



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



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

July 30, 2012

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 12-19
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: Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants Eligible for Medi-Cal Benefits to the Same Extent as Refugees
(Reference: All County Welfare Directors Letters 08-53 and 09-43)

The purpose of this letter is to:

- Inform counties of the requirements of Section 8120 of Public Law 111-118, which states that Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants (SIs) are now eligible for entitlement programs, such as Medi-Cal, to the same extent, and for the same periods of time as refugees.
- Provide counties with guidance on the changes made to Medi-Cal eligibility for Iraqi and Afghan SIs as a result of Section 8120 of Public Law 111-118.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Section 8120 of Public Law 111-118, Iraqi and Afghan SIs and their eligible family members may receive entitlement programs, and other benefits available to refugees. This means that Iraqi and Afghan SIs and their eligible family members may now be eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal if otherwise eligible. The federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) states in ORR State Letter 10-02 that “these programs and benefits would appear to include federal public benefits such as ... Medicaid...” Previously, Iraqi and Afghan SIs were potentially eligible for only Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA). Benefits and services associated with these programs are limited to a maximum of eight months. With respect to medical benefits, Iraqi and Afghan SIs previously could receive RMA (as provided in ACWDL 08-53), but

their Medi-Cal eligibility was limited to restricted scope benefits because they did not meet the immigration status requirements for full-scope Medi-Cal. In order to now receive full scope Medi-Cal benefits as required by this letter, Afghan and Iraqi SIs, like other Medi-Cal beneficiaries, must also meet all Medi-Cal eligibility requirements including, but not limited to income, property, California residency and linkage. Effective immediately, Iraqi and Afghan SIs who meet all Medi-Cal eligibility requirements are eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal.

REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Section 8120 of Public Law No. 111-118, described above, does not impact an Iraqi/Afghan SI's eligibility for Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA), since time-eligibility for RMA benefits remains at eight months from the date of entry for Iraqi/Afghan SI's who are not Medi-Cal eligible, but who meet all RMA eligibility requirements. Iraqi/Afghan SIs who previously exhausted the eight-month maximum eligibility for RMA are eligible for Medi-Cal if they apply and meet all eligibility requirements.

MEDI-CAL FOR IRAQI AND AFGHAN SIs

Iraqi/Afghan SIs are to be treated like refugees for the purposes of determining Medi-Cal eligibility. Effective immediately, Afghan and Iraqi SIs who meet all Medi-Cal eligibility requirements including, but not limited to income, property, California residency and linkage are eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal. Please review all Iraqi/Afghan SI cases that are currently eligible for RMA for ongoing Medi-Cal eligibility. If an SI who is currently eligible for RMA is also eligible for Medi-Cal, the county should grant Medi-Cal as appropriate and send out the attached Approval NOA (Attachment A). For purposes of tracking the immigration status of Iraqi and Afghan SIs in MEDS, counties should use the citizenship/alien indicator code "R".

As noted in ACWDL 08-53, the documents in the following table will confirm both immigration status and date of entry for Iraqi and Afghan SIs:

Documents Acceptable for Confirming Immigration Status and Date of Entry	
Applicant	Documentation
Principal Applicant Iraqi or Afghan SI	Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigration visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under Immigrant Visa Category SI1 or SQ1 and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry
Spouse of Principal Applicant Iraqi or Afghan SI	Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under Immigrant Visa Category SI2 or SQ2 and DHS stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry
Unmarried Child Under 21 Years of Age of Iraqi or Afghan SI	Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under Immigrant Visa Category SI3 or SQ3 and DHS stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry
Principal Applicant Iraqi or Afghan SI Principal Adjusting Status in the U.S.	DHS Form I-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi or Afghan nationality (or Iraqi or Afghan passport), with an immigrant visa code of SI6 or SQ6
Spouse of Principal Applicant Iraqi or Afghan SI in SI6 Category	DHS Form I-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi or Afghan nationality (or Iraqi or Afghan passport), with an immigrant visa code of SI7 or SQ7
Unmarried Child Under 21 Years of Age of Iraqi or Afghan SI in SI6 Category	DHS Form I-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi or Afghan nationality (or Iraqi or Afghan passport), with an immigrant visa code of SI9 or SQ9

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If you have any further questions please contact Mr. Jeffery Baca at (916) 449-5286 or by email at jeff.baca@dhcs.ca.gov

Original signed by Robert Sugawara

Robert Sugawara, Acting Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division

Enclosure

NOTICE OF ACTION
APPROVAL OF MEDI-CAL BENEFITS
FOR IRAQI AND AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANTS

Notice Date: _____
Case Number: _____
Worker Name: _____
Worker ID Number: _____
Worker Telephone Number: _____
Office Hours: _____

APPROVAL NOTICE FOR:

[Insert Name\(s\) Here](#)

We have looked at all information available to us about your circumstances and evaluated you for all Medi-Cal programs. You have been receiving Refugee Medical Assistance.

Beginning on _____ you will receive full-scope Medi-Cal benefits.

A change in the law has made Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants and their eligible family members eligible for Medi-Cal as long as they also meet the other Medi-Cal eligibility requirements.

Please Note: Other family members with different eligibility status will receive a separate notice. Please call your worker if you need additional information about this notice.

DO NOT THROW AWAY YOUR BENEFITS IDENTIFICATION CARD (BIC)

If you already have a plastic Benefit Identification Card (BIC), you should keep using that card. The BIC is good as long as you are eligible for Medi-Cal. If you previously received a BIC but no longer have that BIC, contact your worker for a replacement. You should bring this card to your medical provider whenever you need care. You should not throw away your plastic BIC.

RULES: This action is required by Section 8120 of Public Law 111-118.