

## The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

### Why a State Match is Bad for Kentucky's Children & Families

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports voluntary, evidence-based home visiting models in Kentucky and every state as well as many territories and tribal communities. Home visiting breaks multi-generational cycles of poverty and puts families on the path to good health, educational success and economic stability.

Despite strong bipartisan support and decades of evidence that MIECHV-funded home visiting programs work, Congress allowed MIECHV to expire on September 30. One funding renewal proposal would undermine Kentucky's home visiting program, HANDS, by imposing a dollar-for-dollar state match.

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#### **Kentucky may be forced to cut home visiting services if required to match federal MIECHV money.**

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The state match requirement works by limiting the state's use of their MIECHV grants to 50 percent of the home visiting services supported by MIECHV. States must come up with the other half of the money needed to provide MIECHV services.

**To meet the required funding match, Kentucky will be forced to double its state investment in home visiting,** a difficult task given economic and budget challenges. Doubling its investment could require Kentucky to cut other programs or services. This "rob Peter to pay Paul" approach is likely to negatively impact the health, education and well-being of Kentucky's children and families.

**Kentucky may be forced to cut existing non-MIECHV-funded home visiting programs operating in the majority of the state's counties to divert funding to MIECHV-supported home visiting,** potentially leaving thousands of children and families without home visiting services. Kentucky should not be penalized for implementing home visiting programs across the state in a way that meets the needs of its residents.

**If Kentucky is unable to meet the match, the state may be forced to cut MIECHV home visiting services in part or entirely,** causing local programs to shut down, home visitors to lose or leave their jobs, and families to lose the services they rely on. And once the home visitor-family relationships at the heart of program – the very relationships that make it so successful – are lost, the damage will be irreversible.

**Even if Kentucky meets the state match, the imposition of the requirement will restrict the flexibility the state has to do what is needed for its residents.** Currently, Kentucky has the freedom to invest in and implement early childhood programs, including home visiting, in a way that best serves Kentucky's children and families. The state match will prevent Kentucky from helping residents in communities across the entire state by placing new restrictions on how the money is used for home visiting.



#### **What former Gov. Steve Beshear said about home visiting in Kentucky:**

*"The HANDS program is vital in helping young families raise children who are healthier and more prepared to begin their academic careers, while helping the parents return to the workforce."*

Source: [The Prichard Committee](#)