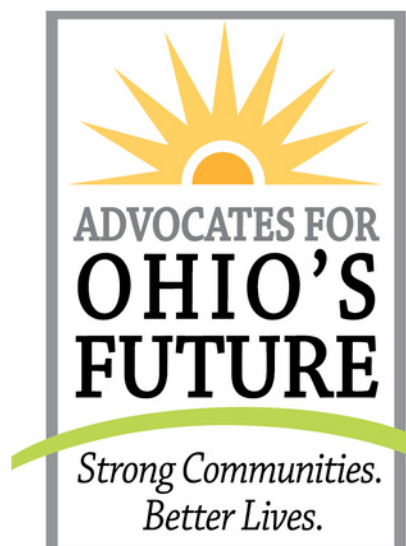


Advocates for Ohio's Future Advocacy Kit

AdvocatesForOhio.org
@Advocates4OH



***Preparing for the
End of COVID-19
Supports***





COVID CLIFF ON THE HORIZON

Since January 2020, a number of COVID-related enhanced benefits, waivers and program flexibilities have held families together, helped keep them safe and supported their most basic needs, at a time when an unprecedented pandemic raged outside their homes and made going to work a health risk. When the federal Public Health Emergency expires, these flexibilities and expansions will end causing a **COVID Cliff**, where families still fighting to gain stability will face the end of enhanced Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, the redetermination of the full Medicaid caseload for the first time in over two years, resumed federal student loan payments, and more.

This significant and sudden loss of basic needs supports will be a major hit to household budgets and lead to confusing and stressful times for families and individuals. Ohio and the nation are on the brink of an economic downturn while inflation continues to rise. **Advocates for Ohio's Future** urges the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Mike DeWine to consider the following immediate investments to ensure the state, local agencies, providers and impacted Ohioans are prepared for the unwind and to mitigate the impact of the COVID Cliff.

CRUCIAL INVESTMENTS NEEDED TO STABILIZE OHIOANS FOOD

\$331.5
MILLION

Ohio Foodbanks: \$183 Million



To address:

- Unprecedented demand from reductions in SNAP benefits
- Inflation costs
- Supply chain issues

In-Person Assisters: \$23.5 Million



To support:

- \$5 million: In-person health insurance enrollment assisters
- \$16 million: Legal Aid Services
- \$2.5 million: A public outreach campaign to inform benefits recipients of changes

County Job & Family Services: \$25 Million



To address:

- Workforce shortages
- Training needs
- Unsustainably high call volume and case management needs



Direct Service Nonprofits: \$100 Million

To support Ohio's direct service nonprofit network, which will be the first line of support when Ohioans lose benefits

TALKING POINTS

COVID Cliff on the Horizon

The federal Public Health Emergency is set to expire soon. Given the number of supports and enhanced benefits tied to it, the upcoming expiration has the potential to create a COVID Cliff where families who continue to struggle will simultaneously lose access to Medicaid and enhanced nutrition benefits while resuming payments on student loans and housing debts over a few months' time.

Ohio has over \$3 billion in flexible American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds intended to support a strong, equitable recovery from the pandemic.

This period of enhanced benefits and expanded eligibility wasn't meant to be permanent. By making targeted, immediate investments in local supportive services, the state can help build a bridge for Ohio families who will face even greater challenges in meeting their basic needs, returning to work, and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Advocates for Ohio's Future and our coalition partners urge the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Mike DeWine to consider immediate investments to ensure the state, local agencies, providers, and impacted Ohioans are prepared for the unwind and to mitigate the impact of the COVID Cliff.

TALKING POINTS

Medicaid

When the federal Public Health Emergency ends, all 3.3 million Ohio Medicaid enrollees will undergo an eligibility review for the first time in more than 2 years. The bulk of the redetermination work will fall to county jobs and family service agencies, who face considerable workforce shortages and capacity issues.

Between 400,000 and 700,000 Ohioans could be terminated from Medicaid coverage during this process. Health care is a vital work support. Maintaining coverage for all eligible Ohioans, and transitioning coverage to affordable Marketplace plans for ineligible Ohioans, is crucial to avoiding a workforce crisis.

Many Ohioans who became ineligible over the past two years are working Ohioans earning just above the income threshold. Their current employers may or may not provide comprehensive or affordable health coverage options. Health care is a vital work support. Ohio's network of certified in-person assistors and FQHCs will play a significant role in helping people who are no longer eligible for Medicaid re-enroll in affordable Marketplace plans.

Some Medicaid recipients may have their coverage terminated wrongfully or fall off the rolls due to a paperwork or mail issue. Ohio's legal aid network will play a significant role in helping navigate complicated notices, paperwork requirements and protecting people's rights to appeals during this process.

TALKING POINTS

SNAP

SNAP maximum allotments have been in place since the beginning of the pandemic and have provided hundreds of dollars of extra food assistance per month to Ohio families and older adults. These emergency benefits will end 30 days after the end of the PHE, at a time when food prices are rising and inflation is a burden to household budgets everywhere.

