

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES (DHCS) JUSTICE-INVOLVED (JI) REENTRY PROGRAM ALL COUNTY WEBINAR SERIES – MARCH 25, 2026

Date:

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Time:

10:00 am – 11:00 am PST

DHCS Staff Presenters:

Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director; Sheela Abucay, Branch Chief, Justice-Involved Reentry Branch; Jodi Mulligan-Pfile, Health Program Specialist, Justice-Involved Reentry Branch; Penny Sanchez, Branch Chief, Operations Management Branch; Kasandra Soto, Chief, Operations Management Branch

Additional Information:

Please refer to the PowerPoint Presentation used during the meeting for additional context and details.

Introduction and Summary of Content

The DHCS All County Webinar series addressed topics related to the Justice-Involved Reentry Program. Participants received updates on the Justice-Involved Initiative, and the following topics were covered during the meeting:

- » DHCS New Meeting Series – All County Webinar
- » JI Initiative Progress Updates
- » New Readiness Assessment Template and Demo
- » JI Screening Portal
- » Forthcoming Guidance
- » Managed Care Plan (MCP)/Correctional Facility (CF) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- » Successful Reentry Story

The meeting concluded with a question period, allowing attendees to ask questions and gain clarity on specific topics and offer feedback to DHCS and panel members.

Topics Discussed

DHCS New Meeting Series – All County Webinar

Sheela Abucay, Branch Chief of the Justice-Involved Reentry Branch

DHCS announced a new monthly webinar series for all counties, scheduled for the last Wednesday of each month, regardless of pre-release service status. The new meeting series will enable DHCS to provide regular program updates to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), county adult jails, and county youth correctional facilities (CF) partners in the state to ensure all stakeholders are receiving consistent messaging. This webinar series will allow CF to also share best practices and lessons learned. DHCS will also use the calls to provide technical assistance and support county implementation efforts. The webinar series will further contribute to DHCS' larger monitoring and oversight strategy for the JI Reentry Initiative.

In addition to the new monthly webinar series, DHCS is also implementing a new County Liaison model where each CF will be assigned a primary point of contact to support implementation of the JI Reentry Initiative. The purpose of the model is to strengthen and streamline communications between DHCS and Counties. County Liaisons will provide consistent technical assistance during onboarding and ongoing operations and will serve as the primary point of contact for questions, issue escalation, and coordination.

To confirm who is your County Liaison, please reach out to our Advisory Inbox: CalAIMJusticeAdvisoryGroup@dhcs.ca.gov .

JJ Initiative Progress Updates

Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director of Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP)

DHCS provided an in-depth update on the JI Reentry Initiative, highlighting collaboration between CF, managed care plans (MCPs), and behavioral health agencies, as well as sharing first-year impact data and member success stories. To learn more, you can access the [Impact Report](#) on the [JI Initiative Webpage](#).

DHCS outlined the 2026 priorities focusing on supporting counties to meet the October 1st go-live deadline and providing updates on the renewal of the 1115 waiver authority to continue and strengthen the JI Initiative.

DHCS provided an update on PATH Round 4 funding, explaining the allocation process, award tiers, and the focus on supporting go-live implementation efforts for correctional facilities.

New Readiness Assessment Template and Demo

Jodi Mulligan-Pfile, Health Program Specialist, JI Reentry Branch

During the All County call the Readiness Assessment discussion focused on introducing the new Readiness Assessment Template and providing a demonstration to county partners. The presentation outlined how the template is designed to help counties systematically evaluate their preparedness for the JI Reentry Initiative go-live. The discussion emphasized practical guidance on completing the assessment, explained its role in identifying areas requiring additional support, and encouraged counties to use the tool to ensure compliance with the October 1st deadline.

