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

California Department of Health Services

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Director

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

April 5, 2002

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons
All County Health Executives
All County Mental Health Directors
All County Foster Care Workers

Letter No.: 02-20

CONTINUOUS ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILDREN (CEC) LOSING FOSTER CARE

Ref.: All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) Nos. 01-01 and 01-40

The purpose of this letter is to provide information regarding CEC Medi-Cal eligibility for foster youth. As stated in ACWDL Nos. 01-01 and 01-40, foster youth who are receiving foster care (FC) funds through Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care will be eligible to receive Medi-Cal services under CEC when FC is discontinued.

CEC for Medi-Cal service became effective January 1, 2001. State statute requires state-mandated local programs to ensure that the Medi-Cal benefits to independent FC youth are extended as defined in federal law. Foster youth who are receiving FC funds will continue to receive no-cost Medi-Cal for up to a 12-month period which ends with the earlier date of the next eligibility determination or the child's 19th birthday.

Whenever a child under 19 loses FC Eligibility and does not qualify under the Extended Medi-Cal Eligibility for Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program (refer to ACWDL Nos. 00-41 and 00-61), CEC is applicable. Therefore, the county must transition the FC youth to the CEC program after being terminated from FC without requiring a new application. The child is entitled to CEC until the next annual redetermination, which shall be 12 months from the last FC re-determination.

The Department of Health Services does not wish to specify a single method for completion of this process. County welfare workers, probation officers, and/or youth may directly contact the youth's Eligibility Worker in their county to arrange for the extended Medi-Cal benefits. Counties are encouraged to work with the youth and their parents to ensure they are given every opportunity to participate in this program.

Counties should maintain a Medi-Cal case file for each CEC child until the child reaches the end of the CEC period or otherwise terminates from the program by moving out of state or notifying the county of the desire not to continue in the program.

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The FFCC Program takes priority over CEC. Children who were in FC on their 18th birthday are eligible to receive zero share-of-cost Medi-Cal until their 21st birthday provided certain criteria are met. Therefore, these children do not get CEC; they are aided under Aid Code 4M.

Examples:

1. A 17-year old child received FC until March 2002 when she is returned to the home of her parents. Parents are not requesting Medi-Cal for themselves. The last FC redetermination was completed in November 2001. This child would be entitled to CEC from April 2002 through October 2002 (six months). Note: April 2002 begins the first month of CEC and this continues until the annual redetermination, unless parents request termination.

2. A 17-year old child received FC until March 2002 when she was discontinued due to emancipation. The last FC redetermination was completed in November 2001. This child would be entitled to CEC from April 2002 through October 2002 (six months). *Note:* April 2002 begins the first month of CEC and this continues until the annual redetermination.

3. A 17-year old child received FC until March 2002 when she was discontinued because he or she returned home. The parents are receiving Medi-Cal with a SOC; they have a redetermination scheduled for July 2002. The last FC redetermination was completed in November 2001. This child would be entitled to CEC from April 2002 through October 2002 (six months). When CEC ends for the child in October 2002, the child's eligibility will be based on existing case information. *Note:* April 2002 begins the first month of CEC and this continues until the end of the 12-month period established in the FC case.

If you have CEC questions regarding this letter, please contact Ms. Nancy Forrest at (916) 657-0619. If you have FC questions, please contact Ms. Erin Lynch at (916) 654-5769.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Richard Brantingham
Acting Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch