

DATE: May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter No.: 26-15

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

SUBJECT: AUDIT FINDINGS RELATED TO RMA DETERMINATIONS (Reference:  
ACWDLs [15-16](#); [25-10](#))

The purpose of this Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Informational Letter is to inform counties of findings identified in external audits conducted by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the California Department of Public Health Office of Refugee Health (CDPH/ORH) in September 2025. This letter includes Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) policy reminders related to those findings.

## Findings

The ORR and CDPH/ORH independently audited selected Medi-Cal case files. Auditors identified one or more of the following issues in the cases that were reviewed:

- Redeterminations were not performed in a timely manner.
- Income verifications were not performed. There were individuals who had no reported income and were not assessed for or enrolled in Medi-Cal prior to RMA enrollment.
- RMA was incorrectly granted to U.S. born citizens.
- Non-citizen information was not collected despite being necessary information for RMA eligibility.
- Inaccurate Notice of Actions (NOAs) were issued.



## Policy Reminders

- The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is reaffirming the guidance in All County Welfare Director's Letter (ACWDL) [15-16](#), Refugee Medical Assistance Beneficiaries Transition to Medi-Cal and Retroactive Eligibility, as a reminder that counties must screen new arrivals for Medi-Cal or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) prior to RMA enrollment according to the program hierarchy rules.
- Income must be verified prior to RMA enrollment. MAGI eligibility is determined using IRS based federal tax household and income rules. However, newly arrived refugees typically have no IRS data. Therefore, counties must collect this information from the refugee applicants to complete the eligibility determination. Many Medi-Cal members may not be required to file taxes because their income is so low. For those members, the counties must still determine the MAGI household and current income. Counties must enter the collected information into CalSAWS and screen the applicant for MAGI Medi-Cal using the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment, and Retention System (CalHEERS) Business Rules Engine (BRE). If the applicant's income is at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) they will be eligible for MAGI Medi-Cal. Refugees who are ineligible for MAGI Medi-Cal because they have an income above 138 percent and up to 200 percent of the FPL can still qualify for RMA. Counties should continue to use CalHEERS to screen refugees with income above 200 percent FPL for other coverage options.
- As of May 5, 2025 RMA is time-limited to four months (ACWDL [25-10](#)). RMA redeterminations should be performed according to the individuals' Entry/Grant Date. Counties must evaluate current members whose RMA is ending (i.e., the end of the fourth month of RMA eligibility period) and determine whether they qualify for MAGI Medi-Cal or other insurance affordability programs. This determination should begin no later than 30 days prior to the termination of their RMA coverage, and before their

RMA-based Medi-Cal coverage ends to ensure that there is no gap in coverage. The CalHEERS BRE must begin within 30 days of the RMA end date in order to correctly determine whether there is potential Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) eligibility.

- RMA is restricted to individuals who have refugee status and individuals in groups treated as refugees by law (asylees, eligible trafficking victims, and special immigrants).
- Every record must include complete information about the member's current citizenship or immigration status. This includes ensuring that Alien Numbers, Citizen/Alien Codes, INS Entry/Grant Dates, and Country-of-Origin fields are fully populated in CalSAWS and properly transmitted to the system of record in MEDS. Counties should also issue NOAs that reference the specific program under which the individual is being approved or discontinued (e.g., Refugee Cash Assistance or Refugee Medical Assistance).

### **Monitoring**

DHCS will monitor statewide RMA enrollment and contact counties to resolve eligibility issues identified during case reviews and to provide guidance on RMA program eligibility requirements. Counties may also contact DHCS to request assistance as needed.

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this letter, please contact the Immigration Unit at [MCEDImmigrationUnit@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:MCEDImmigrationUnit@dhcs.ca.gov). County questions regarding policy guidance should be sent to [MCED-Policy@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:MCED-Policy@dhcs.ca.gov).

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Sincerely,

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