Medi-Cal Coverage Support

LA COUNTY Homeless Services & Housing

START HERE

BenefitsCal.com

Apply, renew, upload documents, update an address, and check status in one place. Set up participant and Application Assister accounts. Save login info.

Phone or in person
DPSS 1-866-613-3777
Find a DPSS office

Who qualifies

2026 income limits
see the DHCS eligibility chart

Special Populations

- ✓ **Children 0–18**
- ✓ **Pregnant & 12 months postpartum**
- ✓ **Former foster youth** under 26
- ✓ **UIS** who renews on time
- ✓ **Adults 65+ and people with disabilities**

US Citizens Age 19-64

- ✓ **Income up to $22,025/yr** for 1, **$29,863** for 2
- ✓ **Assets under $130,000** for 1, + $65,000 per added member

UIS Age 19+

- → **No new full-scope enrollment**
  - — **Restricted scope still available:** emergency, pregnancy and nursing home care
- → Existing full-scope coverage expired? **90 days to reactivate**

Work Rule Exemptions may apply based on health, disability, caregiving, and other circumstances. DPSS may need to confirm an exemption, so respond right away to any mail, texts, or emails.
For current rules, see DHCS.

Term	Definition
Medi-Cal	California's free or low-cost health insurance coverage.
UIS (Unsatisfactory Immigration Status):	An immigration status category that limits new Medi-Cal enrollment to restricted-scope (emergency-only) Medi-Cal rather than full-scope Medi-Cal.
MCP (Managed Care Plan):	Medi-Cal coverage that includes person-centered care coordination through health plans such as L.A. Care or Health Net.
Full-Scope vs. Restricted-Scope Medi-Cal:	Full-Scope: Comprehensive Medi-Cal coverage, including doctor visits, prescriptions, hospital stays, mental health, dental, and transportation services. Restricted-Scope: Limited coverage that only pays for emergency care, pregnancy/postpartum care, and long-term nursing home care.
Fee-for-Service (FFS):	Full-Scope Medi-Cal coverage without healthcare coordination support. Does not mean that participant pays directly for care.

What's changing and when

Source: DHCS Medi-Cal changes

PREVIOUSLY 2026

- **Freeze new enrollments** for UIS age 19+ · **$130,000 asset limit** · counties no longer search for a new address before ending coverage over returned mail · **refugees, asylees, parolees and some green card holders** with full-scope get to keep it but lose eligibility to be part of a managed care plan (e.g., LA Care) through June 30, 2027.

EFFECTIVE JAN 1, 2027

- **Work requirements.** Adults age 19-64 must work (or training, volunteering, half-time school) at least 80 hours per month unless they have a documented exemption. **Earning $580 in a month also counts.** Checked at renewal. **Respond to any notice within 30 days.**
- **UIS move to Fee-for-Service.** Eligible to keep full-scope Medi-Cal but not managed care plan (MCP) participation. **Ineligible for Housing Deposits, Transitional Rent, ECM, IHSS.**
- **Retroactive coverage shortened.** One month of past bills for adults without children, two months when the household includes children.

MAR 1 2027

- **Renewals twice a year** for US citizens aged 19-64 and all UIS. Renewals for special populations stay annual.

JUL 1 2027

- **Full dental ends** for UIS participants who still have full-scope Medi-Cal. Emergency dental continues.
- **Monthly premiums begin** for UIS participants who still have full-scope Medi-Cal. Non-payment leads to loss of full-scope Medi-Cal.
- **Refugees, asylees, parolees and certain survivors** limited to pregnancy-related and emergency care. **Asset limit drops** to $21,000 for one, $31,000 for two.

OCT 1 2028

- **Copayments** for US citizens aged 19-64 and all UIS earning over $15,560 a year, capped at 5% of income. None at community clinics, or for emergency, checkup, pregnancy, pediatric, mental health or substance use care.

Learn more about Medi-Cal · DPSS 1-866-613-3777 · Medi-Cal Helpline 1-800-541-5555

UPDATED 10-29-26

Getting and Staying On Medi-Cal

Applying or renewing via BenefitsCal

1. **Log in or create a participant's account** at **BenefitsCal.com**. No internet? Apply by phone or in person with DPSS. **Case Managers** register as **Application Assisters** once their agency's CBO Manager account is set up. The CBO Manager helps assisters create their accounts.
2. **Gather documents.** Proof of identity (e.g. CA ID), residency (e.g. recent mail), income (e.g. benefits letter), and other health insurance (incl. Medicare).
3. **Submit the application or renewal.** Renew **no later than 60 days** before the due date. **Most participants must renew every 6 months.**
4. **Track status and answer every letter.** Upload requested documents in BenefitsCal and watch for follow-ups until the processing is complete.

90 days
to reactivate after coverage ends over a late renewal or missing paperwork

30 days
to respond to a work requirement notice before coverage ends

Data privacy

- Federal agencies shared Medi-Cal data with ICE in July 2025.
- A court order effective **January 5, 2026** limits sharing on people not lawfully residing in the U.S., permitting only the sharing of citizenship and immigration status, address, phone, date of birth, and Medicaid ID. **No other people, data, or health care use info is permitted to be shared.**
- Canceling coverage doesn't erase data already shared.
- The public charge rule changed **September 18, 2026.** Benefits received before then are not counted. **Refer questions to an immigration legal services provider.**

Keeping participants reachable

No reliable mailing address? Participants may use their **nearest DPSS district office** to receive county mail. Find offices at dpss.lacounty.gov.

- **Mailing address** on file and current
- **Phone** on file (notices also come by text)
- **Email** on file

Update it timely on **BenefitsCal.com**

Key work rule considerations

- **Document exemptions now.** Self-attestation is accepted through 2027, then largely stops.
- **Check who already meets the work rule** through volunteering, school, or $580 a month in earnings.

Case manager role

CAN DO

- ✓ Confirm universal sharing consent is on file to help coordinate Medi-Cal coverage
- ✓ Share official information and offer resources
- ✓ Help interpret potential results of choices
- ✓ Track Medi-Cal coverage status in the **ICMS Snapshot** or other program snapshot reports
- ✓ Respect participants' decisions
- ✓ **Help keep mailing address, phone, and email current with DPSS**

CANNOT DO

- ✗ Make promises about how Medi-Cal information might be accessed by immigration enforcement
- ✗ Provide legal advice or decide for participants

Always bring Medi-Cal Benefits Identification Card (BIC) to every healthcare appointment.

Full-scope Medi-Cal benefits include

Doctor care · Medications · Lab tests · Vision · Wellness care · Mental health & addiction · Emergency care · Counseling · Senior care · Rehab · In-home support · Rides · Hospital care · Food · Dental*

*UIS participants lose dental coverage July 1, 2027. Emergency dental continues.

Your concerns are valid. Making an informed decision is important. **Your decision will not impact your housing eligibility.**

Coverage resources: Stay Covered Coalition · Feedback on this guide? Let us know

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