

DATE: October 3, 2024

Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information

Letter No.: I 24-20

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIASONS

SUBJECT: JANUARY 2025 MANDATORY ENROLLMENT FOR FOSTER
CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN SINGLE PLAN COUNTIES

The purpose of this letter is to provide counties with information related to current and former foster children and youth in Single Plan Counties who will be mandatorily enrolled in a Medi-Cal managed care health plan (MCP) effective January 1, 2025, and the resources available to support their transition.

Background

Assembly Bill (AB) 118 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 42, Statutes of 2023 - SEC.157) amended Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I) section 14184.200 mandating that foster children and youth and former foster children and youth Medi-Cal members living in Single Plan Counties (i.e., Alameda, Contra Costa, and Imperial) transition from Fee-For-Service (FFS) Medi-Cal to an MCP on January 1, 2025.

Policy

Currently, foster children and youth, as well as children and youth formerly in foster care, are voluntary members in Single Plan Counties. Voluntary members may choose either FFS Medi-Cal or enroll in an MCP. Effective January 1, 2025, DHCS will require foster children and youth in Single Plan Counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, and Imperial) to join an MCP. This change will impact approximately 8,180 Medi-Cal members, identified with a foster or former foster youth aid code, residing in a Single Plan County. For the list of foster or former foster youth aid codes, please see the [Master Aid Code Chart \(ca.gov\)](#) on the DHCS website. Current and former foster children and youth will be transitioned from FFS Medi-Cal to an MCP. Current and former foster children and youth who are currently enrolled in an MCP will no longer have the choice to change to FFS Medi-Cal. This transition will not impact Medi-Cal coverage or benefits. MCPs are required to comply with statutory requirements and DHCS guidance to ensure "continuity of care" and "access to care" when transferring foster children and youth into managed care. DHCS has developed All Plan Letter (APL) 24-014 with requirements for MCPs.

What This Means for County Eligibility Workers

Medi-Cal members often turn to their county eligibility workers first with any questions about their Medi-Cal coverage, benefits, and providers. County eligibility workers can answer member questions and support their transition in the following ways:

- Help members understand if the 2025 Mandatory Enrollment for Foster Children and Youth in Single Plan Counties impacts them based on the criteria in this letter,
- Answer member questions about the 2025 Mandatory Enrollment for Foster Children and Youth in Single Plan Counties with the resources below,
- Direct members to DHCS 2025 Mandatory Enrollment for Foster Children and Youth in Single Plan Counties webpage below, and
- Direct members to the Medi-Cal Health Care Options (HCO) Field Operations Program staff in your county office or direct them to the Medi-Cal [Health Care Options \(HCO\) website](#) for information about health plan choices and provider choices.

Resources for County Eligibility Workers

DHCS has developed resources about the 2025 Mandatory Enrollment for Foster Children and Youth in Single Plan Counties to support members, providers, and other stakeholders with the transition. These resources will be valuable to county eligibility workers who are answering transition questions from members. Here is an overview of current and new resources with related URL links:

- New Guidance: 2025 Mandatory Enrollment for Foster Children and Youth in Single Plan Counties [webpage](#): Provides an overview of the transition. It includes:
 - The notices members will receive from Medi-Cal.
 - The Notice of Additional Information (NOAI). The NOAI is translated into all threshold languages (also available as downloadable PDFs).
- New Guidance: [APL 24-014](#) with requirements for MCPs impacted by this transition.
- Current Guidance: [ACWDL 18-02E](#): Provides clarification to the instructions for Intercounty Transfers (ICTs) for an individual in a household who permanently moves out of the county.
- Current Guidance: [ACWDL 23-15](#): Provides clarification of the Authorized Representative Policy.
- Current Guidance: [MEDIL I 14-59](#): [Notifies counties of the](#) online, fillable form tool for urgent Medi-Cal Managed Care Ombudsman requests.
- New Guidance: A [Newsflash and Provider Bulletin](#) that provides policy resources, as well as news and updates about the transition.

Member Notices

Notices will be sent to current and former foster children and youth (identified by aid code) in Single Plan Counties who will be enrolled in an MCP on January 1, 2025. Member notices will also be mailed to authorized representatives documented within the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data Systems (MEDS).

Notices Being Sent to Members Who are Currently Enrolled in FFS Medi-Cal:

- November and December 2024 – Members will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal HCO with information about their automatic enrollment in an MCP and additional plan options available.
- December 2024 – Members will be mailed a Confirmation Letter from Medi-Cal HCO with the MCP they will be enrolled in with an enrollment effective date of January 1, 2025.
- January 2025 – Members will receive a welcome packet from their new MCP.

Notices Being Sent to Members Who are Currently Enrolled in an MCP:

- November 2024 and December 2024 – Members will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal HCO stating that they will no longer have the choice to change to FFS Medi-Cal starting January 1, 2025. Members will be informed that they will stay in the MCP they are already enrolled in and be provided with information on other Medi-Cal health plan options available.

Kaiser Permanente

As current or former foster children and youth, members impacted by this transition may join Kaiser Permanente. Members can call Medi-Cal Health Care Options Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 1-800-430-4263 (TTY: 1-800-430-7077).

If you have any questions, please contact PCU Research by email at PCUResearch@dhcs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Sarah Crow, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division
Department of Health Care Services