SNAP households will see an average loss of \$80 in benefits per person per month. Statewide, Ohio families will lose \$120 million in food purchasing power per month. Families with children and older adults will see the deepest cuts to their SNAP benefits. A few real life scenarios:

- A single parent with two children will lose \$330 per month
- A single parent with two children working full time making less than \$30K will lose \$597 per month
- An older married couple will lose \$414 per month

Ohio's Foodbank network is already facing supply chain issues, rising operating costs, and charitable fatigue. Faced with these challenges, our food support network cannot take on the current rise in demand for food assistance and will not be able to meet growing demands as SNAP benefits are reduced in a few months' time.

For these reasons and more, Ohio's elected leaders must invest in the network of support professionals who help benefits recipients navigate eligibility processes and transition Ohioans to alternate programs when needed to support the long-term stability of Ohio families.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter

When the Public Health Emergency ends, Ohioans will face:

- ➡ Medicaid eligibility reviews for the 1st time in over 2 years
- ➡ End of SNAP maximum benefits

And more. AOF has a plan to support Ohioans through these changes. #COVIDCliff
bit.ly/COVIDCliff

Ohio foodbanks are struggling amidst supply chain issues, ↑ operating costs, ↓ donations, ↓ workforce, and ↑ demand. When SNAP max benefits end this year, demand will be higher than during COVID. @GovMikeDeWine, our hunger heroes need your support. #COVIDCliff bit.ly/COVIDCliff

This year, Medicaid eligibility will be reviewed for the 1st time in > 2 years. To help navigate complicated notices & find new coverage, our legal aid network & insurance enrollment assisters will be vital. @GovMikeDeWine support our support network. #COVIDCliff bit.ly/COVIDCliff

Adding up the impact of the end of the PHE on Ohioans:

- + End of SNAP max benefits
- + Medicaid eligibility reviews
- + End of child nutrition waivers
- + Student loan restart
- + Already lost Child Tax Credit
- = Steep #COVIDCliff

Ohio must invest in recovery. bit.ly/COVIDCliff

Direct service nonprofits have been on the front lines in communities helping Ohioans weather the pandemic. As the end of COVID support nears, we must shore up our nonprofit network. @GovMikeDeWine let's help the helpers. Invest in nonprofits. #COVIDCliff bit.ly/COVIDCliff

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter

Of the many COVID-related benefits that have helped Ohioans, SNAP maximum benefits have provided hundreds of extra food \$\$ to households. When these end this year, Ohioans will face a steep #COVIDCliff. @GovMikeDeWine Invest in our hunger response network! bit.ly/COVIDCliff

We support @Advocates4OH's plan to invest in mitigating the #COVIDCliff. These investments are targeted, smart, and will support recovery from the pandemic. Sign on here to help spread the word and call on our elected leaders to take action: <https://p2a.co/WIMRHbx>

Ohio's leaders must take immediate action to prepare for the #COVIDCliff. Join me in calling on our elected leaders to make critical investments by signing @Advocates4OH's petition here: <https://p2a.co/WIMRHbx>

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

The federal Public Health Emergency will end later this year. When it does, Ohioans will face:

- Review of all Medicaid eligibility for the first time in more than 2 years.
- The end of SNAP maximum monthly benefits
- The end of many child nutrition programs and waivers

And more. To face these challenges, Advocates for Ohio's Future has a plan to support Ohioans through these changes. Check out our full plan here:

bit.ly/COVIDCliff

Ohio foodbanks are struggling amidst supply chain issues, **↑** operating costs, **↓** donations, **↓** workforce, and **↑** demand. When SNAP maximum benefits end later this year, demand for food support will be higher than it was in the height of COVID. @GovMikeDeWine our hunger heroes need your support. Check out Advocates for Ohio's Future's plan to mitigate the impact of the #COVIDCliff @ bit.ly/COVIDCliff

This year, Medicaid eligibility will be reviewed for the first time in more than 2 years. For help navigating complicated notices and finding new coverage, our legal aid network, insurance enrollment assisters, and other in-person aides will be vital. Our elected leaders must support our support network so eligible Ohioans don't lose access to essential benefits. Check out our full #COVIDCliff plan here: bit.ly/COVIDCliff

We're adding up the impact of the end of the PHE on Ohioans:

- + The end of SNAP maximum benefits
- + Medicaid eligibility reviews for the first time in more than 2 years
- + End of many child nutrition expansions
- + Student loan repayment restart
- + The already lost monthly Child Tax Credit payments
- = A Steep, Immediate #COVIDCliff

@GovMikeDeWine we must invest in recovery for Ohioans. AOF has a plan to help Ohioans and their families recover from the end of COVID-related supports. Check out our full plan here: bit.ly/COVIDCliff

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

Direct service nonprofits have been on the front lines in communities across the state helping Ohioans weather the pandemic over the last 2 years. As the end of the Public Health Emergency nears, we must shore up our nonprofit network.

