DHCS
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
Michelle Baass | Director

Medi-Cal

Dear Medi-Cal Member, August 31, 2026

This letter tells you about two new federal rules that Congress and President Trump established. They will impact you next year (in **2027)** and are called:

The **Work and Community Engagement Rule** and the **6-Month Renewal Rule.**

We are sending you information now, but these rules will not go into effect until March 2027. You will receive more information about these rules.

The Work and Community Engagement Rule

This rule says that adults, ages 19-64, will need to work, volunteer, go to school, attend a job-training program, or have an income to keep Medi-Cal.

You can be excused from this rule if you:

- Have a serious, complex, or ongoing medical condition that keeps you from meeting this rule.
- Have a serious mental health condition that keeps you from meeting this rule.
- Are pregnant or were pregnant in the last 12 months, or qualify for postpartum care.
- Are a parent, guardian, or caretaker of a child who is 13 or younger.
- Are meeting the CalWORKs work requirement.
- Are receiving CalFresh and are not excused from the CalFresh work program.
- Are in jail or prison.
- Are a caregiver for someone with a disability or serious medical or mental health condition.
- Have a disability that keeps you from meeting this rule.
- Overuse or misuse of drugs or alcohol, are in treatment, or have been asked to attend treatment.
- Are a veteran with a full (total) disability.
- Were in foster care on your 18th birthday and are younger than 26.
- Are American Indian or Alaska Native.

If none of the above apply during the month of your renewal, **you can meet the rule and can keep Medi-Cal if you meet any of the following in any of the past months since your last renewal:**

- You were under the age of 19.
- You were eligible for or enrolled in Medicare Part A, or enrolled in Medicare Part B.
- You were released from jail or prison within the last 90 days.
- You got care in a hospital, nursing facility, or psychiatric facility.
- You traveled outside your area to get treatment for a serious medical condition.
- You lived in a county with very high unemployment, or in a county affected by a federal natural disaster. If either one of these applies to your county, we will send you another notice.
- You were excused for any of the reasons listed above on page 1.

We may be able to use information that we already have about you to determine if you meet one or more of the reasons listed above. If we can do this, you will receive a notice that says you are excused from the Work and Community Engagement Rule. This notice will also say that you can keep your Medi-Cal and that you do not need to take any further actions.

If we do not have enough information to automatically determine that you meet any of the reasons above, you will have the opportunity to provide information that could excuse you from this rule.

Ways You Can Meet This Rule

If none of the reasons listed above applies to you when you renew your Medi-Cal, you can meet this rule by **any one or a combination of the items below**:

- **Have an income from any source of at least $580 (before taxes) in any month since your last renewal**.
  - People whose hours change frequently or who have seasonal jobs can average at least $580 per month from any source over 6 months.
- Work at any kind of job, volunteer, do community service, or attend a job-training program for a combined total of at least **80 hours in any month since your last renewal**.
- **Go to school at least part time in any month since your last renewal**.
  - People who go to school less than part time can combine their class and school-activity hours with work, community service, or job training to meet the 80-hour requirement.

You do not need to do anything now. You must start meeting this rule beginning in 2027. Before the end of this year, you will receive additional information about what job, volunteer, community service, and school opportunities are available in your area.

The 6-Month Renewal Rule

Beginning January 2027, this rule says that adults, ages 19-64, will get their Medi-Cal eligibility renewed every 6 months to make sure they still qualify for it.

You will be excused from this rule if you:

Are American Indian or Alaska Native.
Are pregnant or were pregnant in the last 12 months, or qualify for postpartum care.
Were in foster care on your 18th birthday and are younger than 26.

You Could Lose Your Medi-Cal
To keep Medi-Cal, you must meet the Work and Community Engagement Rule and get your Medi-Cal eligibility checked every 6 months – *unless you qualify to be excused*, ***as described above.***

If you do not meet these rules, you will get a notice in writing telling you what you need to do before your Medi-Cal will end. The notice will also tell you what to do if you do not agree with the decision, including your right to appeal.

If you lose Medi-Cal because you did not meet these rules, you cannot get financial help to pay for a health plan through Covered California. That means you would have to pay the full cost of new health insurance.

You can re-apply for Medi-Cal again at any time. If you think there was a mistake or your situation has changed, contact your county Medi-Cal office for help. Find their phone number and address here: dhcs.ca.gov/COL.

What You Need to Do Now

Make sure your county Medi-Cal office has your current contact information. This includes a mailing address, telephone number, and email address. This is very important. Your county Medi-Cal office will mail, email, or text you more information about these rules.

Get Connected with BenefitsCal
We recommend creating an account at BenefitsCal.com. BenefitsCal is the official website where you can keep track of your benefits and documents, complete forms, report changes, upload documents, read notifications, and more. You can also "opt in" to get text and email messages so that you can receive the latest information needed to keep your Medi-Cal active.

Your county Medi-Cal office may ask you for renewal forms, pay stubs, and more**. It is important that you reply to your mail or messages in BenefitsCal or send in your information on time so that you don't risk losing your Medi-Cal.** You can also ask your county Medi-Cal office for help.

California lawmakers have invested in new resources to help you with these new rules. We will send you additional information and resources about these rules before the end of this year. This will include websites to help you find paid or volunteer work, learn about job training or schools you can enroll in, and more.

Questions?

- Call or visit your county Medi-Cal office. Find the phone number and address here: dhcs.ca.gov/COL.
- Go online: www.dhcs.ca.gov/workrules
- Call the Medi-Cal Helpline: (800) 541-5555.
- Create a BenefitsCal account or log in to BenefitsCal to complete forms, report changes, manage your benefits, upload documents, read notifications, and more: BenefitsCal.com.

Thank you,

Department of Health Care Services
State of California