



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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### Plan *first* is an insurance program that helps Alabama women

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Many Alabama women are not aware that they qualify for free family planning insurance coverage. **Plan *first*** is a special type of insurance coverage designed to cover family planning services. To qualify, a woman must be 19 through 44 years of age, live in Alabama, be a U.S. citizen or in this country legally, have not had surgery to prevent pregnancy, and have a household income at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level.

**Plan *first*** enrolled providers are located throughout the state and are available from clinics, county health departments, private physicians' offices, nurse midwives, nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants.

Services offered by **Plan *first*** include the following:

- An annual family planning exam that includes a pap smear and a breast exam
- Lab work
- Various medically prescribed family planning methods such as pills and injections
- Tubes tied for women 21 years of age or older
- Special help from a nurse or a social worker to support the woman's effort to continue with her personal pregnancy spacing plan

"With family planning, mothers and babies have a better chance of being healthy and parents can provide for their children both financially and emotionally," said Dr. Grace Thomas, medical director of Women's Health of the Bureau of Family Health Services. "We want to assist in the development and practice of intentional behavior, whether it is a choice to delay or avoid pregnancy or to conceive. This is what family planning is all about."

A large portion of Alabama's women of childbearing age will meet the income criteria. A woman from a family of three may have an annual income of up to \$22,836 and qualify for **Plan *first***.

Applications for **Plan *first*** are available from the Alabama Department of Public Health, county health departments, and providers of services to pregnant women. Women will want to bring proof of U.S. citizenship such as a birth certificate and proof of identity as shown by government-issued card such as a driver's license.

For more information and for the **Plan first** providers in your area, call the **Plan first** toll-free hotline at 1-888-737-2083 or your local county health department.

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