

OLDER ADULT EXPANSION AND AN ANTICIPATED INCREASE IN DENIALS FOR UNSATISFACTORY IMMIGRATION STATUS

Effective May 1, 2022, eligibility for full scope Medi-Cal was expanded to include immigrants aged 50 years and older. Under this Older Adult Expansion, all California residents 50 years of age or older who do not have satisfactory immigrant status or who are unable to establish satisfactory immigration status become eligible for full scope Medi-Cal benefits if they meet all other eligibility requirements. The Older Adult Expansion applies to new enrollees as well as to individuals who currently have restricted benefits because of their immigration status.

There are no new aid codes identifying the beneficiary as eligible under Older Adult Expansion. Individuals eligible for full scope benefits under Older Adult Expansion will be placed in existing full scope Medi-Cal aid codes that were previously assigned to those with satisfactory immigration status. Current beneficiaries enrolled in restricted Medi-Cal aid codes will be transitioned to the equivalent or appropriate full scope aid code for the individual. For example, those individuals with benefits under aid code L7 (Disabled/Blind – Adults ages 19 through age 64 – 0% to 128% FPL, undocumented) will be assigned aid code L6 (Disabled/Blind – Adults ages 19 through age 64 – 0% to 128% FPL, citizen/satisfactory).

New applicants and renewing beneficiaries eligible under this program who claim satisfactory immigration status must provide verification of that status. Immigration status verification requirements will be tracked in the Citizen/Alien Indicator and Alien Eligibility Code fields of the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS). The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has confirmed that the Short-Doyle/Medi-Cal claims adjudication system will continue validating immigration status in MEDS before approving or denying claims. Although newly eligible for full scope Medi-Cal under Older Adult Expansion, claims for beneficiaries unable to verify their assertion of a satisfactory immigration status will be denied with code CO 96/MA43 or CO 96/N30.