

DATE: October 12, 2023

Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter No.: I 23-54

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS

SUBJECT: JANUARY 2024 MEDI-CAL MANAGED CARE PLAN TRANSITION

The purpose of this letter is to provide counties with information related to some Medi-Cal members' change to a new managed care plan (MCP) on January 1, 2024 and the resources available to support their transition.

### **Background**

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is transforming Medi-Cal to ensure that Californians have access to the care they need to live healthier lives. Beginning in 2024, Medi-Cal MCPs will be subject to new requirements to rigorously advance health equity, quality, access, accountability and transparency to improve the Medi-Cal health care delivery system.

### **Policy**

As part of this transformation, some Medi-Cal MCPs are changing on January 1, 2024 as a result of four changes in how DHCS contracts with Medi-Cal MCPs. Collectively, these changes comprise the January 1, 2024, MCP Transition:

- New commercial MCP contracts: On December 30, 2022, DHCS announced an agreement with five commercial MCPs to serve Medi-Cal members in 21 counties.
- County-level Medi-Cal managed care model change: On August 23, 2023, DHCS received federal approval for 17 counties to change their Medi-Cal managed care model. These counties will shift to one of three local plan models – Two Plan, County Operated Health System (COHS), or the new Single Plan model.
- Contract with Kaiser Permanente (Kaiser): Kaiser will expand its Medi-Cal MCP contract to 32 counties and begin serving new populations, subject to a new agreement with DHCS.
- Changes in subcontracted MCP participation: DHCS will require Health Net in Los Angeles County to assign its subcontractor Molina 50% of its total membership in Los Angeles County. In addition, some subcontracted MCPs will serve different counties starting January 1, 2024.

Together, these changes will result in approximately 1.2 million Medi-Cal managed care members having new MCP options. In some cases, these changes will also require members to transition to new MCPs if their current MCP no longer serves members in their county. Changing health plans will not affect Medi-Cal coverage or benefits. DHCS has prepared the [2024 MCP Transition Policy Guide](#) with requirements for MCPs.

### **What This Means for County Eligibility Workers**

Medi-Cal members often turn to their county eligibility workers first with any question about their Medi-Cal coverage, benefits and providers. Given the eligibility redetermination currently underway as part of the continuous coverage unwinding, members are already contacting their county eligibility workers and may also ask about changes to their Medi-Cal MCPs. County eligibility workers can answer member questions and support their transition in the following ways:

- Help members understand if the 2024 MCP Transition impacts them based on the criteria outlined in this letter
- Help differentiate the 2024 MCP Transition from their eligibility redetermination
- Answer member questions about the 2024 MCP Transition health plan changes with the resources below
- Direct members to DHCS 2024 Transition webpages (below) and
- Direct members to the Health Care Options Field Operations Program staff in your county office or direct them to the [Health Care Options \(HCO\)](#) for information about health plan choices and provider choices.

### **Transition Resources for County Eligibility Workers**

DHCS has developed numerous resources about the 2024 MCP Transition to support members, providers and other stakeholders with the transition. These resources will be valuable to county eligibility workers who are answering transition questions from members. Here is an overview of these resources with related URL links:

- [MCP Transition homepage](#) – Provides an overview of the 2024 MCP Transition and how it fits into the broader transformation of Medi-Cal
- [MCP Transition Member home page](#) – Explains the transition to members and will be the most useful for county eligibility workers. It includes:
  - A county look-up tool with information about MCP changes in each county
  - The [notices](#) members will receive from Medi-Cal and the [Notice of Additional Information](#) (NOAI). The NOAI is translated into all threshold languages (also available as downloadable PDFs).
  - General [Frequently Asked Questions](#) in all threshold languages that address key issues about the transition.
  - Frequently Asked Questions about [Continuity of Care](#) and how members may be able to keep their providers when they change MCPs.

- A [Contact Us](#) page for members to learn more about health plans and providers choices.
- [MCP and Stakeholders](#) – Provides policy resources, as well as news & updates about the transition.

### **Notices Being Sent to Members Who Will Transition MCPs**

Notices will be sent to Medi-Cal members who will transition to a new MCP on January 1, 2024.

For details specific to foster care and youth, go to the [Member FAQs](#) on MCP Transition Member home page.

