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*Director*

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
Department of Health Care Services



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
*Governor*

February 5, 2008

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 08-04  
ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS  
ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES  
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: CONFIDENTIALITY POLICIES GOVERNING MEDI-CAL AND THE  
MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY DATA SYSTEM

The purpose of this letter is to transmit to County Welfare Departments (CWD) information on the California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) policies governing the confidentiality of and access to information on the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) and changes required by Senate Bill 25 (Statutes of 2003, Chapter 907) and Assembly Bill 3029 (Statutes of 2004, Chapter 584).

Federal Medicaid law requires that medical information on applicants and beneficiaries must be kept confidential, and that State Medicaid agencies must provide safeguards that restrict the use or disclosure of information concerning applicants and beneficiaries to purposes directly connected with the administration of the state Medicaid program. (Title 42, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 1396a (a)(7).). The regulation implementing this law governs the disclosure of information collected and maintained by state Medicaid agencies and their agents and contractors (Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 431.300 et seq.).

Under no circumstances may Medi-Cal beneficiary information be disclosed unless the disclosure is for a purpose directly related to the administration of the Medi-Cal program. Purposes directly related to the administration of Medi-Cal include establishing eligibility, determining the amount of medical assistance, and providing services for beneficiaries, among other things. (Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I), Section 14100.2.)

In addition, the Privacy Rule of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) states that a program covered by HIPAA, such as Medi-Cal, must ensure that program staff access only that protected health information (PHI) necessary in order for them to carry out their duties. Disclosures of PHI or confidential information to other entities, such as providers, are limited to those which are legally permissible and to the minimum necessary amount of information to accomplish the intended purpose of the disclosure. (45 CFR, Section 164.502(b)(1)).

CWD employees are allowed access to MEDS eligibility data for purposes of administering the Medi-Cal program. The administration of the program encompasses those administrative activities and responsibilities that the State is required to engage in to operate the program, which includes determination of eligibility by DHCS and its agents. Disclosure of information is limited to and solely for the purpose described above.

Senate Bill 25, (Statutes of 2003, Chapter 907) required the removal of the Social Security Number (SSN) from the Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Cards (BIC) and prohibited the use of the SSN in certain situations and on certain documents.

The SSN component was removed from the BIC in 2005 and all Medi-Cal recipients were issued new cards with 14-digit identification (ID) numbers. Beneficiaries were instructed to destroy any old cards and to take their new BICs with them to the doctor, pharmacy, hospital or any other health care provider in order to receive services. Beneficiaries were advised that they could be denied services if they did not have their new BIC with them when requesting services.

Assembly Bill 3029 (Statutes of 2004, Chapter 584) requires providers to use the new 14-digit BIC ID number when billing Medi-Cal, but allows exceptions for hospitals, long term care facilities, licensed primary care clinics and emergency medical transportation services. The providers listed here, as exceptions, will be allowed to continue to use the beneficiary's SSN for billing (W&I Code 14045).

The DHCS policy and W&I Code 14018.4 allow certain providers to contact CWDs for information necessary to verify Medi-Cal program eligibility. However, these organizations are required to make a good faith effort to obtain the beneficiary's BIC information from the Medi-Cal beneficiary. County contact information will be added to the Medi-Cal website at [www.Medi-Cal.ca.gov](http://www.Medi-Cal.ca.gov) prior to DHCS implementing the new billing requirements.

The counties and providers will be notified when this has been completed. Any changes to the contact list should be emailed to [Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov). Provider bulletins have been mailed to medical and dental providers to advise them of the circumstances in which they are allowed to request eligibility information from counties.

DHCS has mailed the enclosed notice to Medi-Cal beneficiaries telling them that they should bring their BIC to their health care providers, that they may call the county social services office to get their BIC number, and that their provider could decline to provide services if the beneficiary does not have the BIC. Effective February 1, 2008, for dates of service on or after this date, providers may no longer bill Medi-Cal or the Child Health and Disability Prevention program using the Medi-Cal beneficiary's SSN. Providers will be required to bill with the Medi-Cal identification number from the BIC. Claims submitted with the Medi-Cal beneficiary's SSN will be denied. Certain exceptions apply for hospitals, Long Term Care facilities, licensed primary care clinics, emergency medical transportation, and hospital based physicians as indicated by the W & I Code, Section 14045. The exception criteria will be based primarily on claim type and Place of Service codes.

When a Medi-Cal provider requests beneficiary information, the CWD must obtain the provider's name, telephone number, and enough information to identify the beneficiary. If the provider is unable to furnish the beneficiary's birth date or SSN, but is able to provide sufficient information to identify the Medi-Cal beneficiary (i.e., beneficiary's name and home address) and the information is sufficient to assure the CWD that there is no question as to the identity of the Medi-Cal provider and/or the Medi-Cal beneficiary, the CWD may release the beneficiary's BIC ID and date of birth.

