

PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENT TO (1) ADD SERVICES FOR FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS, RURAL HEALTH CLINICS, AND TRIBAL FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS, (2) MAKE CHANGES TO MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST REQUIREMENTS, AND (3) MAKE A TECHNICAL CORRECTION RELATED TO INTERMITTENT CLINICS AND MOBILE UNITS

This notice is to provide information of public interest about a proposed State Plan Amendment (SPA) by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). SPA 25-0009 proposes to: (1) add psychological associates as a Prospective Payment System (PPS) billable practitioner type for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), and Tribal FQHCs; (2) remove the mandatory change in scope of service request (CSOSR) requirement when newly adding Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) services as a PPS billable practitioner; and (3) make a technical correction related to intermittent clinic and mobile unit allowable hours of operation.

Medi-Cal reimburses FQHC, RHC, and Tribal FQHC services on a per-visit basis and defines a visit as a face-to-face encounter, or other approved modality of interaction, as specified, between a Medi-Cal member and a billable PPS provider. This includes behavioral health services provided by various licensed behavioral health practitioners as well as certain associate behavioral health practitioners under the supervision of a licensed behavioral health provider. Associate practitioners are registered with the applicable clinical licensing board and work under the supervision of a licensed behavioral health provider while completing the requirements for full licensure.

Assembly Bill (AB) 2703 (Chapter 638, Statutes of 2024), amends Section 14132.100 of the Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) to add psychological associates as a PPS-billable practitioner type. Currently, FQHCs and RHCs that wish to newly add MFTs as a PPS-billable practitioner must undergo a mandatory CSOSR even if the FQHC's or RHC's scope of services already includes behavioral health services provided by other licensed

behavioral health practitioners. The mandatory CSOSR requirement does not apply to newly adding other types of licensed behavioral health practitioners. AB 2703 removes the requirement for a mandatory CSOSR to newly added MFTs as a PPS-billable practitioner.

Lastly, this SPA also seeks to make a technical correction to the allowable hours of operation for Intermittent Clinics and Mobile Units to align with Health & Safety Code (HSC) 1206(h).

DHCS estimates that the effect of SPA 25-0009 on the annual aggregate Medi-Cal expenditures for FQHCs and RHCs will be budget neutral because different types of associate and licensed behavioral health practitioners provide interchangeable behavioral health services. DHCS assumes that the changes proposed in this SPA will provide FQHCs and RHCs with more flexibility in recruiting and training behavioral health practitioners but will generally not increase Medi-Cal members' demand for behavioral health services relative to the baseline.

The effective date of the proposed SPA is January 1, 2025. All proposed SPAs are subject to approval by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Public Review and Comments

Upon submission to CMS, a copy of the proposed SPA 25-0009 will be published on: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/laws/Pages/Pending-2025.aspx>

If you would like to view the SPA in person once it becomes available, please visit your local county welfare department. You may also request a copy of proposed SPA 25-0009 by contacting the mailing address or email address listed below.

Written comments may be sent to the following address:

Department of Health Care Services
Fee-For-Service Rates Development Division
Attn: Provider Rates Section, SPA 25-0009
P.O. Box 997413, MS 4600
Sacramento, California 95899-7417

Comments may also be emailed to PublicInput@dhcs.ca.gov. Please indicate SPA #25-0009 in the subject line or message.

A copy of submitted public comments to SPA 25-0009 may be requested in writing to the mailing address or email address identified above.