

DATE: October 19, 2025

Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information

Letter No.: I 25-24

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

SUBJECT: Updates to the Single Streamlined Application

The purpose of this Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter (MEDIL) is to inform counties about the recent changes to the online Single Streamlined Application (SSApp), which individuals use to apply for insurance affordability programs through [CoveredCA.com](https://coveredca.com), and to provide information about the release of the updated paper SSApp. The online portal changes were implemented in the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment, and Retention System (CalHEERS) Release 25.9 on September 22, 2025.

## Overview

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), in partnership with Covered California and other stakeholders, collaborated with MAXIMUS and The Creative Agency (formerly The Center for Health Literacy) to update the paper SSApp. DHCS also worked with the County Welfare Directors Association, Statewide Automated Welfare System, CalHEERS, and Deloitte's Human-Centered Design consultants, to redesign the online SSApp to improve the user experience when applying for health care coverage.

DHCS and Covered California first introduced the paper Single Streamlined Application (SSApp) in 2013. The updated version includes several changes to improve usability:

- A table of contents is now featured on the front cover of the booklet.
- A separate table of contents has been added to organize the application sections more clearly.
- A redesigned layout that allows applicants to respond for up to four household members per question using four columns per page. This enables applicants to read each question once and provide responses for multiple individuals efficiently.

## **Summary of Updates**

The updates to both the online and paper versions of the SSApp reflect recent federal and state guidance. These updates include improvements to the flow and wording of questions, as well as revisions to the Rights and Responsibilities section for applicants. The changes include:

Clearer instructions on who to include:

- Updated guidance informs the applicant to include certain people on the application, even if they do not want to apply for health coverage.

Streamlined application flow:

- People who are not applying for coverage will skip questions about enrollment in Medicare or eligibility for free Part A Medicare.

Clarified exceptions:

- For applicants who do not have a Social Security number (SSN), additional clarity has been added to the option to indicate that they do not qualify for an SSN or are only eligible for an SSN for a valid non-work reason.

New questions:

- For applicants who attest to naturalized or derived citizen status, there is a new prompt to provide an alien number.
- A new question allows applicants to indicate if they are experiencing homelessness.

## *Summary of Updates to the Applicant Rights and Responsibilities*

Cooperation with Medical Support:

- Language added to inform applicants they must cooperate with the state or county to get any health coverage that they or their family may be entitled to through an absent parent unless they are pregnant or have

good cause to not cooperate. If they need more information about good cause they must contact their county office.

Consent from Veterans:

- Language added to inform applicants eligible for veterans' benefits that by submitting the application they are providing 12-month consent for the Medi-Cal program (DHCS) to transmit their name, email address, mailing address, and mobile phone number to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The information will be used only for the purpose of receiving additional information about veterans' benefits for which they may be eligible.

Estate Recovery Requirements:

- Language updated for the Medi-Cal Program Estate Recovery program for clarity and accuracy.

Express Consent to Contact:

- Language added to inform applicants that by providing contact information on this application, applicants give the DHCS, Covered California, health plans and their business associates, local county offices, and other entities that oversee Medi-Cal benefits express consent to contact them by phone or text message. This is in accordance with the [Telephone Consumer Protection Act \(TCPA\) and Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\) guidelines for Express Consent](#).

Additional details about changes to the online SSApp changes that were implemented in the CalHEERS 25.9 release is available in the [CalHEERS 25.9 release notes](#).

### **Next steps in the paper SSApp Development**

DHCS is in the final stages of developing the English and Spanish versions of the paper SSApp. In late 2025 the English SSApp will be available for counties and community partners to order, and a PDF version will be published on the DHCS website. The Spanish SSApp and a PDF version will follow in late 2025 or early 2026. In the meantime, counties should continue using the paper SSApp available in their inventory.

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In the coming months, DHCS will issue two Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Informational Letters (MEDILs) on the availability of the SSApp. The first will provide updates about the release of the SSApp and ordering information for the paper English and Spanish SSApp.

DHCS will issue a second MEDIL in 2026 once the remaining 17 threshold languages' PDF versions of the SSApp are available on the DHCS website. Counties must continue to accept the 2013 paper or PDF versions of the SSApp, even after the updated versions are released.

If you have any questions, or if we can provide further information, please send them to [MCED-Policy@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:MCED-Policy@dhcs.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Sarah Crow, Chief  
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division

Enclosure (If applicable)