**The 14 digit BIC ID number can be found on the XB screen of MEDS. The 14 digit BIC ID contains a 9 digit Client Index Number, a check digit, and a 4 digit Julian Date that is equal to the card issue date.**

CWDs should only need to provide the Medi-Cal beneficiary's BIC ID and date of birth, and then refer the provider to the Medi-Cal Eligibility Verification System or the telephone Automated Eligibility Verification System for verification of eligibility at 1-800-456-2387. This will allow providers to verify eligibility and obtain all necessary billing information, including an Eligibility Verification Confirmation number that can be used to resolve any future eligibility questions.

Exception: A beneficiary or a provider with the beneficiary's approval can contact the county and be given the BIC ID number if the conditions described below are met::

- The beneficiary has an immediate need for medical services (such as the beneficiary is currently in the doctor's office, has an appointment scheduled prior to anticipated receipt of BIC card, and/or needs to have a prescription filled).
- The beneficiary does not have his/her card or a new card has been issued that invalidates the card in his/her possession.
- The county eligibility worker can confirm the identity of the beneficiary.

The CWD cannot release information concerning an ineligible individual other than the fact he or she is not eligible for Medi-Cal for a specific month. However, if the hospital is requesting a denial reason to determine the individual's need for charity assistance, the CWD may disclose the denial reason.

CWDs are responsible for ensuring that the confidentiality of beneficiary eligibility is maintained. W&I Code, Section 14100.2, subsection (h), provides that a violation of confidentiality is a misdemeanor. DHCS' policy regarding confidentiality also extends to the MEDS print outs including MOPI screens. These screen prints should never leave the county departments. CWDs should remind their employees of this provision.

Any questions concerning confidentiality should be directed to Ms. Ana Fellines at (916) 552-9507 or email her at [Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov).

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY**

Vivian Auble, Chief  
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division

County Contacts for Providers

Any changes or updates are to be emailed to [Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Ana.Fellines@dhcs.ca.gov)

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<p><b><u>Alameda County</u></b> Social Services Agency 8477 Enterprise Way Oakland, CA 94621 (510) 639-1090</p>	<p><b><u>Alpine County</u></b> Health &amp; Human Services 75A Diamond Valley Rd. Markleeville, CA 96120 (530) 694-2235 ext. 231</p>	<p><b><u>Amador County</u></b> Department of Social Services 1003 Broadway Jackson, CA 95642 (209) 223-6550</p>
<p><b><u>Butte County</u></b> Department of Social Welfare 78 Table Mountain Blvd. P.O. Box 1649 Oroville, CA 95965-1649 (530) 538-7711</p> <p><u>Other offices:</u> Chico, CA -- (530) 879-3479 Oroville, CA -- (530) 538-7572</p>	<p><b><u>Calaveras County</u></b> Calaveras Works and Human Svcs Government Center 509 East Saint Charles Street San Andreas, CA 95249-9701 (209) 754-6448</p>	<p><b><u>Colusa County</u></b> Department of Social Welfare 251 East Webster Street Colusa, CA 95932 (530) 458-0250</p>
<p><b><u>Contra Costa County</u></b> Employment and Human Service Department <i>No Medi-Cal website available</i> 30 Muir Road Martinez, CA 94553-4068 1-866-663-3225</p>	<p><b><u>Del Norte County</u></b> Department of Social Services 880 Northcrest Drive Crescent City, CA 95531-3485 (707) 464-3191</p>	<p><b><u>El Dorado County</u></b> Department of Social Services <i>No Medi-Cal website available</i> 3057 Briw Road Placerville, CA 95667-1637 (530) 642-7300</p>
<p><b><u>Fresno County</u></b> Employment &amp; Temporary Assistance Department Heritage Center, Fresno (559) 453-4998 University Med Center (559) 453-6447 Coalinga Regional Center (559) 935-6300 Selma Regional Center (559) 898-5100</p>	<p><b><u>Glenn County</u></b> Human Resources Agency P.O. Box 611 420 East Laurel Street Willows, CA 95988-0611 (530) 934-6514 (530) 934-6510</p>	<p><b><u>Humboldt County</u></b> Department of Social Services 929 Koster Street Eureka, CA 95501 (707) 269-3590 (800) 891-8551</p>
<p><b><u>Imperial County</u></b> Department of Social Services 2995 South Fourth Street, Suite 105 El Centro, CA 92243 (760) 335-3488</p>	<p><b><u>Inyo County</u></b> Department of Social Services 912 N. Main Street Bishop, CA 93514 (760) 872-1394</p>	<p><b><u>Kern County</u></b> Department of Human Services 100 E. California Avenue Bakersfield, CA 93307 (661) 631-6000</p>
<p><b><u>Kings County</u></b> Human Services Agency 1200 South Drive Hanford, CA 93230 (559) 582-3241</p>	<p><b><u>Lake County</u></b> Department of Social Services 15975 Anderson Ranch Parkway P.O. Box 9000 Lower Lake, CA 95457-9000 (707) 995-4200</p>	<p><b><u>Lassen County</u></b> Lassen WORKS Roosevelt Annex 720 Richmond Road Susanville, CA 96130 (530) 251-8152</p>
<p><b><u>County of Los Angeles</u></b> Dept. of Public Social Services <i>(Apply at the nearest District office. Refer to the White Pages under COUNTY GOVERNMENT of your phone book)</i> (877) 597-4777 Toll Free (Limited Service Area) (213) 639-6300</p>	<p><b><u>Madera County</u></b> Department of Social Services 720 E. Yosemite Avenue Madera, CA 93639-0569 (559) 675-7841</p>	<p><b><u>Marin County</u></b> Dept Health &amp; Human Services (Public Assistance) 120 N. Redwood Dr-West Wing San Rafael, CA 94903 (415) 473-3400</p>
<p><b><u>Mariposa County</u></b> Department of Human Services 5186 Highway 49 North Mariposa, CA 95338 (800) 266-3609 (209) 966-3609</p>	<p><b><u>Mendocino County</u></b> Department of Social Services 825 S. Franklin Street Fort Bragg, Ca 95482 (707) 962-1000</p>	<p><b><u>Merced County</u></b> Human Services Agency 2115 West Wardrobe Avenue Merced, CA 95340 (209) 385-3000 ext. 5217</p>

