

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

14 P STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

September 14, 1988

To: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

Letter: 88-70

Subject: Implementation of OBRA and IRCA-86
(Data Processing Instructions)

Reference: ACWDLs 87-55, 87-56, 88-16, 88-21, 88-28, 88-45,
88-47, 88-59, 88-66 and 88-68

All County Welfare Directors letter (ACWDL) 87-56 provided counties with data processing instructions necessary to begin preparation for implementation of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (OBRA) and the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA). Counties were directed to begin designing the system and procedural changes to implement OBRA/IRCA but to hold the effectuation of those changes until notified by this Department of the passage of enabling legislation.

This letter serves as notification that Senate Bill 175 has passed the Legislature. Upon the governor's signature, it will be effective October 1, 1988. ACWDL 88-66, which is being released concurrently with this letter, provides instructions on eligibility determination issues. This letter addresses Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) Network changes and the reporting of OBRA/IRCA aid codes to MEDS.

MEDS Changes

On September 27, 1988, MEDS online and batch systems will be modified to accept the OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the county identification number ("County-ID Per-MEDS") field. MEDS will also allow input of Medi-Cal aid codes in the original aid code ("Orig-Aid") field. MEDS card print programs will be revised to print the message "Valid for Emergency/Pregnancy Related Svs Only", on all Medi-Cal cards containing aid codes 52, 57 and 58. Please refer to ACWDL 87-56 for background data processing information on these MEDS changes and for a list of OBRA/IRCA aid codes and their definitions.

ACWDL 87-56 informed counties that once enabling legislation was passed and the MEDS changes were installed, there would be MEDS edits to prevent acceptance of OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the Orig-Aid field. This has changed. Under certain circumstances, counties will continue to report OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the Orig-Aid field for current beneficiaries. Accordingly, counties that designed

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their batch programs to reject the reporting of OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the Orig-Aid field, must now revise their programs to allow for reporting of both Medi-Cal and OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the Orig-Aid field.

OBRA/IRCA Reporting -- New Applicants

For new (alien) eligibles, counties must report the appropriate OBRA/IRCA aid code in the County-ID Per-MEDS field for October 1988 month of eligibility and thereafter. The Medi-Cal aid code must be reported in the Orig-Aid field. This will ensure that these new eligibles receive Medi-Cal cards reflecting the scope of benefits, (full or emergency/pregnancy related) to which they are entitled as a result of SB 175. This also provides the Department with the means to determine future capitation rates for OBRA/IRCA aliens. For example, an OBRA alien (aid code 58), categorically linked as Aged, Medically Needy (aid code 14) would be reported as follows for October 1988:

<u>County Enters</u>	<u>MEDS Field</u>	<u>Medi-Cal Card Shows</u>
01-58-1234567-1-01	County-ID Per MEDS	01-58-1234567-1-01 "Valid for Emergency..."
14	Orig-Aid	Not Shown on Card

Should the county find the new applicant eligible for Medi-Cal benefits for months prior to October 1988, his/her eligibility for all prior months should be reported as follows:

<u>County Enters</u>	<u>MEDS Field</u>	<u>Medi-Cal Card Shows</u>
01-14-1234567-1-01	County-ID Per MEDS	01-14-1234567-1-01
58	Orig-Aid	58 Not Shown on Card

This reporting ensures that the individual receives the full scope of benefits to which he/she was entitled, before SB 175 was enacted.

OBRA/IRCA Reporting of Current Beneficiaries

For those aliens that counties have tracked since January 1988, and aliens that will be identified during the redetermination process, counties must submit transactions to update MEDS with the OBRA/IRCA aid codes in the County-ID Per MEDS field and the Medi-Cal aid codes in the Orig-Aid field. Please refer to ACWDL 88-66 for instructions on when this conversion of aid codes should take place. For example, an IRCA Amnesty alien (aid code 51) categori-

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cally linked as Disabled Medically Needy (aid code 64) would be reported as follows:

<u>County Enters</u>	<u>MEDS Field</u>	<u>Medi-Cal Card Shows</u>
01-51-1234567-1-01	County-ID Per MEDS	01-51-1234567-1-01
64	Orig-Aid	Not Shown on Card

As indicated at the beginning of this letter, certain groups of individuals must continue to be reported to MEDS using the normal Medi-Cal aid code in the County-ID Per-MEDS field and the OBRA/IRCA aid code in the Orig-Aid field. These are:

- 1) Medi-Cal beneficiaries currently receiving renal dialysis care or long term care services;
- 2) aliens who were referred to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for immigration status verification prior to October 1, 1988 and for whom the counties are awaiting a response.

