



Media Release

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More than 55,000 Arkansans Already Signaled Interest in Enrolling in Private Option
DHS to begin mailing letters about enrollment process this week

More than 55,000 adults who are eligible for the "private option" have notified the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) that they want to enroll in the program. They will begin receiving letters this week explaining how to complete the enrollment process.

The health care coverage will begin January 1, 2014.

DHS used verified information it had on current clients to identify Arkansans who would be eligible for the Arkansas Health Care Independence Program, the official name of the private option. In September, the agency mailed letters to 132,000 eligible households and asked people to sign and return the letters if they wanted coverage. As a result, 55,440 adults said they wanted to enroll. In addition, 2,539 children were identified as uninsured and enrolled in ARKids First health coverage.

"This is an incredible response to a single letter. People in every county said they wanted to sign up," said DHS Director John Selig. "This clearly shows there was a need for the unique approach that Arkansas took to help ensure the lowest-income Arkansans have access to quality health insurance."

The private option is a new state law that allows Arkansas to use federal Medicaid funding to pay for private health insurance premiums for people who have incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level (about \$15,850 a year for a single adult). The State Legislature approved the measure during the most recent legislative session, and Governor Mike Beebe signed it into law in April.

People who have yet to respond to the letters DHS mailed in September may still do so. Simply sign and return the letter immediately to begin the enrollment process. If you don't still have the letter, please call 1-855-372-1084 and speak to one of our representatives.

Attached is a map that shows the number of people by county who said they wanted to enroll (the totals also include 2,539 children who are now enrolled in ARKids First).