

**California Department of Health Care Services  
Proposed Trailer Bill Language**

**Full Scope Medi-Cal for Adults 65 Years of Age or Older  
Regardless of Immigration Status**

**FACT SHEET**

**Issue Title: Full Scope Medi-Cal for Adults 65 Years of Age or Older Regardless of Immigration Status.** This proposal would provide full scope Medi-Cal coverage to all eligible individuals 65 years of age or older, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status.

**Background:** In general, individuals who do not have a satisfactory immigration status for full scope Medi-Cal, but who are otherwise eligible, receive restricted scope Medi-Cal benefits, which are limited to emergency and pregnancy-related services, and when needed, long-term care.

Pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 75 (Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review, Chapter 18, Statutes of 2015), Section 14007.8 was added to the Welfare and Institutions Code and amended by SB 4 (Lara, Chapter 709, Statutes of 2015) to provide individuals under age 19, who do not have satisfactory immigration status, or are unable to establish satisfactory immigration status, with full scope Medi-Cal benefits. SB 104 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 67, Statutes of 2019) extended full scope Medi-Cal coverage to eligible individuals 19 through 25 years of age, inclusive, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status.

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) proposes to extend full scope Medi-Cal coverage to eligible individuals 65 years of age or older regardless of their citizenship or immigration status.

**Justification for the Change:** Providing full scope Medi-Cal to all eligible individuals, who are 65 years of age or older regardless of citizenship or immigration status will help more Californians obtain comprehensive health care services. This proposal is also expected to support the health care safety net for all by reducing the use of emergency rooms for routine health care needs and by compensating non-emergency care providers who may otherwise provide uncompensated services. Finally, expanding full scope Medi-Cal coverage will further help to improve the health care of eligible individuals, and as a result, will also protect the health of all Californians.

Specifically, this proposal would:

- Provide full scope Medi-Cal to otherwise eligible applicants and beneficiaries 65 years of age or older, regardless of citizenship or immigration status.
- Require the coverage to begin after the Director of DHCS informs the Department of Finance, in writing, that systems have been programmed for implementation of the expanded coverage, but no sooner than January 1, 2021.

- Require when implementing this coverage, that DHCS claim federal funds to the extent DHCS determines they are available, and use available state-only funds, only to the extent federal financial participation is not available.
- Require eligible individuals to enroll in a managed care plan, where available, to the extent allowed by State and Federal law.
- Transition beneficiaries 65 years of age or older, who are receiving restricted scope Medi-Cal, to full scope Medi-Cal, when DHCS implements this proposal.
- Continue to allow DHCS to implement through all-county letters until regulations are adopted. DHCS would continue to provide a status report to the Legislature on a semiannual basis until regulations have been adopted.
- Continue to provide DHCS with contract exemption authority.

**Summary of Arguments in Support:** Providing full scope Medi-Cal to all eligible individuals who are 65 years of age or older, will help more Californians obtain comprehensive health care services, reduce the use of emergency rooms for routine health care needs by immigrants who otherwise would receive restricted scope Medi-Cal, provide funding for some uncompensated care, and protect the public health of all Californians.

**Estimate Issue # and Title:** Policy Change 215: Undocumented Older Californians Expansion

**Additional Information:** In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) is a covered benefit for this population under the Medi-Cal program. The costs for IHSS are reflected in the California Department of Social Services' budget.