

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S2-14-26  
Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850



## **Disabled & Elderly Health Programs Group**

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March 23, 2021

Jacey Cooper, Chief Deputy Director  
Health Care Programs  
California Department of Health Care Services  
Director's Office, MS 0000  
P.O. Box 997413  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7418

Dear Ms. Cooper:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) received your request, dated May 8, 2020, for a temporary extension of California's Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health 1915(b) waiver program, under CMS control number CA-17. The current temporary waiver authority expires on, March 31, 2021.

You have requested this extension through, December 31, 2021, to allow California's Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) additional time to develop and obtain approval for California's Medi-Cal California Advancing and Innovating (CalAIM) initiative and to align with the proposed one-year extension of California's Section 1115(a) Demonstration entitled Medi-Cal 2020. The state's intent of the Medi-Cal CalAIM initiative includes transitioning the Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health 1915(b) waiver program and the Medi-Cal 2020 1115(a) Demonstration to a single comprehensive section 1915(b) waiver with a proposed effective date of, January 1, 2022.

On June 1, 2020, the CMS granted a 6-month temporary extension of California's Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health 1915(b) waiver to continue to operate under section 1915(b) of the Social Security Act. On December 16, 2020, the CMS granted an additional 3-month temporary extension that will expire on, March 31, 2021. At this time, CMS is granting an additional nine (9) month temporary extension of California's Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health 1915(b) waiver to continue to operate under section 1915(b) of the Social Security Act. This temporary extension will expire on, December 31, 2021. CMS will continue to engage with the state for status updates on the CalAIM initiative milestones and projected timelines for the proposed transition on, January 1, 2022.

Jacey Cooper  
Page 2

The CMS will continue to work with your staff during the extension period. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Sale at (214) 767-4419 or Kitaho Kato at (415) 744-3639, in the Division of Managed Care Plan Operations (DMCO), or Tonya Dobbin, in the Division of Managed Care Policy, at (410) 786-3032.

Sincerely,

Carrie Smith  
Deputy Director

cc: Erika Cristo, California Department of Health Care Services  
Bill Brooks, CMS