



# Counting Colorado's Uninsured: The Latest Estimates

## Current Population Survey (CPS)

September 12, 2012

### Introduction

*The U.S. Census Bureau on September 12, 2012 released the annual estimates from the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the number and percentage of Americans who lacked health insurance coverage in calendar year 2011.<sup>a</sup>*

### Uninsured: The Overall Numbers

#### United States

- Nationally, an estimated 48.6 million Americans, or 15.7 percent of the population, were uninsured in 2011. That's down significantly from 50.0 million, or 16.3 percent, in 2010.

#### Colorado

- According to the CPS, an estimated 788,000 Coloradans, or 15.7 percent, were uninsured in 2011. That compares with 656,000, or 13.0 percent, in 2010. Colorado was one of only two states that recorded a statistically significant increase in the uninsured rate between 2010 and 2011.<sup>b</sup> Note that the 2011 CPS uninsured rate aligns with the 2011 Colorado Health Access Survey (CHAS), which estimated that 15.8 percent of the state's population was uninsured.<sup>c</sup>

### The Insured and the Uninsured: Breaking Down Coverage in Colorado and the U.S.

Table 1. Insurance Coverage, Colorado and the United States, 2010-11

	U.S.		Colorado	
	2010	2011	2010	2011
Not Covered	16.3%	15.7%	13.0%	15.7%
Insured	83.7%	84.3%	87.0%	84.3%
Private insurance	64.0%	63.9%	70.0%	67.9%
Employment-based	55.3%	55.1%	58.4%	57.4%
Direct purchase	9.8%	9.8%	12.9%	11.5%
Government	31.0%	32.2%	27.8%	26.8%
Medicaid	15.9%	16.5%	12.1%	12.6%
Medicare	14.5%	15.2%	12.0%	13.0%
Military	4.2%	4.4%	6.8%	4.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding and individuals reporting multiple sources of coverage.

<sup>a</sup> Data available from the U.S. Census Bureau at [http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income\\_wealth/cb12-172.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb12-172.html).

<sup>b</sup> Source: State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC). <http://www.shadac.org/blog/census-releases-2011-cps-estimates-insurance-coverage>

<sup>c</sup> Data available from The Colorado Trust at <http://www.cohealthaccesssurvey.org/>.

## Methodology and Limitations

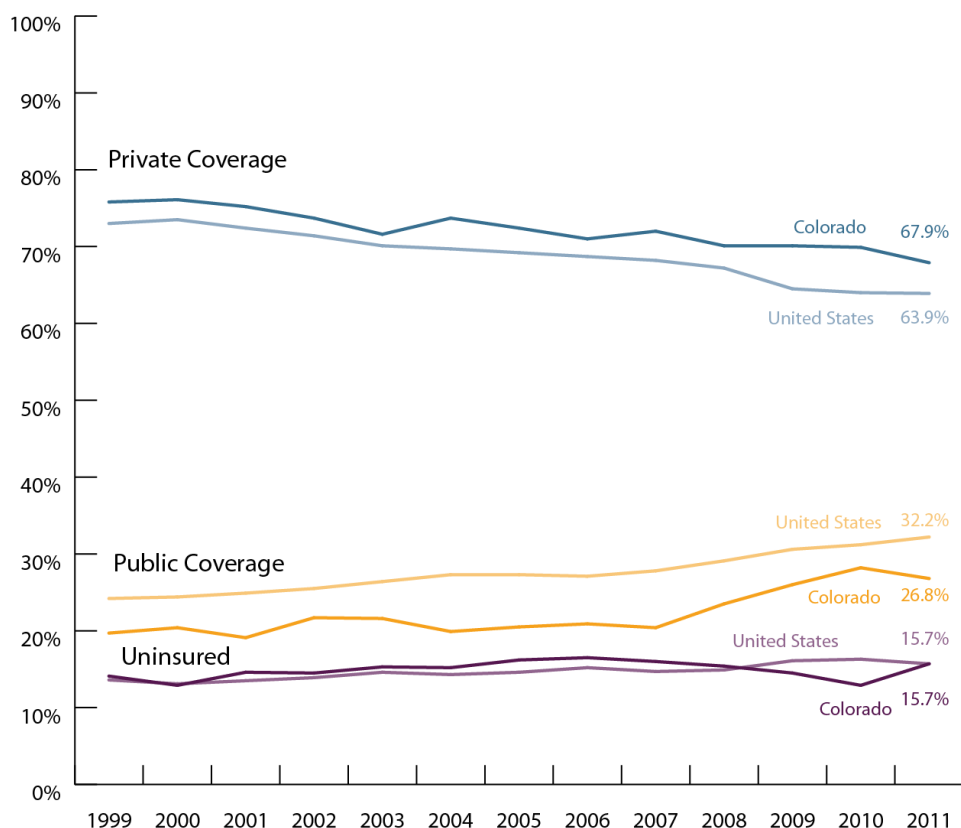
The estimates are based on sample interviews collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and came from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). Interviews were conducted over a three-month period in February, March and April of 2012, with most data collection occurring in March. Estimates are obtained by weighting the sample results with population

estimates of the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. and each state. The final estimates are subject to sampling error.

Additional estimates of Colorado's uninsured rates are expected in the coming weeks from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

## A Retrospective: Health Insurance Coverage, 1999-2011

Graph 1. Insurance Coverage, Colorado and the United States, 1999-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding and individuals reporting multiple sources of coverage.

Among sources of health insurance estimates that are currently available, the CPS is one of the few that allows long-term trending of data at both the state and national levels. As seen in Graph 1, the percentage of Coloradans with private insurance has decreased since 1999. This holds true nationally as well.

In contrast, the percentage of Coloradans with publicly-funded health insurance (Medicare, Medicaid/

Child Health Plan *Plus*, or military coverage) stayed relatively flat from 1999 to 2007, and then rose from 2007 to 2011. This trend was apparent on the national level, though not to the same degree.

The uninsured rate for both Colorado and the U.S. as a whole remained stable during this time period, with both estimates at 15.7 percent in 2011.



CHI is a trusted source of independent and objective health information, data and analysis for the state's health care leaders. CHI, celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2012, is funded today by the Caring for Colorado Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, The Colorado Trust and the Colorado Health Foundation.

303 E. 17th Ave., Suite 930, Denver, CO 80203 • 303.831.4200 • [coloradohealthinstitute.org](http://coloradohealthinstitute.org)