

Key Messages

- On May 11, 2023, the public health emergency will expire. Public health emergencies allow the government to spend money quickly and develop new programs to support the public's well being.
- Even though the public health emergency is ending, COVID-19 is still a dangerous illness.
 - As of March 2023, more than 300 people were dying every day in the United States, and many more were becoming seriously ill.
 - COVID-19 can also disrupt you and your family's routines, preventing people from going to work or school.
- When the public health emergency ends, many people will see changes in their healthcare costs, insurance coverage and renewals, and food benefits.
 - **You may have to pay for COVID-19 tests and vaccines.** During the Public Health Emergency, COVID-19 vaccines and tests were free. After May 11, the cost of tests and vaccines will depend on your health insurance.
 - **You may have to pay for COVID-19 treatments if you get sick.** During the Public Health Emergency, treatment for the COVID-19 virus was free. After May 11, the cost of treatment will depend on your health insurance.
 - In some cases, tests, treatments and vaccines will be free for a few months, because the federal government already purchased them for patients. However, when the government runs out of free supplies, these services will cost money.
 - **If you have Medicaid, you will have to prove you are eligible every year.** During the Public Health Emergency, people who had health insurance through Medicaid were automatically re-enrolled each year. After March 31, people will need to prove they are eligible for Medicaid every year to keep using Medicaid health insurance.
 - **If you use SNAP, you may receive less money for food from the government.** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a government program that helps people buy food. During the Public Health Emergency, the government gave these families extra food money. Some people have already stopped receiving this extra money, depending on where they live. By the end of March, all families will stop receiving extra money.

End of the Public Health Emergency (PHE)

- There are steps you can take before the PHE ends to protect yourself and your community from COVID-19.
 - Get up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccines before May 11, while they are still free. Being up-to-date means getting both doses of a two-shot vaccine, and then getting any recommended booster shots.
 - Stock up on at-home COVID-19 tests before May 11. People are testing regardless of whether they are vaccinated and regardless of whether they feel sick because it makes our communities safer.
 - Order free COVID-19 tests from the government before May 11. A total of four tests per residential address can be ordered at no cost. Order tests online at <https://special.usps.com/testkits>, or call 1-800-232-0233 to order tests in more than 150 languages.
 - If you have medical insurance, including Medicaid, you can get free COVID-19 tests at most pharmacies through May 11. Go to your local pharmacy, give them your insurance card, and ask them if COVID-19 tests are covered under your insurance.
- There are steps you can take after the PHE ends to protect yourself and your community from COVID-19.
 - It is important to stay up-to-date with your COVID-19 vaccines, even after May 11. Look for community health clinics and other healthcare providers that offer free or reduced-cost healthcare services.
 - Use routine medical exams as well as any exams related to refugee status (e.g. domestic health assessment) as opportunities to make sure you are up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines and have enough COVID-19 tests at home.
 - If you get sick with COVID-19 after May 11, do not delay treatment. Even if you have to pay for medicine, your healthcare costs will be much higher if you wait too long and require hospitalization.
 - Practicing social distancing, avoiding gatherings with many people, staying home when you are sick, wearing a mask, and washing your hands frequently are other ways to keep yourself and others safe.

End of the Public Health Emergency (PHE)

- After the PHE ends, it is important for you to continue to receive medical care. If you have Medicaid:
 - Make sure your local public benefits agency has your most up-to-date contact information including your correct address and phone number.
 - Pay attention to any mail or messages you receive from the local government agency that manages Medicaid. If you receive a notice, act on it right away.
- There are many options for people who need help paying for food:
 - Contact your local food bank by visiting <https://foodfinder.us/> and entering your zip code
 - Some states have programs that let you buy more fresh fruits and vegetables with your SNAP benefits. Visit <https://doubleupamerica.org/> for more information.
 - Ask your child's school if there are free and reduced-price meals available.
 - Call 2-1-1, or 1-866-3-HUNGRY, or ask your resettlement case manager about other food resources.

Sources:

- KFF: [Commercialization of COVID-19 Vaccines, Treatments, and Tests: Implications for Access and Coverage](#)
- KFF: [The End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: Details on Health Coverage and Access](#)
- USDA: [Recent Changes to SNAP Benefit Amounts](#)
- HHS: [COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Transition Roadmap](#)
- HHS: [Commercialization of COVID-19 Medical Countermeasures](#)
- HHS: [FAQ: Commercialization](#)
- ECFR: [Refugee Medical Assistance](#)
- CMS: [Waivers, Flexibilities, and the Transition Forward from the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- NPHIC: [What Comes Next When the COVID Public Health Emergency Ends?](#)