

Latino Children Lost Major Health Care Coverage Gains Under Trump

Public health experts say the former president's anti-health care, anti-immigration policies are largely to blame.

July 2, 2021 By Casey Halter

From 2016 to 2020, millions of Americans saw their health insurance gutted, taken away or rendered more inaccessible by Trump-era policies intended to weaken the [Affordable Care Act](#) (ACA) and prioritize privatized care.

Now, a new study from the Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University has uncovered the effects of those policies on Latino children across the country—noting that nearly all progress in expanding health care coverage in this community has been virtually erased, [NBC News reports](#).

According to the study, more than 1.8 million Latino children lacked health coverage as of 2019, a rate of about 9.3%. That marks an increase of 354,400 children who cannot access health coverage compared with 2016, when the rate was just 7.7%. What's more, the rate of uninsured non-Latino children has also risen over the past four years, increasing from 3.7% in 2016 to 4.4% in 2019.

The comprehensive report cites [several barriers](#) that experts believe have contributed to the loss of coverage, including the Trump administration's implementation of the (now-rescinded) public charge rule, which penalized immigrants hoping to become U.S. citizens for using public programs like Medicaid or CHIP (the Children's Health Insurance Program).

The Trump administration also made major cuts to programs meant to educate the Latino community on affordable coverage options as well as teach people how to navigate the health insurance marketplace system. Additionally, experts believe that [ongoing partisan battles over the ACA](#) and attempts to weaken it might have left many Latino families uncertain about the availability of coverage.

Kelly Whitener, PhD, an associate professor at Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families and the main author of the report, noted that children's state of residency correlated more with uninsured rates, with rates ranging from just 1.8% in Massachusetts to 19.2% [in a red state](#) like Mississippi. Other states with high rates of uninsured Latino children include Texas,

Arkansas and Georgia.

Study authors also pointed out that Latino children in families with incomes at or below 137% of the federal poverty line (about \$35,000 for a family of four) were the most impacted, with the uninsured rate among at-risk communities rising more than two percentage points, from 8.4% in 2016 to 10.5% in 2019.

Moving forward, Whitener noted that the new findings have been shared with President Joe Biden's administration as it moves to develop a plan to ensure more Latino children get health care coverage.

To learn more about health insurance and how to find an affordable option for your family, regardless of immigration status, read [“Three Ways Undocumented Latino Immigrants Can Still Find Affordable Health Care Without ACA Coverage.”](#)

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