incredibly hard on behalf of Florida's Medicaid recipients. Pausing the unwind temporarily will provide the administration with the opportunity to improve the process. It will enable the state to confirm in a timely manner that those losing coverage are in fact no longer eligible, and further, that those who are no longer eligible are connected to alternative forms of coverage where possible.

Sincerely,

Florida Policy Institute
Florida Health Justice Project
Florida Voices for Health
Catalyst Miami
Florida Covering Kids and Families
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Children's Campaign
American Lung Association in Florida
Brevard Florida NOW
Center for Children's Rights
Center for Psychological Growth
Central Florida Jobs with Justice
Chronic Disease Coalition
Community Catalyst
Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Community Justice Project, Inc.
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Democratic Disability Caucus of Florida
Disability Rights Florida
Equality Florida
FL National Organization for Women
Florida Center for Fiscal & Economic Policy
Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Florida Council of Churches
Florida Head Start Association
Florida NOW Education Fund
Florida People's Advocacy Center
Florida Voices for Progress
Greater Orlando National Organization for Women
Health Foundation of South Florida
Healthcare for Florida Coalition
Heart of Florida United Way
Hemophilia Federation of America
Jax NOW
League of Women Voters of Broward County
League of Women Voters of Florida
League of Women Voters of Hillsborough and Pasco Counties
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.

MomsRising/MamáConPoder
NAPAWF (National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum)
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Pastors for Florida Children
Progress Florida Education Institute
SEIU Florida
St. Johns County Legal Aid
Suwannee River AHEC
The Alliance for LGBTQ Youth
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Together for Hope
United Activision Media LLC
United Way of Brevard County

cc: Florida House Speaker Paul Renner
Florida Senate President Kathleen Passidomo
Department of Children and Families Secretary Shevaun Harris
Agency For Healthcare Administration Secretary Jason Weida