JJ Screening Portal Updates

Penny Sanchez and Kasandra Soto, Operations Management Branch

DHCS presented updates on the JJ Screening Portal, including user experience improvements, batch processing capabilities, Application Programming Interface (API) development, and the Early Access Simulation environment for training. DHCS highlighted new features designed to streamline the screening process, including enhanced user navigation and improved data integration with case management systems. The presenters also discussed recent security upgrades aimed at safeguarding sensitive member information and ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations.

Additionally, the team shared feedback from pilot counties that had tested the JJ Screening Portal's latest functionalities, noting increased efficiency in processing screenings and positive user experiences. Penny and Kasandra encouraged counties to actively participate in upcoming training sessions and provided a timeline for future enhancements that will further support the JJ Initiative's go-live readiness. These updates reaffirm the commitment to equipping counties with reliable tools and resources as they prepare for the October 1st deadline.

Forthcoming Guidance

Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director

DHCS addressed ongoing challenges and questions from counties, including unknown release dates, billing codes, policy guide updates, Enhanced Care Management (ECM) toolkit development, and implementation guidance for small and rural counties.

DHCS discussed that managing unknown release dates continues to be a challenge for county jails and CFs; however, the short-term model provides the best practice timelines and flexibility for a CF to provide JI Reentry services. DHCS is evaluating other solutions, including retroactive reimbursement timelines. A CF can have up to 180 days from the date of service to submit a claim for 100% rate reimbursement.

DHCS acknowledged that the release of the JI benefit guide is forthcoming and emphasized its significance in supporting counties through the JI Reentry Initiative transition. The guide will provide detailed instructions on eligibility criteria, covered services, and step-by-step processes for accessing benefits under the new framework. Counties were informed that the benefit guide will clarify common areas of confusion, such as billing protocols, timelines for service provision, and documentation requirements, thereby facilitating smoother implementation and compliance.

The release of the newly formatted Policy and Operations Guide was addressed as an upcoming development essential for supporting counties during the JI Reentry Initiative transition. While the current guide remains relevant, DHCS recognizes that it is a comprehensive document; therefore, they are taking a phased approach to enhancing and updating its content in manageable sections. This process begins with the sections that were shared during the All-County call, ensuring that counties receive timely and focused guidance on the most critical topics. The guide will provide detailed instructions on eligibility criteria, covered services, and step-by-step processes for accessing benefits under the new framework. Counties were informed that the benefit guide will clarify common areas of confusion, such as billing protocols, timelines for service provision, and documentation requirements, thereby facilitating smoother implementation and compliance.

DHCS is actively working on the development of an ECM Toolkit. This toolkit is intended to support counties by offering guidance and resources tailored to the implementation of ECM within the context of the JI Reentry Initiative. The toolkit will be created in collaboration with county probation officers and will include critical guidance on

probation requirements, such as understanding court orders and avoiding probation violations. It will also address the need for proper release and consent processes so ECM providers can share information with probation officers while respecting privacy and legal boundaries. Additionally, the toolkit will offer resources for accessing community supports to aid successful reentry, with input from reentry providers and community-based organizations to ensure practical and effective guidance for ECM providers supporting individuals transitioning back into the community.

DHCS acknowledged receiving numerous inquiries from small and rural counties regarding the implementation of the JI Reentry Initiative. To address these concerns, DHCS is developing specific guidance, informed by internal discussions and input from key informants, that will focus on the unique challenges faced by correctional facilities in small rural areas. This forthcoming guidance will address issues such as balancing program implementation costs with potential reimbursement revenue, limited community resources—including restricted provider availability and pharmacy access during nights and weekends—and the responsibilities of counties that contract out youth correctional services or lack their own facilities. Additionally, DHCS will clarify readiness assessment requirements and obligations for counties participating in re-entry and pre-release services. DHCS emphasized its ongoing collaboration with county partners and its commitment to providing clear, actionable guidance to support small and rural counties during the transition.

