

POLICY BRIEF

# Leading the Way: Medicaid Care Coordination and Population Health Strategy for Incarcerated Youth

## The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, Section 5121 (CAA23 -Sec. 5121)

The healthcare landscape is ever-evolving, with new policies and regulations continually shaping how care is delivered to vulnerable populations. *The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, specifically, Section 5121 (CAA23 -Sec. 5121)* introduced new mandates that Medicaid and CHIP agencies provide essential health services to young people who are incarcerated and post-adjudication starting January 1, 2025. The services include physical and behavioral health screening, diagnostic services, and targeted case management.

This policy aims to enhance early intervention and care coordination, tackling substantial gaps in care for youth with complex needs. Using the 1115 waiver and similar funding provisions will be a key strategy for states, addressing determinants of health and challenges faced during re-entry. Ultimately, the societal impact equals safer communities, reduced cost pressures on health systems, and overall long-term health as youth enter adulthood.

Five Areas of Policy Action

<p><b>Integrated Care Management</b></p>	<p>At the heart of Medicaid care coordination is the ability to manage the care of individuals with multiple, complex health needs. For incarcerated youth, this means developing care plans that are not only comprehensive but also personalized.</p>
<p><b>Continuity of Care</b></p>	<p>One of the biggest challenges in providing healthcare to incarcerated youth is ensuring continuity of care. Innovative coordination using the 1115 Waiver can bridge the gap between the healthcare provided in the criminal justice system and the community-based care that follows the release.</p>
<p><b>Behavioral Health Services</b></p>	<p>Many incarcerated youth struggle with behavioral health issues, including mental health disorders and substance use disorders. State demonstration projects under the 1115 Waiver can integrate behavioral health services into the broader state-wide care plan.</p>
<p><b>Data-Driven Strategies</b></p>	<p>Effective care coordination relies on data. State demonstration projects under the 1115 Waiver must leverage data to identify the specific needs of incarcerated youth, track their health outcomes, and adjust care plans accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Community Engagement and Support</b></p>	<p>Upon release, incarcerated youth face numerous challenges, including finding stable housing, continuing their education, and securing employment. State demonstration projects under the 1115 Waiver can play a critical role in connecting these young people with community resources that support their reintegration.</p>

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