



**ORAL HEALTH KANSAS**  
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



## WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

The Weekly Wednesday Update is our newsletter which we email every Wednesday with oral health, health and policy updates from around the state and nationally.

To view past issues [click here](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

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## Award Nominations Are Now Open

This week we announced the [Excellence in Oral Health Awards nominations](#) are now open! Every year at our annual conference, we honor individuals and organizations who are making a difference in our oral health communities. Don't let their hard work go unnoticed. Let them know how they have made a difference! The deadline for award nominations is September 7 by 5pm and can be emailed to [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).

## Nearly Half a Million Kentuckians Now Without Dental Benefits

On June 29, the federal court blocked the implementation of the Kentucky's 1115 Medicaid waiver, which would have allowed the state to require low-income adults to provide proof of employment to qualify for Medicaid. Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services responded to the ruling by announcing it would immediately eliminate the dental and vision services covered for the 460,000 Kentuckians in the Medicaid expansion population. The removal of these essential dental services are likely to increase costly ER visits and negatively impact health outcomes. [One dental office](#) in Kentucky has already expressed they've had to turn away half of their patients due to the elimination of dental insurance. Read Kentucky Oral Health Coalition's response [here](#) or find more information [here](#).



Governor Colyer has [stated](#) his administration will continue to pursue Medicaid work requirements regardless of this court ruling in Kentucky. Kansas state officials are allowed to continue negotiating with federal officials but cannot implement a work requirement without legislative approval.



## “Public Charge” Is Impacting Oral Health

Earlier this year, news reports surfaced about White House plans to make it more difficult for immigrants to settle in the US if they might use public programs. This is known as “public charge.” The administration is expected to propose changes soon to broaden the array of services considered in public charge determinations – including Medicaid and the Children’s

Health Insurance Program, which are important for children’s access to dental coverage. The proposal has several more steps to go before it is finalized, but it is important to understand the harm it could cause to families and to the nation’s health care system now.

For many years, the test for public charge included a look at two types of benefits:

- Whether applicants ever received cash assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and whether they are likely to need that cash assistance in the future; and
- Whether applicants are likely to need long-term nursing home care paid for by the government

The draft regulation proposes changes to this rule and would expand the list of benefits that would be considered in a public charge determination. According to the Trump administration’s draft rule, the list of what is considered a “public benefit” would include:

- Cash benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Head Start’s educational and developmental supports
- Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage
- Financial help to purchase health coverage on the marketplace
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) assistance
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) assistance to ensure healthy pregnancies and breastfeeding

The impact of this proposed rule will hurt the health not only of the directly targeted individuals and families, but also the health of their larger communities. A community’s overall health depends on the health of all of its members. Without insurance, families may delay care or forego it altogether. This

means there will be more children in school, and adults in the workplace, without access to the dental and health services they need. More people delaying care until the last possible moment will strain emergency resources and hospitals', and clinics' uncompensated care burdens will increase. More information on public charge and it's impact on oral health can be found [here](#).

### How can I help?

Once the rule is posted, you can submit comments directly to the federal Department of Homeland Security. Please be on the lookout for additional communication from us asking for your support on this issue. If you are in the Kansas City area and would like to learn more, we invite you to attend a forum hosted by JUNTOS, the Center for Advancing Latino Health at KU Medical Center, with support from the REACH Healthcare Foundation. The event will offer a look at Immigrant Health in Kansas City and how the "public charge" rule could impact the community. More information can be found [here](#).



## Voter Registration Deadline for Primary Elections is July 17th!

Elections are quickly approaching! Make sure you're registered by July 17th to vote in the Primary Election on August 7th! How do I register to vote? Register to vote through the state [online](#) or by [printing out the application](#). Make sure to register by July 17th to be able to vote in Primary Election. Use [this website](#) to see if you're registered to vote and to view a sample ballot.

You can also use [TurboVote](#) to register, as well as receive direct updates on your polling place and ballot information.

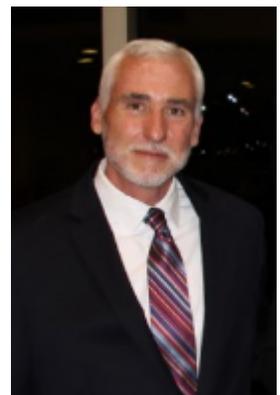
What if I can't make it to the voting booth on August 7th?

If you're unable to make it to a voting booth on August 7th for the primary election, you can do advance voting by mail or in person. Advance voting by mail begins on July 18th and can be applied for [here](#). Advance voting in person may also begin on July 23rd. [Contact your election office](#) to find out when and where.



Congratulations to Brian Smith, past OHK Board President and Dental Champions Class 3 on his new position! Brian has accepted a position as Columbus Superintendent. Brian has been the Galena, Kansas superintendent for approximately 14 years. He's been a great leader for OHK and Galena and Columbus is lucky to be gaining his expertise! We

wish you the best of luck!



## Reserve a Sugary Drink Display Today!

What is a Sugary Drink Display? It's our drink display that has 10 popular beverages and shows how much sugar is in each. You can reserve a child drink display or an adult drink display for a month. You



will get reimbursed for return shipping costs. Our drink displays are constantly on the move so it's important to reserve one as soon as possible. If your requested date is not open, we can work with you to see what day works best! Click [here](#) to fill out the reservation form.



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