County Contacts for Providers

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	737 South State Street P.O. Box 8508 Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 463-7700	
<b><u>Modoc County</u></b> Department of Social Services 120 North Main Street Alturas, CA 96101 (530) 233-6501	<b><u>Mono County</u></b> Department of Social Services 85 Emigrant Street P.O. Box 576 Bridgeport, CA 93517 (760) 924-1773 (760) 932-5610	<b><u>Monterey County</u></b> Department of Social Services 100 South Main Street- Suite 216 Salinas, CA 93902 (831) 755-8500 (831) 755-4650  <u>Other offices:</u> Seaside - (831) 755-4650 King City - (831) 385-7400
<b><u>Napa County</u></b> Department of Social Services 2261 Elm Street Napa, CA 94559 (707) 253-4511	<b><u>Nevada County</u></b> <i>No website available</i> Human Services Agency 950 Maidu Avenue P.O. Box 1210 Nevada City, CA 95959 (530) 265-1340 Toll Free: (888) 809-1340	<b><u>Orange County</u></b> Social Services Agency <i>(Call for nearest district office)</i> <u>Orange County Regional Centers:</u> Anaheim (714) 575-2400 Santa Ana (714) 435-5900 Aliso Viejo (949) 389-8200 Garden Grove (714) 741-7100
<b><u>Placer County</u></b> Health and Human Services 11519 B Avenue Auburn, CA 95603 (530) 889-7610 Roseville Office (916) 784-6000 North Lake Tahoe (530) 546-1912	<b><u>Plumas County</u></b> Dept of Social Services 270 County Hospital Rd, Suite 207 Quincy, CA 95971 (530) 283-6350	<b><u>Riverside County</u></b> Department of Public Social Services 4260 Tequesquite Avenue) Riverside, CA 92501 <i>(Call for nearest office)</i> (951) 955-6400
<b><u>Sacramento County</u></b> Department of Human Assistance <b>Medi-Cal District Offices</b> Downtown Sacramento (916) 874-2256 East Sacramento (916) 874-3800 South Sacramento (916) 875-8100 Del Paso (916) 648-0894 Rancho Cordova (916) 875-8600 Elk Grove (916) 685-9273 Galt (209) 745-3484  <b>For Other Medi-Cal Information call</b> (916) 874-2072	<b><u>San Benito County</u></b> Human Services Agency 1111 San Felipe Rd, Ste 206 Hollister, CA 95023-3801 (831) 636-4180	<b><u>San Bernadino County</u></b> Human Services System Transitional Assistance Department <i>(Call for nearest district office)</i> (909) 388-0245
<b><u>San Diego County</u></b> Dept of Health & Human Svcs Agency <i>(Call for the nearest district Office)</i> (866) 262-9881	<b><u>City &amp; County of San Francisco</u></b> <a href="http://www.sfhsa.org">www.sfhsa.org</a> SF Medi-Cal Health Connection 1440 Harrison Street San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 863-9892	<b><u>San Joaquin County</u></b> Human Services Agency 333 E. Washington Street Stockton, CA 95202 (209) 468-1000
<b><u>San Luis Obispo County</u></b> Department of Social Services 3433 S. Higuera Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93403 (805) 781-1600  <u>Other offices:</u> Atascadero - (805) 461-6000 Paso Robles - (805) 237-3110 Morro Bay - (805) 772-6340	<b><u>San Mateo County</u></b> Human Services Agency 400 Harbor Boulevard, Building "B" Belmont, CA 94002 (650) 802-5018	<b><u>Santa Barbara County</u></b> Department of Social Services 1100 W. Lompoc Lompoc, CA 93436 (805) 681-4401

