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Enrollment Expansion for Healthy San Francisco Program in the Works

San Francisco's program that aims to provide universal health access has enrolled about 24,000 people one year after it launched, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reports. Enrollment currently is limited to people whose incomes do not exceed 300% of the federal poverty level.

The program provides qualifying residents with primary care at one of 27 participating clinics, as well as access to urgent care, mental health care, substance abuse services, pharmaceuticals and other medical care.

Members must pay a quarterly fee and make copayments depending on their incomes.

Timeline for Further Expansion

Expansion of the Healthy San Francisco program has been delayed while the city awaits a decision by the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco over the legality of a provision that requires employers to spend a minimum amount on health care in coverage for their workers, reimbursements of medical expenses or payments to the city.

After several months of meetings and calls from the San Francisco Organizing Project -- a grassroots coalition of congregations and schools -- for a timeline for expanding the program, public health officials said city residents earning up to 500% of the federal poverty level likely will be allowed to enroll beginning in February 2009.

Officials also estimate that enrollment will open to people whose incomes exceed that threshold in the summer of 2009, but officials did not estimate when all of San Francisco's uninsured residents would be enrolled in the program, the *Chronicle* reports (Knight, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7/2).

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