DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
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February 9, 1999

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers
All County Medi-Cal Program Specialists/Liaisons
All County MEDS Coordinators
All County Public Health Directors
All County Mental Health Directors

Letter No.: 99-07

ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS FOR REFUGEES

The purpose of this letter is to inform County Welfare Departments of new vaccination requirements that may affect the status of Refugees as they are being tracked on the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS). There is a new vaccination requirement for all refugees and aliens who filed for an adjustment of status or an immigrant visa application on or after September 30, 1996.

The new law requires all refugees and aliens who apply for an adjustment of status to show they have been vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases such as mumps, measles, rubella, polio, tetanus, diphtheria toxoids, pertussis, influenza Type B, hepatitis B, and any other vaccinations recommended by the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices. Their current recommendations also include the varicella, haemophilus influenzae Type B, and pneumococcal vaccines.

Refugees have to comply with this requirement only if they apply for an adjustment of status one year after their date of entry into the United States. Refugees generally need only a "vaccination sign-off" to fulfill this requirement.

For purposes of Medi-Cal benefits and Refugee Medical Assistance, when a refugee obtains an adjustment of status one year after their date of entry, **DO NOT** remove the refugee tracking code on MEDS. Refugees should remain identified as refugees on MEDS because they are still eligible for five years of refugee benefits and/or until they become citizens. Counties also receive Targeted Assistance and Refugee Employment Services because of the number of refugees in their county. This is 100 percent federal funding.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Elena Lara of my staff at (916) 657-0712.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Angiline Mrva, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Branch