State law provides that aliens currently receiving long term care or renal dialysis care must continue to receive these vital medical services. Please refer to ACWDL 88-66 for further information on this issue. Therefore, if these individuals fall under the category of OBRA (aid code 58) or IRCA limited scope (aid codes 52 or 57), counties must report their eligibility to MEDS using the normal Medi-Cal aid codes in the County-ID Per-MEDS field. The OBRA/IRCA aid code must be reported in the Orig-Aid field. This action will ensure that these individuals DO NOT receive a limited services Medi-Cal card.

For example, an OBRA alien (aid code 58) categorically linked as Aged, Long Term Care, (aid code 13) would be reported as follows:

<u>County Enters</u>	<u>MEDS Field</u>	<u>Medi-Cal Card Shows</u>
01-13-1234567-1-01	County-ID Per-MEDS	01-13-1234567-1-01
58	Orig-Aid	58 Not Shown On Card

Medi-Cal recipients who have a CA-6 pending at the INS prior to October 1, 1988, MUST NOT have their aid codes switched until the procedures outlined in ACWDL 88-66 have been followed.

To reduce an individual's benefits, counties would update the County-ID Per-MEDS and Orig-Aid fields for pending month, as follows:

<u>County Enters</u>	<u>MEDS Field</u>	<u>Medi-Cal Card Will Show</u>
01-58-1234567-1-01	County-ID Per-MEDS	01-58-1234567-1-01 "Valid for Emergency..."
86 (prior aid)	Orig-Aid	86 NOT Shown On CARD

In ACWDL 88-56, counties were informed that those records that were not appropriately switched by a month's time, would be placed in a hold status on MEDS. This has changed. Records will NOT be placed in a hold status. However, counties will receive a listing or tape of all MEDS OBRA/IRCA records that require county action, namely, the switch of OBRA/IRCA aid codes into the County-ID Per-MEDS field. This listing/tape will be produced following MEDS renewal and will be mailed the first week of October, 1988. Please see Attachment I for a sample copy of this listing.

Again, prior to making this conversion, counties must follow procedures stated in ACWDL 88-66. This ACWDL provides the time period by which these changes must be made and any additional procedural instructions associated with these changes.

Reporting of OBRA/IRCA Aid Codes for Aliens Not Tracked on MEDS (January 1988 - September 1988)

ACWDL 88-66 instructed counties to begin tracking eligible OBRA/IRCA aliens beginning January 1988. Counties were given the option of tracking internally or on MEDS. Counties that did not track OBRA/IRCA aliens on MEDS, must now identify these individuals for reporting of OBRA/IRCA aid codes to MEDS (in the Orig-Aid field) for historical months back to January, 1988. To assist counties in this process, a new online only transaction has been developed.

New Online Transaction

The EW31, "Modify MEDS Record (Part 2)" transaction will be available for use on September 27, 1988. The EW31 transaction will allow counties to report appropriate aid codes in the "Orig-Aid" field for current as well as retroactive months by using a single transaction for an individual. Please note, the EW31 transaction is designed exclusively for the reporting of "Orig-Aid" codes to MEDS at this time. No other changes to the MEDS record will be allowed when using this transaction. Counties may choose to use this transaction alone, or in conjunction with existing MEDS transactions. See Attachment II for a sample screen of the EW31 transaction. Information on usage considerations will be included in the MEDS Network Change Cycle #77.

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Counties are reminded that changes in Medi-Cal and/or OBRA/IRCA aid codes must also be reported to MEDS. For Example, an IRCA limited scope alien (aid code 52) who becomes disabled (aid code 51) must have this change in status reported to MEDS, in order to receive a full scope card. Also, the change in OBRA/IRCA aid code must be reported back to the month in which the individual became disabled. This will allow the county to issue full scope Medi-Cal cards if requested to do so by the recipient.

For policy questions regarding the reporting of OBRA/IRCA aliens, please contact Tom Dickson at 916-324-4961, ATSS 454-4961 or Elaine Bilot, at 916-323-4124, ATSS 473-4124. For questions regarding MEDS system changes please contact Maria Enriquez at 916-445-2043, ATSS 485-2043.

Thank you for your assistance in implementing this legislation.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Sandra Duveneck, for
Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch

Attachments

cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons
Medi-Cal Program Consultants
MEDS Liaisons

Expiration Date: December 1, 1989

