

Child Support Calculation: Healthcare Coverage Review

HBXXXX will ensure more of Virginia's children receive adequate health care coverage by providing that when child support is calculated for low-income families, a healthcare coverage review is conducted to determine if the child may be eligible for a public health coverage option, ensuring the child will receive all necessary doctor's visits and allowing more of the family's resources to be expended on other necessities.

The numbers:

- **Thirty-two percent of Virginia's children** live in one-parent households. Typically, the non-custodial parent is subject to an order to pay child support. 14% of Virginia's children receive child support.
- **Approximately 5% of Virginia's children (89,000) are not covered** by health insurance. 52,000 of these are eligible for Medicaid or FAMIS.
- Child support orders in Virginia are required to include information about healthcare coverage for children.

Why is this bill needed?

- All children should have access to health care!
- Parents of children without insurance may hesitate to take them for needed check-ups, immunizations, or even when sick.
- Parents who can only afford health insurance plans with high co-pays or deductibles may similarly hesitate to seek medical care for children.
- If a child qualifies for Medicaid or FAMIS, the payor parent may be able to pay more in child support to meet other needs of the child.
- The custodial parent of a child on Medicaid or FAMIS can use the money that would have been spent on co-pays on other family needs.
- Payor parents often miss or get behind in payments, leaving the custodial parent struggling to meet children's needs, including health care.

What this bill does:

- Requires the Division of Child Support Enforcement, when calculating child support for low-income families, to determine if the child would qualify for Medicaid or FAMIS.
- Requires courts to consider whether a child may qualify for Medicaid or FAMIS coverage before approving child support orders.

This bill does NOT require a family to choose Medicaid or FAMIS if there are other affordable healthcare coverage options they prefer.

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