### Choice Counties

- Choice counties where an MCP transition will occur and members will have health plan options from which to choose include the following: Alpine, El Dorado, Kern, Sacramento, and San Diego.
- October 2023 – Members who are currently enrolled in a MCP that will be exiting the county at the end of 2023 will be mailed a letter from their current MCP letting them know about the MCP changes.
- November and December 2023 - Members will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal with additional information about:
  - New MCP enrollment
  - Additional options available
  - If members have to choose a new MCP, they will receive a Choice Packet to choose a new MCP in their county. The member must select a new MCP by December 22, 2023. If they don't, members will be automatically enrolled in a new MCP or Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service (i.e. foster care children or youth).
- December 2023 - After members select a new Medi-Cal MCP, or are automatically enrolled into a new MCP, they will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal with information about their new MCP.
- January 2024 – Members will receive a welcome packet from their new MCP.

### Single-Plan or County-Organized Health System (COHS)

- If members live in a county that is changing to a Single Plan Model or a county that is changing to a County-Organized Health System (COHS) model, they will be *automatically* enrolled in the COHS plan, Single Plan, or Kaiser Permanente (if they meet the eligibility criteria in the Kaiser section below). Foster care members in a Single Plan county will not be mandatory to be enrolled in a managed care plan until 2025.
  - Single Plan counties - Alameda, Contra Costa, Imperial

- COHS expansion counties – Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Mariposa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, San Benito, Sierra, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba
- October 2023 – Members who are currently enrolled in a MCP that will be exiting the county at the end of 2023, will be mailed a letter from their current MCP letting them know about the MCP change.
- November and December 2023 - Members will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal with additional information about:
  - New MCP enrollment
  - Additional options available (if applicable)
- December 2023 - Members will be mailed a letter from Medi-Cal with information about their automatic enrollment into a new MCP or Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service (i.e., foster care children or youth in Single-Plan Counties).
- January 2024 - Members receive a welcome packet from their new MCP.

This “[county look-up tool](#)” provides detailed information with a link to notices for all transition counties.

## **Kaiser**

Medi-Cal members who are enrolled in Kaiser on January 1, 2024 can remain in Kaiser. This applies to members in a Kaiser prime MCP and in Kaiser as a delegated subcontractor to another prime MCP<sup>1</sup>. Specifically:

- Kaiser is currently a prime MCP in these counties and will continue as a prime MCP – Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, San Diego
- Kaiser is currently a delegated subcontractor to another prime MCP in these counties and will become a prime MCP on January 1, 2024 – Alameda, Contra Costa, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Napa, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, Ventura, Yolo
- Kaiser will enter these additional counties as a new prime MCP as of January 1, 2024 - Fresno, Imperial, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tulare, Yuba
- COHS and Single-Plan counties with Kaiser will become the responsibility of DHCS’ enrollment broker, Health Care Options (HCO), effective January 1, 2024.

For members not currently enrolled in Kaiser, they can choose to enroll in Kaiser if they meet specific eligibility criteria:

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions of prime and subcontracted MCP. Prime MCP: An MCP that directly contracts with DHCS to provide Medi-Cal services to members within the county or counties specified in their contract. Subcontracted MCP: An MCP that contracts with the Prime MCP to assume full or partial risk of a portion of the prime MCP’s membership.

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- Have previously enrolled with a Kaiser Medi-Cal MCP at any point during calendar year 2023;
- Are an existing Kaiser member and transitioning into Medi-Cal managed care;
- Were previously enrolled with Kaiser, outside of Medi-Cal, during the 12 months preceding the effective date of their Medi-Cal eligibility;
- Have an immediate family member currently enrolled in Kaiser (i.e. a “family linkage”):
  - Spouse/domestic partner; a beneficiary’s dependent child, foster child, or stepchild under 26 years of age; a beneficiary’s dependent who is disabled and over 21 years of age; a parent or stepparent of a beneficiary under 26 years of age; or a grandparent, guardian, foster parent, or other relative with appropriate documentation of a familial relationship of a beneficiary under 26 years of age as determined by the Department
- Are dually-eligible for Medi-Cal and Medicare; or
- Are a child or youth enrolled in the foster care system and identified with a foster care aid code.

If you have any questions please reach out by email to [MCPTransitionPolicyGuide@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:MCPTransitionPolicyGuide@dhcs.ca.gov)

Original Signed By,

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