

PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENT TO ADD SCHOOL- LINKED SERVICES AND THE DISTINCT PROVIDER TYPES FOR THESE SERVICES

This notice is to provide information of public interest about a proposed State Plan Amendment (SPA) by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). The proposed SPA 25-0044 will update the Alternative Benefit Plan (ABP) to add school-linked services (SLS) for behavioral health (mental health and substance use disorders) provided by credentialed school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors to the list of providers for children and youth at a school site as part of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative. SPA 25-0044 will align the ABP with SPA 23-0027, which added coverage of SLS for behavioral health provided by Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credentialed school psychologists, credentialed school social workers, and credentialed school counselors, and with SPA 25-0038, which proposed to add clinical trainees as an SLS provider.

SPA 25-0044 will also remove the September 30, 2025, end date for medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder in the ABP. This will align the ABP with changes proposed in SPA 25-0043.

DHCS estimates that the annual aggregate Medi-Cal expenditures for adopting the PPS credentialed practitioners and clinical trainees for SLS will be budget neutral. DHCS also estimates there will be no fiscal impact to remove the sunset date for MAT because there was no fiscal impact for adding MAT in SPA 20-0006B.

Additionally, this notice provides information of public interest with respect to Section 440.386 of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), which requires Medicaid state programs to publish a public notice to solicit public input regarding the amendment to the Medi-Cal ABP. DHCS provides a comprehensive set of services under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment benefit for individuals under 21 years of age, as described by 42 CFR 440.345.

Section 1902(a)(73) of the Social Security Act requires state Medicaid programs to notify Indian Health Programs (IHP) and Indian Health Organizations (IHO) of any SPAs that are likely to have a direct effect on Indians, IHP, and IHO. DHCS has determined that

adding SLS and removing the sunset date for MAT will not have a direct effect on Indians, IHPs, or IHOs since IHPs and IHOs do not operate these programs.

The effective date of adding clinical trainees and removing the end date for MAT is October 1, 2025, while the effective date for SLS is January 1, 2024, which matches the effective date for SLS in SPA 23-0027. All proposed SPAs are subject to approval by CMS.

Public Review and Comments

Upon submission to CMS, a copy of the proposed SPA 25-0044 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 25-0044 using the mailing or email addresses listed below.

Written comments may be sent to the following address:

Department of Health Care Services
Benefits Division
Attn: Medi-Cal Benefits Policy Branch
P.O. Box 997413, MS 4601
Sacramento, California 95899-7417

Comments may also be emailed to PublicInput@dhcs.ca.gov. Please indicate SPA 25-0044 in the subject line or message.

A copy of submitted public comments to SPA 25-0044 may be requested in writing to the mailing or email addresses identified above.