



TOBY DOUGLAS
Director

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



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

DATE: AUGUST 27, 2014

ALL PLAN LETTER 14-008 (REVISED)
SUPERSEDES APL 02-003

TO: ALL MEDI-CAL MANAGED CARE HEALTH PLANS

SUBJECT: STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING THRESHOLD LANGUAGES

PURPOSE:

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is responsible for promulgating the standards that Medi-Cal managed care health plans (MCPs) must apply to determine which languages, at a minimum, they must use to provide translated materials to their enrollees. This All Plan Letter (APL) serves to inform all MCPs of the attached updated dataset for threshold languages and language concentration standards. Through this APL, DHCS is revising the concentration standards specified in its contracts with MCPs. This APL supersedes APL 02-003, Cultural and Linguistic Contractual Requirements: Threshold and Concentration Standard Languages Update.¹ MCPs must implement all contracted language services in accordance with the updated dataset effective January 1, 2015.

BACKGROUND:

As required under State and federal law,² DHCS must:

- Identify prevalent non-English languages spoken by enrollees and potential enrollees throughout the State based on a significant number or percentage of persons who speak each language;
- Provide member informing materials in each prevalent non-English language; and
- Require each MCP to make its written information available in the prevalent non-English languages in its particular service area.

State law requires DHCS to implement requirements for language group concentration standards through its contracts with MCPs. The MCP contract specifies:

¹ All Plan Letters are available at: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Pages/AllPlanLetters.aspx>.

² Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 438.10(c).

Contractor shall provide translated materials to the following population groups within its service area as determined by DHCS:

- A population group of mandatory Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in the MCP's service area who indicate their primary language as other than English, and that meet a numeric threshold of 3,000; and
- A population group of mandatory Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in the MCP's service area who indicate their primary language as other than English and who meet the concentration standards of 1,000 in a single ZIP code or 1,500 in two contiguous ZIP codes.

POLICY:

The enclosed dataset delineates the Medi-Cal required threshold languages for all Medi-Cal managed care counties. *Every three fiscal years, at a minimum, the Medi-Cal Managed Care Division (MMCD) will provide a threshold and concentration standard language update that contains annual data.* The update will address potential changes to both numeric threshold and concentration standard languages within all Medi-Cal managed care counties. MCPs are expected to comply with the update within three months of notice of the update.

DHCS is revising the contract to read:

- A population group of mandatory Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in the service area who indicate their primary language as other than English, and that meet a numeric threshold of 3,000 or five-percent (5%) of the beneficiary population, whichever is lower; and
- *A population group of mandatory Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in the MCP's service area who indicate their primary language as other than English and who meet the concentration standards of 1,000 in a single ZIP code or 1,500 in two contiguous ZIP codes.*

MCPs must provide written translation of enrollee informing materials to Medi-Cal limited English proficient (LEP) enrollees based on the numbers and percentages of persons who speak a language other than English in a specified geographic area, as detailed below. MMCD Policy Letters (PL) 99-002, 99-003, and 99-004, and APL 99-005 relating to cultural and linguistic standards and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provide guidance to MCPs on serving enrollees who are considered LEP.³

³ Policy Letters are available at: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Pages/PolicyLetters.aspx>.

DHCS has published additional policy statements related to language services in MMCD PL 10-012, Health Education and Cultural and Linguistic Group Needs Assessment; and APL 11-018, Readability and Suitability of Written Health Education Materials. These policy statements provide additional guidance to MCPs on helping enrollees access necessary services by providing written information in a language and at a reading level enrollees can understand.

