



U.S. SENATOR
GARY PETERS

The American Rescue Plan Act: Vaccines and Health Care

Vaccines: The American Rescue Plan includes \$50 billion to help the Federal Emergency Management Agency support a national vaccination program that administers the vaccine and provides frontline medical professionals the personal protective equipment and testing supplies needed to slow and eventually eliminate the spread of COVID-19. As Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, with oversight of FEMA, Senator Peters was instrumental in securing this funding for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund.

The American Rescue Plan also includes \$7.5 billion in CDC funding to prepare, promote, distribute, administer, monitor, and track COVID-19 vaccines. This includes support for state, local, and Tribal public health departments, as well as funding for community vaccination centers, public communication, IT enhancements, and facility enhancements.

You can visit [Michigan.gov](https://www.michigan.gov/vaccine) vaccine page or call the COVID-19 Hotline at (888)-535-6136(press 1) to learn how you can get the safe and effective vaccine in Michigan.

Testing: The American Rescue Plan includes \$48.3 billion for testing in order to contain the virus and mitigate its effects, hire staff for contact tracing, provide PPE for frontline health workers, and take other steps to combat the virus, such as enabling isolation and quarantine. The funding will support a national strategy for testing as well as investing in laboratory capacity, community-based testing sites, and mobile training units.

Health Insurance: The American Rescue Plan will help make health insurance more affordable, including for workers who have lost their jobs. This bill will build on President Biden's decision to create an extended open enrollment period, during which individuals can enroll in ACA plans through May 15. All Michiganders who currently do not have health insurance to go to www.healthcare.gov or call (800)-318-2596 to look at ACA plan options or see if they qualify for Medicaid.

- **ACA Premium Assistance:** The relief package increases the generosity of ACA premium assistance, removing the 400% federal poverty level limit on subsidy eligibility and capping the out-of-pocket cost for coverage at 8.5 percent of a person's modified adjusted gross income. Individuals who are unemployed would receive maximum ACA subsidies that would bring their premiums down to \$0. The enhanced premium assistance will be in place through 2022.



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- **COBRA Continuation Coverage:** The relief package will also provide a 100% federal subsidy for COBRA insurance plans, which allow newly unemployed individuals the option to continue on the group private insurance offered by their employer. The provisions in the bill provide a tax credit to employers to cover the full private insurance premium for workers who lost their jobs because of the pandemic, and for their covered relatives, through September 30, 2021.

Community Health Centers: The American Rescue Plan will provide \$7.6 billion in funding for community health centers. This will help provide relief to frontline providers who serve communities of color and medically underserved populations hit hardest by the pandemic.

Mental health: The American Rescue Plan includes \$3.88 billion in funding to strengthen behavioral health care, including mental health and substance use disorder services. \$3 billion of this funding for flexible block grants to states and \$420 million is to support Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs). Additional funding includes investments in training for mental health care professionals, mental health education and awareness campaigns, and grants to health care providers to promote mental health among their workforce, among other provisions.

- **Block grants:** The bill provides \$1.5 billion for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant program and \$1.5 billion for the Substance Abuse Prevention Treatment Block Grant program. These programs provide funding to all 50 states that can be used flexibly. More information on these programs can be found [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs):** The relief package provides \$420 million for CCBHCs, which will support the expansion of clinics across the country that address behavioral health disorders, community-driven overdose prevention and harm reduction, and other behavioral health needs. There are more than 300 CCBHCs in 41 states, including 24 in Michigan. CCBHCs provide 24/7/365 crisis services; outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment services; immediate screenings, risk assessments, and diagnoses; and care coordination with emergency rooms, law enforcement, and veteran groups. More information about CCBHCs can be found [here](#).



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Health Workforce: The American Rescue Plan includes \$7.66 billion to expand the public health workforce and COVID-19 response. This will include awarding grants to state, local, and territorial public health departments. Funds can be used for costs, including wages and benefits, related to the recruiting, hiring, and training as individuals. The funds can also be used for PPE, data management and other technology, or other necessary supplies.

Support for Older Americans: The relief package included \$1.44 billion to carry out programs authorized under the Older Americans Act of 1965, including nutrition services, home- and community-based support services, transportation, vaccination outreach, addressing social isolation, and caregiver support. Additional information on Older American Act programming, carried out by Area Agencies on Agencies in partnerships with other organizations across the state. To find local services, visit Michigan.gov/OSA.

Medicaid Increases: The American Rescue Plan will increase the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for home- and community-based services under the Medicaid program by 10 percent and extend Medicaid coverage to pregnant women postpartum.

- Medicaid home- and community-based services provide critical support for caregivers, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. Funds can be used to increase direct care worker pay, provide benefits such as paid family leave or sick leave, pay for transportation expenses to and from the homes of those being served, purchase personal protective equipment for workers and those they are supporting, and provide hazard pay. The funding can also be used to support family caregivers, pay for recruitment and training of additional direct care workers, and pay for technology to facilitate services.
- Postpartum Coverage: The relief package includes provisions that will give states, for five years, the option to extend Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility to pregnant individuals for 12 months postpartum. States choosing this option must provide the full Medicaid benefit for pregnant and postpartum individuals during the 12-month postpartum period.