

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**July 16, 2020**

## **NEARLY 58,000 MARYLANDERS GAIN HEALTH COVERAGE DURING TWO SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIODS**

BALTIMORE, MD – A total of nearly 58,000 Marylanders enrolled in health coverage during Maryland Health Connection’s two special enrollment periods that began in February and March and ended Wednesday, July 15.

The Maryland Health Insurance Easy Enrollment program launched Feb. 26 as the first of its kind in the nation. The Comptroller of Maryland asked state tax filers to check a box on their state tax return if they lacked health insurance and desired that information to be shared with the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. Several states are in the process of looking at creating similar programs.

Since February:

- More than 41,000 filers checked the box
- More than 3,700 enrolled as of July 13

Final numbers are pending, because tax filers had until the July 15 tax filing deadline to check the box on their state tax form, and will have several weeks to enroll.

On March 16, the marketplace also opened a special enrollment period in response to the coronavirus pandemic. With support from Gov. Larry Hogan and participating insurance providers, Maryland held one of the longest special enrollment periods in the nation.

“Maryland Health Connection was quickly able to respond to this global crisis and help our Maryland families get the health coverage they need,” says Michele Eberle, executive director of Maryland Health Benefit Exchange.

Since March 16 when the coronavirus special enrollment period began, 54,028 enrolled. Of those:

- 35 percent purchased private plans
- 65 percent enrolled in Medicaid
- 90 percent of enrollees received free or reduced cost coverage
- Prince George’s County had the highest enrollment with 10,897; Montgomery County had nearly as many, with 10,594

- Ages 18-34 made up 35 percent of enrollments
- Nearly a third were self-reported Black/African American, the largest group of enrollees

Marylanders who have lost health coverage due to job loss or have experienced other major life changes may still be eligible to enroll through Maryland Health Connection within 60 days of the loss of coverage. Those who qualify for Medicaid may enroll any time of year.

To enroll, visit [MarylandHealthConnection.gov](http://MarylandHealthConnection.gov) or download the free “Enroll MHC” mobile app. For free consumer assistance, call 855-642-8572 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays.

Help is available in more than 200 languages through the call center, as well as Relay service for the deaf and hard of hearing. Trained navigators and brokers statewide offer [free help enrolling by phone](#).

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**Maryland Health Benefit Exchange:** (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of the state government. It was established in 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) and is responsible for the administration of Maryland Health Connection.

**Maryland Health Connection:** One of every six Marylanders receive their health coverage through Maryland Health Connection (MHC), the state-based health insurance marketplace. Residents can compare and enroll in health insurance as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid or financial help with private plans.