

Many legal immigrants remain eligible for HUSKY

Revised December 2003

Changes to the HUSKY program in the state budget bill recently passed by the General Assembly have reduced the number of legal immigrants who are eligible for HUSKY coverage. However, many legal immigrants remain eligible for HUSKY, including:

- Immigrants who are already enrolled in HUSKY. Their coverage will continue, and these families should fill out their annual renewal forms when they receive them.
- Qualified legal immigrants who have been in the United States for more than five years are eligible for federally funded benefits. They can apply for and receive HUSKY benefits. (The five years is counted from the date of entry with status as a qualified legal immigrant.)
- Qualified legal immigrants who are victims of domestic violence or who have mental retardation are eligible for HUSKY, regardless of their date of entry into the United States.
- Immigrants whose applications were received *before* July 1, 2003 may still be granted coverage if they are otherwise eligible.

Immigrants in the U.S. less than five years

Most legal immigrants who have been in the United States for less than five years and make new applications after June 30, 2003 will not be eligible. However, there are important exceptions to this rule.

- **HUSKY A:** Under federal rules, Connecticut must continue to provide HUSKY A (Medicaid) coverage to these groups of immigrants, even if they have been in the U.S. less than five years:
 - ◆ Refugees, asylees, Cuban entrants, and Haitian entrants are eligible for their first seven years in the United States.
 - ◆ Immigrants whose deportation has been withheld are eligible for the first seven years from the date withholding is granted.
 - ◆ Amerasian immigrants are eligible for the first five years in the United States.
 - ◆ Honorably discharged U.S. military, active duty military personnel and their spouses, and unmarried dependent children (regardless of date of entry) are eligible.
- **HUSKY B:** Under federal rules, Connecticut must continue to provide HUSKY B (SCHIP) coverage to these immigrants, even if they have been in the U.S. less than five years:

(over)

- ◆ Refugees, asylees, and certain Cuban, Haitian, and Amerasian immigrants to the same extent that they are eligible for Medicaid (see above).
- ◆ Unmarried, dependent children of honorably discharged veterans and active duty service members of the Armed Forces, regardless of the date of entry.
- ◆ Battered children or children of battered spouses under certain circumstances.

Tips for immigrant families

- Immigrants should submit all necessary immigration documents that show their immigration status.
- Immigrants who are denied coverage can file an appeal with the Department of Social Services.
- It is important that legal immigrants who are now enrolled in HUSKY do not allow their coverage to lapse, because if they lose their coverage and have to fill out a new application, they may no longer be eligible.
- Children born in the United States are U.S. citizens, regardless of the immigration status of their parents. These U.S.-born children are eligible for HUSKY.
- Parents who are applying for coverage only for their children do not have to provide any information on their own immigration status.
- For questions or help with filing appeals, immigrant families should call the HUSKY Infoline at 1-877-CTHUSKY or Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-233-7619.

Much of this guidance on benefits for immigrants in the U.S. for less than five years was adapted from *Immigrant Access to Health Benefits: A Resource Manual* by the Access Project, available at www.accessproject.org/f_content6.htm or by calling (617) 654-9911. The guide also includes information on service requirements for clients with limited English proficiency.