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<p><b><u>Santa Clara County</u></b>                  Social Services Agency                  Medi-Cal Service Center                  P.O. Box 880                  San Jose, CA 95106-0880                  1-800-753-0024</p>	<p><b><u>Santa Cruz County</u></b>                  Human Resources Agency                  1020 Emeline Street                  Santa Cruz, CA 95060                  (831) 454-4131</p> <p><u>Other offices:</u>                  Watsonville Office (831) 763-8500</p>	<p><b><u>Shasta County</u></b>                  Department of Social Services                  2460 Breslauer Way                  P.O. Box 496005                  Redding, CA 96001                  (530) 225-5767</p>
<p><b><u>Sierra County</u></b>                  Social Services                  202 Front Street                  P.O. Box 1019                  Loyalton, CA 96118                  (530) 993-6700                  Downieville Office (530) 289-3711</p>	<p><b><u>Siskiyou County</u></b>                  Human Services                  818 S. Main Street                  Yreka, CA 96097                  (530) 841-2700 293                  Weed, CA 96094                  (530) 938-5100</p>	<p><b><u>Solano County</u></b>                  Health and Social Services  <i>No Medi-Cal website</i>                  201 Georgia Street                  P.O. Box 12000                  Vallejo, CA 94590                  (707) 553-5311</p>
<p><b><u>Sonoma County</u></b>                  Human Services Department                  520 Mendocino Avenue                  PO Box 1539                  Santa Rosa, CA 95402-1539                  (707) 565-5200                  (800) 354-1277</p>	<p><b><u>Stanislaus County</u></b>  <i>No Medi-Cal Web Site Available</i>                  Community Services Agency                  251 East Hackett Road                  P.O. Box 42 (95353)                  Modesto, CA 95355                  (209) 558-2777</p>	<p><b><u>Sutter County</u></b>                  Department of Human Services                  Welfare Social Services Division                  539 Garden Highway                  P.O. Box 1535                  Yuba City, CA 95991                  (530) 822-7230</p>
<p><b><u>Tehama County</u></b>                  Department of Social Services                  22840 Antelope Blvd.                  P.O. Box 1515                  Red Bluff, CA 96080                  (530) 527-1911</p>	<p><b><u>Trinity County</u></b>                  Dept of Health and Human                  Services                  #51 Industrial Parkway                  P.O. Box 1470                  Weaverville, CA 96093-1470                  (530) 623-1265</p>	<p><b><u>Tulare County</u></b>                  Health &amp; Human Services Agency                  (Call for nearest Office)</p> <p><u>In-Take Office</u>                  Dinuba (559) 591-5804                  Lindsay (559) 562-1377                  Porterville (559) 782-4750                  Tulare (559) 685-2600                  Visalia (559) 733-6111</p>
<p><b><u>Tuolumne County</u></b>                  Department of Social Services                  20075 Cedar Road North                  Sonora, CA 95370                  (209) 533-5711</p>	<p><b><u>Ventura County</u></b>                  Human Services Agency                  4651 Telephone Road                  Ventura, CA 93003                  (805) 658-4100</p> <p><u>Regional Offices:</u>                  Oxnard (805) 385-8487                  Ventura (805) 658-4100                  Santa Clara Valley (805) 933-8300                  Simi Valley (805) 584-4842</p>	<p><b><u>Yolo County</u></b>                  Dept of Employment &amp; Social Svcs                  25 N. Cottonwood Street                  Woodland, CA 95695                  (530) 661-2750</p> <p>West Sacramento Office                  500-A Jefferson Blvd.                  West Sacramento, CA 95605                  (916) 375-6200</p>
<p><b><u>Yuba County</u></b>                  Human Services Agency                  6000 Linhurst Avenue, No. 504                  P.O. Box 2320                  Marysville, CA 95901-9987                  (530) 749-6311</p>		