

SUPPORT HB 2124 & BUDGET AMENDMENTS 313 #4H & #36S

Cover COVID-19 Services as

“Emergency Only” Medicaid Services

Medicaid is required by federal law to provide “Emergency Only” services to any immigrant who (1) resides in the state and (2) is financially eligible for Medicaid, but does not meet the specific requirements for non-citizens. [For example most LPRs with a Green Card must be in the U.S. for 5 years before qualifying for full Medicaid.]

Medicaid’s Emergency-Only services are now available for urgent health needs generally provided by hospital emergency departments (e.g. accidents, heart attacks, labor/delivery). As allowed by federal law, HB 2124 appropriately broadens such services to COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccines.

* The disparate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on black, brown and immigrant communities is well established.  If low-income individuals in those communities are not encouraged to get tested, treated and vaccinated (through free, and broadly available services), ALL OF US suffer because of community spread.  The Medicaid Emergency Only mechanism is in place to ensure access to this essential care for needy Virginians.
* At least 12 states have administratively declared this policy for their Medicaid programs.  Those states are able to ensure and market free services and timely treatment to all low-income individuals, regardless of immigration status.
* This bill is desperately needed NOW! Virginia must reach out to encourage all low income immigrants to come forward to get COVID-19 testing, treatment and vaccines. This helps all Virginians by reducing the spread of the virus, long-term health issues and death.

This is truly a matter of life or death – not just for immigrants, but for all of us.

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