

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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May 13, 1987

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

Letter: 87-24

MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION -- PROMPTNESS REQUIREMENT

This is to remind you of the Promptness Requirement provided in Title 22, Section 50177 of the California Administrative Code and made specific in the Medi-Cal Procedures Manual Section 4-J (attached). If an applicant has an immediate medical need, the county shall expedite the eligibility determination within available resources. Women who are pregnant are considered to have an immediate need.

The importance of early prenatal care cannot be overemphasized. Early prenatal care increases the opportunity for healthy pregnancies and healthy infants, and lowers medical costs.

Effective on February 17, 1987, emergency regulations implement the Medi-Cal Comprehensive Perinatal Services program. This program will provide Medi-Cal beneficiaries with nutrition, health education and psychosocial services in addition to regular medical care.

By following the Promptness Requirement, the county has the opportunity to ensure pregnant women receive the full benefit of early prenatal care.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch

Attachment

cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons
Medi-Cal Program Consultants

Expiration Date: May 13, 1988

MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY MANUAL

4J -- PROMPTNESS REQUIREMENT

These guidelines are to be used in determining how quickly counties are to complete an eligibility determination and/or issue a Medi-Cal card to a new applicant or continuing eligible. (Reference: Title 22, California Administrative Code, Sections 50177, 50743 (b), and 50745 (b) and (c).)

In order to assure equal and consistent treatment of Medi-Cal applicants and beneficiaries, the following clarifies the State's policy.

- a. If the applicant has an immediate medical need, the county shall expedite the eligibility determination within available resources.
- b. If a beneficiary (new or continuing) has a need for medical services prior to the anticipated receipt of a Department-issued card, the county shall issue a current month card.
- c. These policies shall be applied equally to all applicants and beneficiaries who have an immediate medical need. (Women who are pregnant shall be considered to have an immediate medical need and shall automatically have their eligibility determination expedited without reference to whether or not they plan to carry their pregnancy to term.)