Managed Care Plan/Correctional Facility MOU

Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director

Starting in 2025, counties are required to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between their managed care plans (MCPs) and correctional facilities (CFs). DHCS emphasized that this coordination is crucial for ensuring a seamless connection between the correctional facility and the managed care plan, regardless of existing provider relationships. The MOU facilitates long-term support for individuals transitioning out of incarceration, making sure that the services they need are covered by their Medi-Cal plan once they re-enter the community. Counties are encouraged to proactively work with their MCPs to build these relationships, as this collaboration not only strengthens the program but also improves outcomes for justice-involved individuals after release. Resources and further details are available on the DHCS website for counties needing guidance. DHCS held a webinar on the MOU template and the recording can be accessed on the DHCS [YouTube JI Playlist](#)

The Why – Successful Reentry

Autumn Boylan, Deputy Director

The closing remarks focused on "the why" behind the JI Reentry Initiative, emphasizing the importance of supporting successful re-entry for justice-involved individuals. DHCS underscored that the goal is to ensure people leaving incarceration receive coordinated care, including scheduling medical appointments, connecting with resources, and having ongoing support from ECM providers.

A moving success story was shared from a real program participant, who described feeling cared for and supported, especially during a difficult time of homelessness and addiction. With the help of their care manager, they were able to attend parenting classes, demonstrate personal growth to the court, and begin rebuilding their life for themselves and their family. This testimonial reflects the initiative's broader mission: to create positive outcomes for justice-involved individuals, their families, and their communities. The meeting concluded with appreciation for the collective effort and a commitment to continued collaboration in future meetings.

Frequently Asked Questions

During the All-County monthly call, DHCS collected and tracked several questions submitted by participants through the chat and Q&A feature.

Below are the questions received, along with DHCS's responses

County Liaison Questions

- » Question: Are County Liaisons for the County staff providing Pre-release Services, not staff at the Child Welfare Department processing Medi-Cal applications?
 - DHCS Response: The DHCS County Liaison serves as the primary point of contact for Correctional Facilities and partners delivering JI Reentry Services. If staff have questions about processing Medi-Cal applications, they may email the assigned DHCS County Liaison for their county or contact CalAIMJusticeAdvisoryGroup@dhcs.ca.gov for assistance.
- » Question: Is the County Liaison going to work with the county staff working on the pre-release services or the county staff working on the MC pre-release application processing?

- DHCS Response: The County Liaison serves as the primary point of contact for each county and plays a key role in supporting counties with implementation of pre-release services. Your county liaison is available to support in readiness assessment, provide clarification on policy and operational requirements related to CalAIM Justice-Involved pre-release services, and provide technical assistance
- » Question: Who will the County Liaison be reaching out to in each county? Will you use the PATH or Readiness Assessment contacts? Or another contact list?
 - DHCS Response: The County Liaison will first contact the individual indicated as the point of contact on the submitted Readiness Assessment. After this initial outreach, they will request support in identifying the relevant participants for check-in meetings, technical assistance sessions, and communications.
- » Question: Does DHCS have plans to post the County Liaison contact list?
 - DHCS Response: At this time, DHCS is not posting a public list of County Liaisons. Instead, each County Liaison will be proactively reaching out directly to their assigned county to introduce themselves, share their contact information, and begin establishing regular communications. County Liaisons will be reaching out to counties to assist with readiness and provide technical assistance. Counties are free to engage with their County Liaison as needed, and Liaisons will maintain contact and schedule check-ins appropriately. If your county liaison has not reached out, please email CalAIMJusticeAdvisoryGroup@dhcs.ca.gov.

Readiness Assessment Questions

- » Question: We have already submitted our readiness assessment. It is currently pending. If it comes back with questions/suggestions, will it come back in this format?
 - DHCS Response: Readiness Assessments submitted in the old format will not be converted into the new electronic format. However, we are still reviewing them based on the requirements in the Nintex form. If we find anything additional that is needed, we will let you know—but this will not delay your go-live. Any outstanding items will be listed in an issue/action summary, which you can return to us using the conditional approval reporting form that we will provide.

