



Medi-Cal

Your Guide to Medi-Cal Behavioral Health: What's Covered and How to Get Care

This brochure explains what behavioral health services, which refer to both mental health and substance use services, are available to you through your Medi-Cal benefits.



Get the details about free and low-cost behavioral health benefits for Californians.

[dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/
BH-Brochures.aspx](https://dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/BH-Brochures.aspx)



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Covered Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Services



This brochure tells you about different types of services and how to get them. It also tells you who to call if you need help or have questions.

You can use your Medi-Cal benefits to access behavioral health services, which include three main types of services:

» **Non-Specialty Mental Health Services**

Support for common concerns like anxiety, depression, and stress.

» **Specialty Mental Health Services**

Care for more serious mental health conditions like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or others that make it hard to do everyday activities.

» **Substance Use Services**

Treatment and support for alcohol or drug use, including counseling, detox, and recovery services.

There are also additional resources for children and youth under 21 and American Indian/Alaska Native Members.



Non-Specialty Mental Health Services



Non-Specialty mental health services can support you in addressing mild-to-moderate conditions or emotional issues that do not greatly affect your daily life or activities. Some examples of services include:

- » Initial mental health assessments.
- » In some cases, medications may be part of the overall approach to support mental and emotional well-being.
- » Individual or group therapy.
- » Dyadic Services: Services that support you and your child’s behavioral health and development together.

Your Medi-Cal Coverage	How to Get Non-Specialty Mental Health Services
Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan*	» Speak to your health care provider—like your doctor, nurse, or physician assistant. » You can also contact your Medi-Cal managed care plan at: dhcs.ca.gov/mmchpd » Managed care plans offer member handbooks with a full list of available non-specialty mental health services.
Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service*	» Speak to your healthcare provider—like your doctor, nurse, or physician assistant.

*Medi-Cal covers care whether you’re in a Fee-for-Service or a Managed Care Plan. These are just different ways Medi-Cal pays for your services. If you qualify, Medi-Cal offers free or low-cost health coverage.

Specialty Mental Health Services



Specialty mental health services can support you in addressing mental health conditions or emotional issues that are severe enough to greatly affect your daily life or activities. Some examples of services include:

- » Individual, group, or family-based counseling and treatment services.
- » Case management services that help connect you to other services and supports.
- » Crisis intervention services that help address your urgent condition to help prevent more serious outcomes such as hospitalization.
- » Psychiatric inpatient hospital services if your mental health condition cannot be safely treated at home or in a provider’s office.
- » Residential treatment services are provided in licensed facilities.

Your Medi-Cal Coverage	How to Get Specialty Mental Health Services
Medi-Cal Managed Care* or Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service*	» Speak to your health care provider—like your doctor, nurse, or physician assistant. » You can also contact your county behavioral health plan at: dhcs.ca.gov/mmchpd » County behavioral health plans offer member handbooks with a full list of available specialty mental health services.

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Substance use services can help you overcome issues with alcohol or drug use. Some examples of services include:

- » Outpatient treatment including counseling and education.
- » Residential treatment at licensed facilities to support sobriety, manage triggers, and continue care after discharge.
- » Medication-assisted treatment combining medication and counseling for substance use.
- » Screenings and referrals for individuals ages 11+ at risk of substance use issues.

Your Medi-Cal Coverage	How to Get Help for Alcohol or Drug Use
Medi-Cal Managed Care* or Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service*	» Speak to your health care provider—like your doctor, nurse, or physician assistant. » You can also contact your county behavioral health plan at: dhcs.ca.gov/sud-cal » Call DHCS’ SUD Non-Emergency Treatment Referral Line: 1-800-879-2772 Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/SUD-NETRL » County behavioral health plans offer member handbooks with a full list of available substance use services.

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Services for Children and Youth



Medi-Cal provides behavioral health services for children and youth under age 21. Services are confidential, based on individual needs, and can adjust as those needs change. Examples include:

- » Treatment options that may include therapy, crisis care, or medication.
- » Support for anxiety, depression, and emotional challenges.
- » Services for substance use and eating disorders.
- » Youth ages 12+, parents, caregivers, or others with legal responsibility can request support.

School-Based Programs: The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) Fee Schedule Program and the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Billing Option Program help schools get paid for providing mental health and substance use services, making it easier for students to get care.

Who Can Get Services	How to Get Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth
Children and Youth Under Age 21 with Managed Care* or Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service*	» Speak to your health care provider—like your doctor, nurse, or physician assistant. » You can also contact your Medi-Cal managed care plan at: dhcs.ca.gov/mmchpd » Managed care plans offer member handbooks with a full list of available mental health services.

*Medi-Cal covers care whether you're in a Fee-for-Service or a Managed Care Plan. These are just different ways Medi-Cal pays for your services. If you qualify, Medi-Cal offers free or low-cost health coverage.

Services for American Indian/ Alaska Native Members



Medi-Cal partners with Indian Health Care Programs (IHCPs) to provide behavioral health services, including mental health and substance use services, for American Indian/Alaska Native members. IHCPs provide a range of services, including:

- » Therapy to support mental and emotional well-being.
- » Counseling for individuals, families, and groups.
- » Substance use support, including services to address alcohol and drug concerns.
- » In some counties, these programs have traditional healers and natural helpers.
- » You can get services through IHCPs or through the other options listed in this brochure.

Who Can Get Services	How to Get Behavioral Health Services for AI/AN
American Indian/ Alaska Native Medi-Cal Members	For more information on IHCPs: » Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/ihpsl » Call: Office of Tribal Affairs at 1-916-449-5770 CalHOPE RedLine: Trauma-informed phone, chat, and video support for Urban Indian and Tribal communities. » Visit: ccuih.org/redline

Resources and Contacts



If you need help with your Medi-Cal or behavioral health services, there are people you can talk to and places you can go for support.

Service	Description and Who to Contact
Crisis Support	Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offering 24/7 support from trained counselors. » Call or text: 988 » Chat online: 988lifeline.org
CalHOPE All ages	Free crisis counseling, emotional support, and mental health resources by phone or online. » Call: 1-833-317-HOPE (4673) » Visit: calhope.org
BrightLife Kids Families and kids ages 0–12	Free, confidential mental health app that supports families with young children and offers expert guidance for parents and caregivers. » No insurance required » Visit: brightlife.kids
Soluna Teens and young adults ages 13–25	Free, confidential mental health app supporting teens and young adults with coaching, crisis help, and peer support. » No insurance required » Visit: solunaapp.com



Topic	Description and Who to Contact
General Medi-Cal Support	For general Medi-Cal questions: » Call: 1-800-541-5555 » TDD: 1-800-430-7077 » Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/myMedi-Cal
Trouble Accessing Services or Denied Services	If you have trouble accessing Medi-Cal behavioral health services or believe you were wrongly denied: » Call: 1-888-452-8609 » Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/ombudsman » Email: MMCDOmbudsmanOffice@dhcs.ca.gov » File a complaint or request a hearing: dhcs.ca.gov/complaint
Applying for Medi-Cal	If you do not currently have Medi-Cal but want to apply: » Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/apply
View this Brochure Online	Get the details about free and low-cost behavioral health benefits for Californians: » Visit: dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/BH-Brochures.aspx



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