



**California Children's Services Program
COVID-19 Policy Guidance
Frequently Asked Questions**

Updated December, 2020

This frequently asked questions (FAQ) document provides responses to questions received from California Children's Services (CCS) program stakeholders regarding programmatic flexibilities issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this guidance is to provide temporary direction during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) and to ensure that CCS clients are able to access, without delay, medically necessary essential services.

A. Continuous Coverage

1. How will the Department address Medi-Cal and CCS Program coverage during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has extended continuous coverage for CCS beneficiaries who are also enrolled in Medi-Cal, through the end of the COVID-19 PHE. Continuous enrollment means that CCS will not disenroll a CCS/Medi-Cal beneficiary, except in cases where an individual is reported to be deceased, an individual is no longer a resident of the state, an individual requests to be discontinued from CCS, or an individual turns 21 years old. Please note that CCS beneficiaries who are concurrently enrolled in Medi-Cal will continue to have access to medically necessary services through Medi-Cal, even if they are disenrolled from CCS.

These flexibilities do not extend to CCS beneficiaries who are not enrolled in Medi-Cal, pending further notice from DHCS.

2. How should CCS counties handle CCS reinstatements during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: Counties should process reinstatements to restore coverage for CCS/Medi-Cal beneficiaries who have been disenrolled, dating back to April 1, 2020. Individuals do not have to request the reinstatement of their CCS eligibility.

B. CCS State Fair Hearings and Appeals

1. Can CCS State Fair Hearings and Appeals be conducted via video conference or telephone during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: During the COVID-19 PHE, CCS State Fair Hearings and Appeals conducted by both the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and DHCS' Office of Administrative Hearings and Appeals (OAHA) may be conducted via video conference or telephone.

- 2. Will CCS Notice of Hearing letters include information about video conference and telephone options during the COVID-19 PHE? What if the CCS beneficiary needs the documents related to their hearing in a language besides English?**

Answer: Notice of Hearing and Notice of Action letters from either CDSS or DHCS' OAHA now include video conference or telephone options. CDSS and DHCS' OAHA will, upon request, provide any document related to the hearing in the beneficiary's preferred language.

- 3. Will extensions be granted to request a CCS State Fair Hearing during the COVID-19 PHE?**

Answer: CCS beneficiaries who are concurrently enrolled in Medi-Cal will be allowed to request a fair hearing up to 210 days from the date the date that a notice of action is mailed. DHCS does not currently have authority to extend this action to CCS State-only beneficiaries.

- 4. How will negative actions occurring during the executive order period of a CCS State Fair Hearing be handled during the COVID-19 PHE?**

Answer: DHCS has suspended negative actions following a fair hearing for CCS beneficiaries who are concurrently enrolled in Medi-Cal. DHCS does not currently have authority to extend this action to CCS State-only beneficiaries.

- 5. Will aid paid pending continue for CCS beneficiaries who do not appear at their scheduled CCS State Fair Hearing during the COVID-19 PHE?**

Answer: Aid paid pending will continue for CCS/Medi-Cal beneficiaries who do not appear at a scheduled CCS fair hearing. DHCS does not currently have authority to extend this action to CCS State-only beneficiaries.

C. Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

- 1. What flexibilities have been applied to prior authorization for CCS beneficiaries who require DME during the COVID-19 PHE?**

Answer: DHCS has suspended prior authorization requirements temporarily for Durable Medical Equipment Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) in instances where the DMEPOS is lost, destroyed, irreparably damaged, rendered unusable, or unavailable as a result of the COVID-19 PHE.

- 2. What flexibilities have been applied to replacement requirements for DME during the COVID-19 PHE?**

Answer: CCS counties have the flexibility to waive replacement requirements such as the face-to-face requirement, a new physician's order, and new medical necessity documentation are not required.

3. Are there changes in the process for submitting requests for DME during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: No, there have not been any changes to the process for submitting requests for DME. A Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) or Service Authorization Request (SAR), as applicable, are still required for DMEPOS and must include appropriate documentation; however, TARs/SARs may be submitted after the services have been rendered. In addition, providers and suppliers must still provide and maintain documentation indicating the need for the benefit, and in the instance of DME, indicate if the equipment was lost, destroyed, irreparably damaged, rendered unusable, or unavailable as a result of the COVID-19 PHE.

D. CCS Program Pharmacy

1. Will flexibilities be provided for CCS approved prescription supplies during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: For the duration of the PHE, DHCS Medi-Cal (including CCS) will allow up to a 100-day supply per dispensing of any covered drug, medical supplies, or prescription formulas and covered enteral supplements, including mail and home delivery by Medi-Cal enrolled pharmacies. Utilization limits on quantity, frequency, and duration of medications dispensed to CCS clients may be waived by means of an approved SAR if there is a documented medical necessity to do so. Pharmacies are advised to incorporate the statement "Patient impacted by COVID-19" within the Special Instructions section of the SAR.

2. Will flexibilities be provided for CCS approved prescription delivery during the COVID-19 PHE?

Answer: The flexibilities described in item D.1 above apply to all CCS prescriptions, including those that are provided via mail and home delivery by Medi-Cal enrolled pharmacies.