@GovMikeDeWine let's help the helpers. Invest in nonprofits. Check out our full #COVIDCliff plan here: bit.ly/COVIDCliff

Of the many pandemic-related benefits that have helped Ohioans through COVID, SNAP maximum benefits have provided hundreds of extra food dollars to households each month. When these end later this year, Ohioans will face a steep #COVIDCliff. @GovMikeDeWine - Investments in our hunger response network are vital to support Ohioans through this major change. Check out our full plan here: bit.ly/COVIDCliff

We support @Advocates4OH plan to invest in mitigating the #COVIDCliff. These investments are targeted, smart, and will support recovery from the pandemic. Sign on here to help spread the word and call on @GovMikeDeWine to take action: <https://p2a.co/WLMRHbx>

Ohio's leaders must take immediate action to prepare for the #COVIDCliff. Join me in calling on our elected leaders to make critical investments by signing @Advocates4OH petition here: <https://p2a.co/WLMRHbx>

**Download Twitter & Facebook
graphics at**

bit.ly/COVIDCliffGraphics 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tips

Letters to the editor of your local newspaper are an ideal way to communicate the importance of advocating for your issue or to comment on a column, article or news coverage that discusses the issue.

While newspapers cannot print every letter they receive from their readers, there are some general guidelines to follow when developing letters to the editor that may help increase the likelihood that your letter will be published.

Letters should be in your own words.

- Often you will be provided with a “Talking Points” document to help you write your letter. You should pick one or two key points and write about how they directly affect you and your governing body, organization, or business.
- Try not to use your talking points word-for-word. These points are simply a guide – please use your own opinions and thoughts to write your letter. Many others may be working from the same document, and you want your letters to be unique to you.
- Do not repeat your opponent’s arguments or take the myth/fact approach. Restating a contrary position only serves to put it in print once again.

Letters should describe your connection to the information you are sharing.

- Describe your role in your advocacy community and how you are connected to health and human services issues.
- Be sure to maintain your credibility by making realistic statements that reflect your observations and are accurate.

Letters should be no more than 250 words.

- 200-250 words is a good length and should allow you to make your point succinctly and clearly.

Letters should be timely.

- If you are writing in response to an article written by the newspaper, make every effort to get your letter to the newspaper within one week of the original article’s publication. Reference the article you are responding to in your letter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More Tips & Sample LTE

Letters must be signed, include your city of residence, daytime phone number.

- Some newspapers will call to confirm if they choose to run your letter and will not run a letter that does not include a signature and contact information.

Letters can be submitted online.

- Many newspapers now accept letters to the editor via e-mail or through an online form. Check your local newspaper's website under "contact" or "how to submit a letter to the editor."

Letter to the Editor Samples

Below are a few Letter to the Editor samples to get you started!

- As the COVID-related federal Public Health Emergency nears expiration on July 15, 2022, the critical supports and enhanced benefits provided to families in need will expire as well. While we know this "unwind" is coming, we should be doing more as a state to ensure that those families who will simultaneously lose access to Medicaid eligibility, enhanced nutrition programs, and student loan deferment have an off-ramp that will mitigate the impact of the COVID Cliff. ***[Insert personal story about what COVID-related benefits have meant to you and how the end of these benefits will impact you.]***
- We are all feeling the sting of rising food prices and supply chain challenges at the grocery store. Food banks in Ohio are fighting the same challenges as inflation results in increased costs and decreased donations. Programs like SNAP that were able to increase their maximum allotments at the beginning of the pandemic will now see those enhanced benefits end 30 days after the end of the Public Health Emergency. This will apply to seniors and even college students who have benefited from this increase. ***[Insert personal story about what COVID-related SNAP benefits have meant to you and how the end of these benefits will impact you.]***
- ***[Insert story of your organization's work and why the end of COVID-related benefits is important to you.]*** (Organization name) is partnering with Advocates for Ohio's Future and other non-profits across Ohio to help mitigate the effect of these changes. We are urging the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Mike DeWine to consider immediate investments to ensure that the state, local agencies, and impacted Ohioans are prepared for the unwind and to soften the landing for our populations in need. Ohio has sufficient American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to ensure our state completes a strong and equitable recovery that takes care of all Ohioans. No one should have to fall over the COVID Cliff.

RESOURCES



1

[AOF COVID Cliff Fact Sheet](#)

2

[Pandemic Emergency Supports Expiration Timeline](#)

3

[Get Covered Ohio Medicaid Changes Materials](#)

4

AOF Public Health Emergency Webinar:

- [Webinar Recording](#)
- [Slide Deck](#)

5

AOF Webinar: Protecting Client Rights

- [Webinar Recording](#)
- [Slide Deck](#)

6

[AOF Petition To Mitigate the COVID Cliff](#)



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