If you have any questions regarding this APL, please contact your DHCS contract manager.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by Margaret Tatar

Margaret Tatar
Acting Deputy Director
Health Care Delivery Systems

Attachment

Threshold and Concentration Languages

For Two Plan, GMC, and COHS Counties as of March 2014

County / # of Languages that meet T/CS (Inc. English)	Total # of Beneficiaries in Mandatory Aid Codes*	Arabic	Armenian	Cambodian	Chinese**	English	Farsi	Hmong	Korean	Russian	Spanish	Tagalog	Vietnamese
Alameda (4)	261,445	1,638	29	702	16,471	165,760	1,621	3	575	237	49,528	1,675	6,854
Contra Costa (2)	151,725	583	7	50	1,162	106,708	1,002	2	216	287	35,355	753	1,132
Fresno (3)	314,133	610	428	1,161	304	214,109	97	9,604	67	269	81,073	177	562
Kern (2)	247,674	134	4	74	41	173,569	18	1	50	13	71,353	107	102
Kings (2)	37,149	33	2	3	10	26,591	0	16	0	0	10,220	23	11
Los Angeles (11)	2,190,078	3,480	36,411	6,061	35,335	1,263,283	5,646	33	13,686	3,548	756,182	3,656	17,454
Madera (2)	45,222	20	0	1	13	27,691	1	2	1	8	17,084	6	6
Marin (2)	29,163	31	10	10	120	18,322	159	0	57	98	9,126	28	310
Mendocino (2)	29,878	3	0	6	37	24,774	1	0	1	3	4,570	8	25
Merced (3)	100,339	19	1	9	36	65,658	7	2,740	12	5	29,438	17	34
Monterey (2)	115,460	85	0	6	52	55,952	20	1	64	26	57,603	133	239
Napa (2)	23,182	8	5	0	27	13,058	5	0	5	6	9,471	122	19
Orange (5)	607,055	2,191	381	579	2,048	314,923	5,139	57	5,952	381	194,692	1,201	65,953
Riverside (2)	472,653	705	32	139	426	333,817	131	88	263	58	130,840	291	964
Sacramento (6)	340,420	1,845	1,139	319	4,895	248,026	1,088	7,905	212	14,929	39,614	1,003	7,211
San Bernardino (2)	566,151	899	48	288	742	437,073	105	27	481	54	119,324	230	1,886
San Diego (5)	484,768	16,181	39	669	1,257	299,291	1,653	97	440	730	137,844	3,309	8,496
San Francisco (4)	117,289	273	14	109	29,998	59,914	24	0	197	1,056	17,490	1,645	3,042
San Joaquin (2)	191,556	111	6	2,076	221	143,067	126	1,377	29	16	40,182	170	1,278
San Luis Obispo (2)	44,466	43	2	19	38	34,798	11	0	14	17	8,498	51	52
San Mateo (4)	102,461	775	35	45	3,320	58,271	249	3	127	531	32,205	2,648	324
Santa Barbara (2)	91,749	35	2	3	39	50,302	27	11	33	44	39,459	69	66
Santa Clara (5)	251,851	561	39	843	6,685	131,948	1,525	4	797	644	68,137	3,339	30,450
Santa Cruz (2)	52,335	26	0	12	112	29,910	27	3	13	18	21,060	43	27
Solano (2)	87,567	142	7	16	203	67,204	72	24	58	45	14,885	2,032	436
Sonoma (2)	88,257	59	10	240	187	58,675	49	4	54	49	26,397	136	343
Stanislaus (2)	150,295	388	21	373	120	111,459	184	56	4	71	33,759	56	242
Tulare (2)	168,503	174	1	19	41	108,149	8	137	11	10	58,372	55	51
Ventura (2)	159,493	324	40	30	301	91,035	373	2	168	83	62,833	699	552
Yolo (3)	40,160	85	7	50	191	25,908	161	74	33	1,828	9,720	54	117
Grand Total	7,562,477	31,461	38,720	13,912	104,432	4,759,245	19,529	22,271	23,620	25,064	2,186,314	23,736	148,238
% of Total	100.00%	0.42%	0.51%	0.18%	1.38%	62.93%	0.26%	0.29%	0.31%	0.33%	28.91%	0.31%	1.96%

Threshold Standard Languages (Blue cell shading) ≥ 3,000 per language or ≥ 5% of the Medi-Cal Population with mandatory aid codes that speak the language per county

