STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P STREET
O. BOX 942732
CRAMENTO, CA 94234-7320

December 29, 1989
Letter No.: 89-114

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

SUBJECT: ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 75 AND SENATE BILL (SB) 822 - OUTSTATIONING OF ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

The Legislature has declared that early perinatal care is the most effective measure against infant mortality and lifetime disabilities caused by low birth weight. It is believed that more women would be able to obtain perinatal services earlier if their eligibility could be determined at the location where they regularly receive perinatal care. With this in mind, Assembly Bill (AB) 75 and Senate Bill (SB) 822 were signed by the Governor on October 2, 1989.

AB 75 allocates funds from the Cigarette and Tobacco Tax (Proposition 99) to various health related programs. One of the many provisions in AB 75 mandated a state-only funded expansion of the Medi-Cal program to provide coverage, at no share of cost, to pregnant women and infants up to one year of age whose family incomes are over 185 percent but not more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. This expansion will be implemented January 1, 1990. AB 75 also provided expanded program funding to outstation Eligibility Workers (EWs) to facilitate access to Medi-Cal applications for pregnant women.

SB 822 allows County Welfare Departments (CWDs) to petition the Department of Health Services (DHS) for approval and funding to implement a plan for the outstationing of EWs at alternative sites. It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this legislation, to encourage the placement of EWs at alternative sites, especially perinatal clinics, to enroll qualified pregnant women in the Medi-Cal program. It is not the Legislature's intent to affect existing law with respect to currently outstationed EWs in other types of facilities (e.g., county hospitals). In addition to allowing CWDs to petition the Department with their plans for outstationing EWs, this bill also allows an augmentation to the Department's County Cost Control Plan to fund any incremental costs associated with outstationing EWs in sites where low-income pregnant women receive perinatal care.

This letter is to inform you of the information counties will need to provide when submitting their petitions for incremental funding established by AB 75 and SB 822. Each County Welfare Department should include in its petition a plan for the outstationing of EWs at alternative sites, which should include all of the following:

1) the number of Eligibility Workers to be outstationed;
2) a list of all clinic sites within the county for which onsite EWs are being proposed. This list should indicate the type of clinics involved. Priority will be given to clinics which concentrate on delivering perinatal services to poor women;
3) an estimate of the number of new Medi-Cal eligible perinatal care patients who are expected to be served by the clinics in this fiscal year and next fiscal;
4) approximate number of EW hours/days per week which would be required to process the applications at each site;
5) an estimate of the staff travel time required to implement this plan;
6) the language capabilities needed by the onsite workers;
7) how clinic staff and EWs will interface and how EWs will be organized, trained and supervised;
8) fiscal analysis of the incremental funding;
9) description of the mechanism counties will use to oversee the quality assurance of their eligibility determinations. Counties will be required to submit an annual report to the Department covering actual caseloads served and a county assessment of the effectiveness of the outstationing plan. The Department will review these reports to determine if the plan should be renewed, altered, discontinued or incorporated into the county administrative funding base.

You should be aware that the Department has had several meetings with clinics/provider associations. These clinics are aware of the funding available to counties for the outstationing of EWs in alternative sites and many are interested in having an EW outstationed. We have suggested to these clinics that they express this interest to their counties. We encourage you to network with these clinics in developing your outstationing plan.

In determining whether to approve the plan and the level of funding, the Department will review the petitions for: 1) compliance with the guidelines; 2) potential to increase eligibility determinations and access to Medi-Cal perinatal services by pregnant women; 3) potential success rate of the applications processed by the outstationed EW; and 4) amount of travel and training time requested to implement and continue the outstationing plan.

The Department shares the concerns of the Legislature and is anxious to begin reviewing these petitions. Upon completion of the reviews, counties will receive a written notice indicating whether their plan has been approved, and if so, what amount of funding they will receive. Along with this information, counties will also be provided additional information regarding submitting their annual report. If denied, counties will receive a written notice indicating the reason for denial. Please call if you have any questions regarding the petitions.

We are requesting counties to submit their petitions by January 22, 1990. Petitions should be sent to:

Outstationing of Eligibility Workers - Perinatal Coordinator
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch
California Department of Health Services
714 P Street, Room 1792
Sacramento, CA 95814

Again, should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Lisa Reagan of my staff at (916) 322-6238. If you have any questions regarding the fiscal presentation in your petition, please contact Terry Quinn of the County Administrative Expense Unit at (916) 323-0632.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch

cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons
Medi-Cal Program Consultants

Expiration Date: December 29, 1990