

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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September 26, 1991

Letter No.: 91-80

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons

SUBJECT: MC 210 APPLICATION PILOT PROGRAM

Background

Over the past few years, the Department of Health Services (DHS) has been working on streamlining the Medi-Cal Statement of Facts form (MC 210). For this reason, DHS commissioned the Medi-Cal Forms Committee to study and re-design the form. At the same time, the Sierra Foundation conducted its own independent study of the MC 210 and submitted their proposed revision of the form, which provided many useful ideas and suggestions to the Forms Committee. As a result of these combined efforts, the Forms Committee developed a revised MC 210 (5/90 version - now in use statewide) with a more organized structure, reformatted questions, more space for applicant responses, and a lowered reading level by 1 1/2 grade levels. However, the length of the form was not reduced.

Subsequently, in June 1990, the Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch, Perinatal Access Unit, convened a special state and county work group called the Streamline Committee to concentrate on developing a shortened MC 210, and to streamline the application process in general.

The Streamline Committee is composed of DHS staff and representatives from seven counties: Merced, Sacramento, Sonoma, Santa Clara, San Bernardino, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Activities

The Streamline Committee's first meetings focused on the review of 16 other states' one to two page shortened applications. However, they discovered these states have adopted either the federal option of Waiver of the Assets Test or Presumptive Eligibility (PE), or both. These options allow the elimination of the complex property questions and the use of a one-page screening sheet. California has not yet been able to fully adopt these options, due in part to the related costs. It should be noted that AB 99 was recently passed into law which enacted the waiver of the assets test specifically for pregnant women and infants up to one year of age with incomes between 185 and 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

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The Streamline Committee has reviewed each question on the MC 210 to eliminate duplication, decrease complexity, and organize the questions in a more logical pattern. Many questions could not be eliminated because they were federally mandated, and deletion would risk federal Quality Control errors and the loss of Federal Financial Participation.

Initially, the committee attempted to create a MC 210 form for pregnant women only. However, it was decided that such a form would not be practical since most pregnant women applicants have families who also need Medi-Cal, and this would require the women to complete two MC 210 forms.

As a result, it was agreed that a streamlined MC 210 form would be created for use by all applicants. After several months of work, the committee developed two draft versions. One version is called the "Two-Part" form. Part One asks the basic information questions all applicants must answer (e.g. personal identification, family members, income). Part Two asks for the more detailed questions not usually completed by most low income applicants, (e.g. questions on burial trusts, stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, etc.).

The Streamline Committee also has developed a second version of the MC 210 known as the "Short" form, which is shorter and less complicated, but may require supplemental forms to be completed by the eligibility workers.

Pilot Programs

Pilot programs to test the two versions of the revised MC 210 will begin this fall, for a period of six months in eight volunteer counties. The "Two-Part" form will be piloted by Kern, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Sonoma counties beginning October 1, 1991. Alameda, El Dorado, Fresno, and San Bernardino will pilot the "Short" form beginning November 1, 1991.

Evaluations will be conducted by the pilot counties on these forms to determine their effectiveness. These evaluations will be incorporated into monthly status reports submitted to DHS. After six months, the Committee will evaluate the success of each version based on available data. The most successful of the two forms will then be selected for statewide use.

We appreciate the enthusiasm and readiness of the counties participating in this pilot program, and look forward to a successful outcome. If you have any questions, please call Tony Plescia (916)657-3185 or ATSS 8-437-3185.

Sincerely,

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Frank S. Martucci, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch