



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

April 19, 2021

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No: 21-07
ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS
ALL PROBATION DIRECTORS
ALL FOSTER CARE ELIGIBILITY WORKERS
ALL FORMER FOSTER YOUTH ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

SUBJECT: FORMER FOSTER YOUTH FLAG IN THE MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY DATA SYSTEM (Reference: All County Welfare Directors Letters 14-41, 14-41E and 19-08)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide counties with guidance on obtaining, recording, and preserving the verification of prior foster care status for the Former Foster Youth (FFY) in the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS).

Background

A youth is eligible for FFY Medi-Cal when the youth is under age 26, currently resides in California, and was in foster care under the responsibility of any state or tribe at age 18 or older. For more information, see ACWDLs 14-41, 14-41E and 19-08. Income and assets are not considered when determining eligibility for FFY Medi-Cal.

Youths who were in the following programs at age 18 or older are not eligible for FFY Medi-Cal:

- Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment program (Kin-GAP)
- Supportive Transition Emancipation Program (STEP)
- FC Ineligible – (county funds)
- Adoption Assistance Program

In 2014, under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medi-Cal was expanded to provide health care coverage until age 26 for all FFY who exit foster care at age 18 or older, regardless of income. A simplified FFY eligibility enrollment and determination process was created using self-attestation. Additionally, youth exiting foster care at age 18 or older are automatically transitioned into Medi-Cal coverage for FFY without interruption in coverage and without requiring a new application. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) provided the counties with extensive guidance in ACWDLs 14-41 and 14-41E for verifying former foster care status and enrolling applicants in the FFY Program. Once a FFY was verified, their verification information was maintained by the counties, but not stored in a dedicated location in MEDS or the Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS). Further clarification on eligibility for the FFY Program may be found in ACWDL 19-08.

Currently county eligibility workers (CEWs) cannot share FFY status across the SAWS systems. This inability creates a burden for CEWs utilizing a different SAWS system (than that used by the county where FFY status is known and verified) to identify the client as a FFY based on ex-parte review. This inability to see the youth's FFY status may pose other barriers when the FFY moves to a new county and/or becomes eligible for Medi-Cal on another basis (e.g. SSI or CalWORKS-linked Medi-Cal) at the time of their exit from foster care. Youth exiting foster care are to be automatically moved into FFY Medi-Cal once they are no longer eligible for CalWORKS or SSI; however, an ex-parte review does not necessarily show their former foster care status.

New FFY Flag Field in MEDS

Limitations in the current system should not prevent or jeopardize the FFY's continuous ongoing Medi-Cal enrollment. Establishing the ability to store FFY status in MEDS will ensure the verification information is easily accessible to CEWs doing an ex-parte review when the FFY experiences a change in residence or circumstance.

The FFY flag field has been created in MEDS on the Other Client Eligibility Information (INQE) page. The FFY flag consists of a two-digit alpha/numeric/special character field that the CEWs will be responsible for updating. A sample screen shot of the new INQE page is attached to this ACWDL.

This project will be implemented in multiple phases. In phase one of development, the FFY flag field will be initially populated with "*P" for all youths who were in foster care up to age 21 or in the FFY Program up to age 26. Please note, the "*P" status in the FFY MEDS field does not mean the FFY has been verified as eligible for Medi-Cal. The regular verification process as set out in ACWDLs 14-41 and 14-41E will still need to be completed by the CEWs for all youths exiting foster care at age 18 or older.

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Remaining Phases of Development of the FFY MEDS Flag

Guidance for the new developments in each remaining phase will be provided in Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Letters (MEDILs) and Change Cycle Letters.

The remaining phases will implement communication of the verification findings by the CEWs to MEDS, the method of data collection, additional MEDS indicators, and data storage. DHCS will continue to work with our SAWS partners to ensure timely development on both sides.

If you have any questions, or if we may provide further information, please contact the Access Unit in the Eligibility and Access Branch by email at FFY@dhcs.ca.gov.

Original Signed By,

Sandra Williams, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division

1. Sample screen

SAMPLE OF INQE SCREEN

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INQE          ** OTHER CLIENT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION **      YYE - 09/26/19
                                                    11:36:45
FORMER          , FOSTER          Y      MEDS-CUR-MMY 10-19
MEDS-ID XXX-XX-M5002 SSN-VER W  CIN M5002M5002X 2  BIRTHDATE 10-22-1978 DOB-VER S

DEATH-DATE          DEATH-CD          DEATH-POSTED
SSI-LAST-RECEIVED   PICKLE-TICKLER   LAST-PICKLE-CHG
EXP-DEL-DATE 05-04-2014  CMS-INDICATORS   ELIG-APPROVAL-DATE 02-26-2014

SSN-VER-BIRTHDATE 10-22-1978  LANG: SPOKEN 7 WRITTEN 7  ETHNIC 1  FFY XX
CITIZENSHIP-DOC: TYPE 2A  NUMBER M5002M5002XXX  SOURCE 15  DATE 01-06-2009
IDENTITY-DOC:     TYPE 2B  NUMBER M5002M5002X   SOURCE 15  DATE 10-15-2009
BIRTHPLACE US:CA:19  ENTRY-GRANT-DT          COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN
CITIZEN/ALIEN-IND Q  ALIEN-ELIG  ALIEN-SPONSOR-STAT  ALIEN-NO
PGM: M      1(COV/CA)  H 2          3          FS      CW
                2019=====> 2018=====>
    10-19 PEND  JAN  FEB  MAR  APR  MAY  JUN  JUL  AUG  SEP  OCT  NOV  DEC
ORIG-AID
NEG-ACTN
MULTI-SOC
RES-COUNTY 15      15  15  15  15  15  15  15  15  15  15  15  15
I/O-DAY
ST/FED-IND
OPTION ___ <F13=VALID OPTIONS> F3=SUMMARY; F7=BACK; F8=FORWARD; ENTER=RETURN
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