Concentration Standard Languages (Bold text & cell shading) ≥ 1,000 per zip code or ≥ 1,500 per two contiguous- Hmong in Merced, Russian in Yolo, and Tagalog in San Mateo meet this criteria

*Beneficiaries identified above have mandatory Aid Codes for Two Plan, GMC, and COHS plan model types

**Chinese is the combined total of Mandarin and Cantonese

Threshold and Concentration Languages

For Rural Expansion Counties as of March 2014

County / # of Languages that meet T/CS (Inc. English)	Total # of Beneficiaries in Mandatory Aid Codes*	Arabic	Armenian	Cambodian	Chinese**	English	Farsi	Hmong	Korean	Russian	Spanish	Tagalog	Vietnamese
Alpine (1)	232	0	0	0	0	232	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amador (1)	4,925	1	1	0	2	4,696	1	0	2	0	208	2	4
Butte (2)	46,369	32	3	0	21	41,312	3	1,333	1	7	3,474	6	51
Calaveras (1)	7,205	0	0	0	0	6,930	0	0	1	2	257	0	1
Colusa (2)	5,226	1	0	0	0	2,611	0	0	0	2	2,606	2	1
Del Norte (1)	9,784	0	0	0	9	8,966	0	129	3	0	396	6	7
El Dorado (2)	21,749	5	0	6	10	19,260	5	0	2	9	2,361	6	12
Glenn (2)	6,943	0	0	0	0	4,840	0	35	0	0	2,057	1	0
Humboldt (1)	38,387	1	0	5	27	35,998	4	351	4	4	1,174	7	6
Imperial (2)	54,643	7	3	0	5	25,491	4	0	4	0	29,085	5	15
Inyo (2)	3,332	0	0	0	0	2,677	0	0	1	0	645	0	0
Lake (2)	22,549	1	1	1	4	20,376	1	0	4	0	1,840	4	13
Lassen (1)	6,199	0	0	0	0	5,855	0	0	0	1	198	0	5
Mariposa (1)	3,070	0	0	0	0	2,955	0	0	1	0	112	0	0
Modoc (2)	2,405	0	0	0	0	2,186	0	0	0	0	140	0	0
Mono (2)	1,968	0	0	0	0	1,152	0	0	0	0	808	0	0
Nevada (2)	13,608	0	1	1	3	12,746	3	0	0	1	827	0	0
Placer (2)	34,759	52	10	9	47	29,968	87	1	46	592	3,463	60	151
Plumas (1)	3,063	0	0	0	1	2,978	0	0	0	0	73	0	0
Shasta (1)	52,544	0	1	3	30	49,953	3	18	8	7	916	14	29
Sierra (1)	482	0	0	0	0	464	0	0	0	1	16	0	0
Siskiyou (1)	13,694	1	0	2	6	12,824	0	0	2	1	412	1	3
Sutter (2)	24,182	2	0	0	18	17,824	40	34	0	3	4,596	2	9
Tehama (2)	15,847	4	0	0	9	13,354	1	1	1	8	2,452	0	1
Trinity (1)	3,814	0	0	0	1	3,667	0	4	0	0	13	0	0
Tuolumne (1)	8,769	0	0	0	10	8,563	1	0	0	2	184	0	0
Yuba (2)	18,198	1	0	5	12	15,236	1	359	0	3	2,540	0	5
Grand Total	423,946	108	20	32	215	353,114	154	2,265	80	643	60,853	116	313
% of Total	100.00%	0.03%	0.00%	0.01%	0.05%	83.29%	0.04%	0.53%	0.02%	0.15%	14.35%	0.03%	0.07%

Threshold Standard Languages (Blue cell shading) ≥ 3,000 per language or ≥ 5% of the Medi-Cal Population with mandatory aid codes that speak the language per county

Concentration Standard Languages (Bold text with cell shading) ≥ 1,000 per zip code or ≥ 1,500 per two contiguous- no rural counties met either criteria for any non-threshold language

*Beneficiaries identified above have mandatory Aid Codes for Regional and COHS plan model types

**Chinese is the combined total of Mandarin and Cantonese