PATH Funding Questions

- » Question: The last Budget Modification for PATH 3 is due 3/31/2026. Many counties have not launched yet. Will there be other opportunities for BMs in the future?
 - DHCS Response: DHCS recommends that counties reach out to their Technical Assistance Third Party Administrator, Public Consulting Group, for questions regarding PATH 3 budget modification requests.
- » Question: When will counties who requested PATH 3 expenditure date extensions be notified of the decision?
 - DHCS Response: DHCS recommends that counties reach out to their Technical Assistance Third Party Administrator, Public Consulting Group, for questions regarding PATH 3 expenditure date extensions and notifications.
- » Question: Is the state considering any sustainable funding streams for county facilities once PATH funding sunsets? While we will be able to bill Medi-Cal, many responsibilities required of county facilities under the Readiness Plan are not Medi-Cal billable. Maintaining the expected level of structure, staffing, and ongoing operational readiness will require stable, long-term funding. Can you speak to whether the state is planning for this?
 - DHCS Response: The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) recognizes the need for sustainable, long-term funding to support county facilities beyond the one-time PATH funding. To address this, DHCS is working to implement a new Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA) program specifically for Justice-Involved (JI) individuals. This program is designed to provide an ongoing funding stream for certain administrative activities required under the prerelease mandate—activities that are currently supported by PATH funds. DHCS has developed a Justice-Involved MAA Operational Plan and a comparison matrix of existing MAA programs (such as County-based MAA, School-based MAA, and Mental Health MAA) and the proposed JI MAA. If approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), this new JI MAA program would allow correctional facilities to claim reimbursement for planning and administrative activities related to the Justice-Involved Reentry Initiative. At this time, DHCS is in the process of submitting the JI MAA proposal to

CMS and cannot provide a specific timeline for approval. However, the package is nearly final and ready for submission. If approved, this program would help ensure a more stable and sustainable funding source for county facilities to maintain the necessary structure, staffing, and operational readiness required by the initiative.

Billing Questions

- » Question: When trying to come up with FFS fee schedules, we see the document that references the CPT and HCPC codes to be used. We have gone to the DHCS site where we can enter the code and find a fee. Is this the recommended way of finding fees? Also on that fee schedule site, there is a reference to a conversion rate of fixed. Does that mean that there is no conversion for different licenses such as MD, LMFT etc.?
 - DHCS Response: Yes, this is the recommended process of finding fees. This database is updated when State Plan amendments or rate changes occur.
 - [Medi-Cal Rates | Medi-Cal Providers](#)
 - Medi-Cal Rates are updated and effective as of the 15th of the month and published to the Medi-Cal website on the 16th of the month.
 - [Notes to Rates | Medi-Cal Providers](#) explains the different procedure types and provides guidance on how to use the Rates worksheet.
 - [Justice-Involved \(JI\) Reentry Initiative: Rates Reminder for Embedded Providers](#) This article explains that JI services fall under standard Medi-Cal policy and are subject to a one percent rate reduction in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I) Section 14105.191, as modified by AB 1183 (2008). All billing providers are required to establish and bill their usual and customary service charge (fee) for services rendered. Defaulting to a Medi-Cal rate schedule as the billed service charge is discouraged, as it may not accurately reflect the actual costs of providing services.
- » Question: What documentation is provided to Correctional Facilities once approved to bill Medi-Cal?

- DHCS Response: Once a provider is approved to bill Medi-Cal, DHCS sends a provider enrollment approval welcome letter. The documentation also includes billing instructions.
- » Question: Are embedded health providers required to be signatories to the MCPCF MOUs?
 - DHCS Response: Embedded health providers are not required to be signatories to the MCP–CF MOU unless:
 - They are a Knox-Keene licensed subcontractor, and
 - They have delegated responsibilities for care coordination or referral functions.