



NOTICE OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2024

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS A COVERED SERVICE UNDER THE ALTERNATIVE BENEFIT PLAN FOR MEMBERS WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS

This notice provides information of public interest about a proposed State Plan Amendment (SPA) 24-0051 by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). SPA 24-0051 proposes to add Supported Employment as a covered service under the Alternative Benefit Plan (ABP) and add additional eligibility groups to the ABP. As a result of SPA 24-0051, Medi-Cal members who meet eligibility criteria and for whom receiving Supported Employment is medically necessary will be able to receive Supported Employment through the Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) program, Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) program or the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) in counties that have opted in to implement Supported Employment.

Supported Employment is a community and team-based service that helps individuals living with behavioral health conditions acquire and/or maintain competitive employment to support recovery from their behavioral health condition.

County behavioral health programs will have the option to implement Supported Employment as a SMHS, DMC, or DMC-ODS service.

These changes support the objectives of DHCS' California Behavioral Health Community-Based Organized Networks of Equitable Care and Treatment (BH-CONNECT) initiative. More information about BH-CONNECT can be found at <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/CalAIM/Pages/BH-CONNECT.aspx>.

Full access to services available under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit for individuals under 21 years of age (as described by 42 CFR 440.345) will remain unchanged as a result of SPA 24-0051. Additionally, DHCS complied with the provisions of Section 5006 (e) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 by publishing a tribal notice on October 7, 2024.

DHCS anticipates that the total federal cost associated with these changes will be minimal. There is no estimated federal cost impact for Supported Employment services offered through the SMHS and DMC-ODS delivery systems, as those systems are



authorized under California's 1915(b) waiver. For DMC counties, which represent only 6 percent of California's Medi-Cal population, that opt to implement supported employment, the estimated federal cost would be \$4,424.09 for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024-2025 and \$4,424.09 for FFY 2025-2026.

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

Public Review and Comments

DHCS requests input from Medi-Cal members, Medi-Cal specialty behavioral health delivery systems, providers, and other interested stakeholders concerning proposed SPA 24-0051.

Upon submission to CMS, a copy of the proposed SPA 24-0051 will be published at the following internet address:

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/laws/Pages/Pending-2024.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 24-0051 or a copy of submitted public comments related to SPA 24-0051 by submitting a request in writing to the mailing or email address listed below. Please identify SPA 24-0051 in the subject line or message making this request.

Written comments may be sent to the following address:

Department of Health Care Services
Medi-Cal Behavioral Health – Policy Division
ATTN: Ivan Bhardwaj
MS 2702
P.O. Box 997413
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413

Comments may also be emailed to PublicInput@dhcs.ca.gov. Please indicate SPA 24-0051 in the subject line or message including the comments.

To be assured DHCS considers the comments prior to submission of the SPA to CMS, comments must be received no later than November 28, 2024. Please note that comments will continue to be accepted after November 28, 2024, but DHCS may not be able to consider those comments prior to the initial submission of SPA 24-0051 to CMS.