



*Commonwealth of Virginia  
Office of the Governor*

## *Executive Order*

### **EXECUTIVE ORDER THIRTY-TWO (2024)**

#### **REESTABLISHING THE TASK FORCE ON MATERNAL HEALTH DATA AND QUALITY MEASURES**

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I hereby issue this Executive Order to reestablish the Task Force on Maternal Health Data and Quality Measures.

#### **Importance of the Initiative**

Supporting women's health services is key to the well-being of women and families in the Commonwealth. Enhancing quality maternal health care underscores my commitment to supporting the holistic well-being of those who are or may become mothers and their children. The Commonwealth can—and must—effectively address disparities and promote the health and dignity of every mother.

Quality health care for women, prior to pregnancy, prenatal, at birth, and postpartum, is essential. The data shows this care is especially critical in addressing the higher maternal mortality rates for African American, indigenous, and Hispanic women, as well as women in rural and underserved communities. Access to maternal health services supports thriving families by ensuring that pregnant women receive essential prenatal care, including medical screenings, nutritional support, and information and education that improve birth outcomes.

Our ongoing efforts have improved prenatal care, with additional investment and partnerships with maternal health hubs in areas such as Petersburg and have expanded access to doulas and nurse midwives who are specially trained to provide direct support for mothers before, during, and after childbirth.

We have broadened health care coverage and access for expectant mothers and are helping secure mothers' access to financial assistance, as well as increased legal enforcement to hold fathers accountable for meeting their financial responsibilities to their children. Virginia was also recently selected to participate in a National Governors Association's Improving Maternal and Child Health in Rural America Learning Collaborative that will provide insights and best practices to improve maternal health outcomes.

While we have made progress, our work in this area plays a crucial role in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, which is why further action is necessary to solidify these accomplishments.

### **Directive**

I hereby direct the State Health Commissioner to re-establish the Task Force on Maternal Health Data and Quality Measures (the Task Force) for the purpose of evaluating maternal health data collection processes to inform policies in the Commonwealth that improve maternal care, quality, and outcomes.

The Task Force shall include:

- (i) The Director of the Department of Medical Assistance Services or her designee;
- (ii) The Director of the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative or her designee;
- (iii) the Program Manager for the Maternal Mortality Review Team;
- (iv) Individuals as designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, who to the extent possible shall be:
  - a. members of nonprofits related to health information or data;
  - b. licensed obstetricians or gynecologists practicing in the Commonwealth;
  - c. individuals who are licensed nurse practitioners or registered nurses who work in the area of maternal health in the Commonwealth;
  - d. individuals who are certified nurse midwives; individuals who are licensed certified midwives in the Commonwealth;
  - e. experts in postpartum care and depression in the Commonwealth;
  - f. individuals who are experts in maternal health data collection processes;
  - g. representatives from organizations or groups in the Commonwealth that specialize in serving at-risk populations and improving equity and outcomes in maternal health;
  - h. individuals who are licensed in neonatal and premature infant care and nutrition in the Commonwealth;
  - i. representatives in maternal health from each of the health care payers; and
  - j. health care experts who serve underserved and minority populations in the Commonwealth;
  - k. the Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services or their designees;
- (v) the Secretary of Education or her designee, the Chief Diversity, Opportunity and Inclusion Officer or his designee, the Chair of the Virginia Council on Women, as well as any other stakeholders as may be appropriate appointed by the Governor.

The Task Force shall:

- (i) Monitor progress and evaluate all data from state-level stakeholders, including third-party payers, and all available electronic claims data to examine quality of care with regard to race, ethnicity, and other demographic and clinical outcomes data;

- (ii) Monitor progress and evaluate data from existing state-level sources mandated for maternal care, including the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure updates to Prenatal and Postpartum Care and Postpartum Depression;
- (iii) Examine the barriers preventing the collection and reporting of timely maternal health data from all stakeholders, including payers;
- (iv) Examine current maternal health benefit requirements and determine the need for additional benefits to protect women's health;
- (v) Evaluate the impact of Social Determinants of Health screening on pregnant women and its impact on outcomes data;
- (vi) Analyze available data one year after delivery, including local-health district level data that will assist in better understanding the scope of the issue; and
- (vii) Develop recommendations, based upon best practices, for standard quality metrics on maternal care.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Task Force upon request. The Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services shall provide staff assistance to the Task Force. The Task Force shall report its findings and conclusions to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1 of each year regarding its activities and shall conclude its work by December 1, 2025.

#### *Providing Postnatal Support Services*

By December 1, 2024, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall provide a report to the Governor outlining recommendations including budgetary, legislative, or administrative measures with the goal of improving maternal health, including maternal mental health and substance use and progress towards eliminating health disparities. This report shall include recommendations for:

- (i) The identification and provision of services, referrals, and educational initiatives that improve maternal health outcomes and address pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women.
- (ii) The provision of resources and dissemination of information pertaining to maternal mental health conditions including postpartum depression and other postpartum and perinatal mental health conditions and substance use issues affecting women including their symptoms, treatment options, and the availability of resources.

#### **Effective Date of the Executive Order**

This Executive Order shall be effective upon signing and shall remain in full force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order or directive. Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 26<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024.



*Glenn Youngkin*  
Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:

*Kelly Gee*  
Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth