DATE: December 30, 2025

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS   Letter No.: 25-32
                  ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
                  ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
                  ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
                  ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
                  ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: Medi-Cal Call Center Data

This All-County Welfare Director's Letter (ACWDL) provides guidance for the operationalization of Senate Bill (SB) 1289 (Chapter 792, Statutes of 2024) and outlines county responsibilities under the new statute that requires counties with call centers to collect, and report call center data metrics.

Background
SB 1289 adds Section 14000.8 to the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), effective January 1, 2026.

Counties with call centers that service Medi-Cal applicants and members are required to report specific call center data metrics to DHCS monthly. Counties do not need to report Covered California's quick sort regional call center data. DHCS already collects and reports this data to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

WIC section 14000.8 requires the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to collect call-center data metrics from counties that operate a county call center serving Medi-Cal applicants or members. Counties must report on three data metrics: total call volume, average wait time by language, and average abandonment rate, and DHCS must develop a report based on the call center data received and post it to the DHCS website quarterly.

Data Metric Reporting
Counties with call centers must collect and report data metrics on the three specific metrics listed above. Counties must submit the data by the 8th of each month. If the 8th is a Saturday or Sunday, the data is expected on Friday prior to the weekend. January 2026 will be the first data set published to the website. This data must be sent to DHCS by February 8, 2026. The data is separated and identified through measures listed below.
Data metrics that need to be reported:

California Department of Health Care Services
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division
1501 Capitol Avenue | Sacramento, CA | 95899-7413
MS 4607 | Phone (916) 552-9200 | www.dhcs.ca.gov

State of California
Gavin Newsom, Governor

California Health and Human Services Agency

Measure #1 – Total call volume
Measure #2 – Average wait times by language
Measure #3 – Average abandonment rate

Counties with Amazon Web Services may elect to have the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) transmit the data to DHCS automatically. For counties without Amazon Web Services, the transmission of data is not automated; therefore, the county must submit the *Medi-Cal County Call Center Data* report. Some counties may elect to have CalSAWS submit data metrics on their behalf, while other counties may elect to submit the report themselves. Both situations call for the same level of data to be submitted to DHCS. Additionally, both situations allow the counties to review the data before transmitting it to DHCS.

Please note: These requirements apply only to counties with call centers that handle calls from Medi-Cal applicants and members. Counties that do not operate Medi-Cal call centers are not subject to this statute.

Data Definitions
The table below provides definitions for the measures and related data elements.

Data Definitions	Description
Call Center	A call center is an office location, or other physical or virtual infrastructure, with a dedicated telephone number(s) developed specifically for the purpose of handling a general queue of inbound customer calls that provide telephonic customer service to applicants, members, and/or authorized representatives seeking customer service with applying for, renewing, accessing benefits for, or requesting general information about the Medi-Cal or CHIP programs.
Call	An inbound call to the call center requesting customer service for the Medi-Cal or CHIP programs. If calls for other benefit programs are included, DHCS will footnote this information.
Measure #1 - Total Call Volume	The total number of inbound calls received by the call center, including Automated Response System or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, and including calls received outside of the regular business hours.

Data Definitions	Description
	• Stratify normal working hours, after normal working hours, and provide total (normal working hours + after normal working hours). • If calls for other benefit programs are included, DHCS will footnote this information. Calculation: The total call center volume should equal the sum of the call volume from all the call centers in the county that support the Medi-Cal program.
Measure #2 - Average Call Wait Time (stratified by language)	The total wait time is the time from when a caller enters a queue to when a county agent picks up the call. This data set represents voice calls only. • Stratified by language. • Calls received outside of the regular business hours are not included in calculating call wait time. • If calls for other benefit programs are included, DHCS will footnote this information. • DHCS will include a footnote to indicate counties that operate "courtesy call backs." Calculation: The average wait time equals the sum of the wait time from all call centers in the county that support the Medi-Cal program, from when a caller enters the queue to when a county agent picks up the call, divided by the total number of calls from all the call centers in the county that support the Medi-Cal program that entered the queue.

Measure #3 - Average Call Abandonment Rate	Inbound calls that enter a queue to speak to a live agent but decide to hang up or end the call before speaking to a live agent. This does not include calls made through the Automated Response System without the need to transfer to a live agent (callers self-serve through the system).
	  • For counties with call back functionality, individuals queued for call back are not counted as abandoned.
	  • After-hours calls are not included in calculating the call abandonment rate.

Data Definitions	Description
	• Hang-ups prior to entering a queue are not included in the abandonment rate. • If calls for other benefit programs are included, DHCS will footnote this information. Calculation: The abandonment rate equals the total number of calls from all call centers in the county abandoned by the caller after entering a queue (numerator) divided by the total number of calls from all call centers in the county that entered the queue (denominator). The acceptable range for this number is between 0 and 1, with a value of 0 representing 0% (no calls abandoned), a value of 0.5 representing 50% (half of the calls are abandoned), and a value of 1 representing 100% (all calls are abandoned). ⌑

County Medi-Cal Call Center Data Report

Counties and CalSAWS will use a reporting template titled "SB 1289: County Medi-Cal Call Center Data" to submit the data. The report contains four tabs that include: A) Data Dictionary, B) SB 1289 Measure #1, C) SB 1289 Measure #2, and D) SB 1289 Measure #3.

Measure #1 – Total Call Volume

This tab will be used to collect the total call volume received per month, defined as the total number of inbound calls received by the call center, including Automated Response System or IVR system, and including calls received outside of the regular business hours. DHCS will footnote calls received that include other programs such as CalFresh or CalWORKs. Below are the fields for SB 1289 Measure #1 tab.

Title of Field	Description
County Name	The name of the county.
Number of calls received during working hours from all the call centers in the county.	The total number of calls received during normal business hours across all the call centers in the county.
Number of calls received after working hours from all the call centers in the county.	The total number of calls received after normal business hours across all the call centers in the county.
Total number of calls received from all the call centers in the county.	The total number of calls received across all the call centers in the county.

Calculation
The total call center volume should equal the combined call volumes from all county call centers that support the Medi-Cal program.

Measure #2 – Average Call Wait Time by Language
This tab collects the wait time of inbound calls received by the county, defined as the total wait time from when a caller enters a queue to when a county agent picks up the call. Calls received outside of regular business hours are not included. Additionally, DHCS will footnote calls received when a caller inquires about multiple programs, such as Medi-Cal and CalFresh or Medi-Cal and CalWORKs.

Title of Field	Description
County Name	The name of the county.
Average Wait Time All Languages	The sum of the total wait time spent in the queue for all languages, divided by total number of calls for all languages.
Average Wait Time, stratified by language	Wait time spent in the queue (numerator) divided by the total number of calls that entered the queue (denominator) from all call centers in the county, stratified by language. The average wait time should be reported in minutes and seconds for calls received by each call center during the calendar month. Counties should not round the minutes. DHCS will round the total wait time for the state report. If the average wait time cannot be provided, leave this field blank (missing) and provide an explanation in the data limitations field.

Not all counties are equipped to collect the full stratification of threshold languages. In this case, data for all languages will be reported under English or in the "Other Language" category. Otherwise, if the county is able to capture stratified language data, the list of languages is provided below, from the Measure 2 tab of the template.

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Armenian
- English
- Cambodian
- Farsi

- Filipino
- Japanese
- Mien
- Spanish
- Vietnamese

- Hindi
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Thai

- Hmong
- Laotian
- Russian
- Ukrainian

Calculation

The average wait time is calculated by dividing the total wait time for all calls that entered the queue across all county call centers by the total number of calls that enter the queue. Wait time is measured from the moment a caller enters the queue until a county agent answers the call. Calls received outside of regular business hours are excluded from this calculation. If calls related to other benefit programs are included, DHCS will provide a footnote to indicate this. Courtesy calls may also be footnoted. DHCS will provide a footnote to indicate counties that operate "courtesy call backs).

Reports should reflect the average wait time in minutes and seconds for calls received by each call center during the calendar month.

> If the average wait time cannot be reported, leave the field blank and provide an explanation in the data limitations field.

Measure #3 – Average Call Abandonment Rate

This tab collects the Average Call Abandonment Rate, defined as inbound calls that enter a queue to speak to a live agent but decide to hang up or end the call before speaking to a live agent. This does not include calls made through the Automated Response System without the need to transfer to a live agent (callers self-serve through the system). It does not include calls made through the Automated Response System where the callers self-serve without the need to speak to a live agent.

Notable exceptions include:

- For counties with call-back functionality, callers who opt for a call-back and are queued are not counted as abandoned.
- After-hours calls are excluded from the abandonment rate calculation.
- Calls that are disconnected before entering the queue are not counted as abandoned.
- If calls related to other benefit programs are included, please use a footnote to clarify.

Title of Field	Description
County Name	The name of the county.
Average Abandonment Rate	The average percentage of abandoned calls.

Calculation

The average abandonment rate is calculated by dividing the total number of calls abandoned after entering the queue (the numerator) by the total number of calls that entered the queue (the denominator) across all call centers in the county.

The resulting value ranges from 0 to 1:
The result is expressed as a percentage where higher values indicate a greater proportion of calls being abandoned. For example:
- The value of 0 means no calls were abandoned (0%)
- The value of 0.5 means half of the calls were abandoned (50%)
- The value of 1 means all calls were abandoned (100%)

Universal Data Footnotes

Due to data variances between counties, DHCS developed universal footnotes to be used across the three measures. The counties should use footnotes to inform DHCS of any unique situations related to the data.

Footnotes
a) Does not include all calls received by call centers
b) Does not include calls received after business hours
c) Includes calls for other benefit programs
d) Includes only calls transferred to a live agent
e) Call center does not capture this data
f) Did not report data because of technical issues/reasons
g) Call center offers courtesy callbacks
h) Courtesy callback wait time not included
i) Wait times for callbacks are included but reported separately from live calls
j) Wait time reflects the time spent on hold after the call is answered by a live agent
k) County does not collect data for this specific language
l) County provides first call resolution

Footnotes
m) Calls handled to completion by the automated system are counted as abandoned calls
n) Data does not discern why a caller disconnected (e.g., poor reception, battery loss, privacy)
o) High volumes may be attributed to outreach efforts
p) Callbacks are included
q) Includes quick sort transfer calls from Covered California r) County only provides quick sort transfer calls from Covered California

Publishing the Call Center Metrics Data
DHCS will combine the county call center data with the Covered California quick sort transfer data that DHCS receives for CMS reporting purposes. DHCS will make the data available to two entities. First, the combined data will be submitted to CMS as part of the CMS Performance Indicators. Second, the combined data will be published quarterly on DHCS's public-facing website dashboard. Counties will have an opportunity to review and comment on the data before it is made public.

The initial public release of the call center data metrics report is scheduled for May 15, 2026, and will include data from January, February, and March 2026.
If you have any questions or if we can provide further information, please email DHCS at SB1289CallCenterDataQuestions@dhcs.ca.gov.

Sarah Crow
Division Chief, Medi-Cal Eligibility
Department of Health Care Services
Enclosure *(if applicable)*