



RICHARD FIGUEROA  
ACTING DIRECTOR

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



GAVIN NEWSOM  
GOVERNOR

February 18, 2020

To: Tribal Chairpersons, Designees of Indian Health Programs, and  
Urban Indian Organizations

Subject: Notice of Proposed Change to the Medi-Cal Program

The purpose of this letter is to provide information regarding a proposed change to the Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) Medi-Cal Program that will be submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). DHCS is forwarding this information for your review and comment.

DHCS is required to seek advice from designees of Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations on Medi-Cal matters having a direct effect on Indians, Indian Health Programs or Urban Indian Organizations per the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). DHCS must solicit the advice of designees prior to submission to CMS of any State Plan Amendment (SPA), waiver requests or modifications, or proposals for demonstration projects in the Medi-Cal program.

Please see the enclosed summary for a detailed description of this DHCS proposal.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may submit written comments or questions concerning this proposal within 30 days from the receipt of notice. Comments may be sent by email to [GEMTQAF@DHCS.ca.gov](mailto:GEMTQAF@DHCS.ca.gov) or by mail to the address below:

**Contact Information**

Department of Health Care Services  
Fee-For-Service Rate Development Division  
1501 Capitol Avenue  
MS 4600  
P.O. Box 997417  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7417

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In addition to this notice, DHCS plans to cover this SPA in the next quarterly Medi-Cal Indian Health webinar. Please note that Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may also request a consultation on this proposal at any time as needed.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Sandra "Sam" Willburn, Chief  
Primary, Rural, and Indian Health Division  
Department of Health Care Services

Enclosure



**Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)  
Tribal and Designees of Indian Health Programs Notice**

**PURPOSE**

Continuation of the Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) program that assesses a Quality Assurance Fee (QAF) and provides increased payments for GEMT services.

**BACKGROUND**

Senate Bill (SB) 523 (Chapter 773, Statutes of 2017)<sup>1</sup> established a QAF program for GEMT, effective July 1, 2018. Under this program, DHCS collects transport and revenue data from GEMT service providers. The data is used to determine 1) an annual QAF, and 2) an add-on amount that increases the Medi-Cal reimbursement amount for GEMT services.

GEMT providers will be charged a QAF on all ground emergency medical transports, regardless of payer type, billed with the following codes:

Billing Code	Description
A0429	Basic Life Support
A0427	Advanced Life Support, Level 1
A0433	Advanced Life Support, Level 2
A0434	Specialty Care Transport
A0225	Neonatal Emergency Transport

Contingent on federal approval, GEMT providers will receive increased reimbursement through the application of an add-on to the Medi-Cal fee-for-service fee schedule amount for the above-listed service codes.

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES**

Continuation of current GEMT QAF Program from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

**IMPACT TO TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAMS**

Tribally owned and operated GEMT providers must submit the required data reports and QAF payments to DHCS by the due dates. They will receive the increased reimbursement for each Medi-Cal GEMT service provided. Tribally owned and operated GEMT providers may be assessed a penalty if they do not submit the required data reports to DHCS by the established due dates.

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Bill (SB) 523 (Chapter 773, Statutes of 2017) is available at:  
[http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180SB523](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB523)

### **IMPACT TO FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS (FQHCs)**

FQHC owned and operated GEMT providers must submit the data reports and QAF payments to DHCS by the due dates. They will receive the increased reimbursement for each Medi-Cal GEMT service provided. FQHC owned and operated GEMT providers may be assessed a penalty if they do not submit the required data reports to DHCS by the established due dates.

### **IMPACT TO INDIAN MEDI-CAL BENEFICIARIES**

There is no impact to Indian Medi-Cal beneficiaries who receive GEMT services.

### **RESPONSE DATE**

Indian Health Programs and Urban Indian Organizations may submit written comments or questions concerning this proposal within 30 days from the receipt of notice. Comments may be sent by email to [GEMTQAF@DHCS.ca.gov](mailto:GEMTQAF@DHCS.ca.gov) or by mail to the address below:

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