

SCHAC 2024 Medi-Cal Redetermination Letter

We have outlined some recommendations for the Board that we believe will help decrease disenrollment from Medi-Cal and will help improve equity of access to vital health programs:

- Board of Supervisors to **review DHA protocols for processing incomplete, incorrectly submitted, and not returned Medi-Cal renewal applications.** In this review process, we recommend the County to include important stakeholders, such as CBOs, federally qualified health clinics and hospitals. These stakeholders will have valuable insight to assist with the development of strategies for outreach and maintenance of benefits for eligible individuals.

DHA Response: The department complies with regulations and the focus of the work is on redeterminations that are received incomplete and complete. There is no focus on customers that do not return Medi-Cal redeterminations as customers are sent three notices and a redetermination packet unless the case is run ex-parte in which the data matches information in the federal hub, then the renewal is completed automatically strictly via system matches. Additionally, customers who opted in to receive text message communication will receive text messages when redetermination packets are sent, not received, incomplete, or processed. If the packet is received incomplete, a case is not discontinued until they are given the opportunity to complete the redetermination packet. If nothing is received, a discontinuance notice is sent informing customers that they have 90 days to complete their renewal. Renewals can be completed online, by phone or in-person with the assistance of our staff if they needed.

DHA has more than 289,000 active Medi-Cal cases of which about 86,000 share the case with other programs such as CalWORKs and CalFresh. These combo cases are often more in communication with us. The recent 90-day refresh report indicates a discontinuance rate in Sacramento County as low as 14.6%, compared to 20.4% state average. Moreover, the State of California was recognized by the Whitehouse for our diligent approach to the unwinding plan.

- Provide the SCHA with a copy of these protocols.

DHA Response: Below is a list of the policy documents attached that addresses these protocols:

- Annual Renewal Packet and Reasonable Explanation Flexibilities for Continuous Coverage Unwinding
- Second Contact Temporary Requirement
- Suspension of Medical Support Requirement
- Suspension of Requirement to Unconditional Income 100 Percent FPL Income Waiver
- Stable Income Waiver
- Zero Income Waiver

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- **DHA should develop a method for tracking and reporting on the different procedural discontinuance reasons**, including returned mail, so that we can understand more of the reasoning behind procedural discontinuances and strategize to decrease the number of disenrollments for this reason. Currently all procedural discontinuances are reported in one category, so this analysis is not possible.

DHA Response: Currently the Department does not have the ability nor the access to reporting that provides the ability to track the different procedural discontinuance reason within the category. The Department is limited to the data that is available for the reports that are pulled from CalSAWS.

- **Reduce the phone wait times** for Medi-Cal beneficiaries calling DHA about their renewal process.

DHA Response: The Department continues to work on enhancements to its services and procedures to reduce the phone wait times, specifically the Department has focused on the following:

- Hiring additional eligibility Staff.
 - Approximately 113 new hires exited eligibility training and joined the workforce between June and July 2024
 - An additional 40 trainees will begin eligibility training on August 26, 2024
 - Approximately 100 new trainees will begin eligibility training in October/November 2024
- Exploring extending business hours to keep phone lines and lobby office hours open until 5pm Monday through Friday with the goal to implement by Fall/Winter 2024.
- Monitoring phone queues and routing profiles to ensure customers connect to the right area in order to prevent additional transfers and reduce wait times.
- CalSAWS enhancements:
 - Welcome Bot went live in early June and provides self-service features available in Amazon Connect such that allow customers to access case information 24 hours a day.
 - Includes EBT ordering feature that does not require customer to call for replacement.
 - Average of approximately 20 customers use this feature daily.
 - Identifying and correcting the ongoing issue of customers experiencing dropped calls to reduce the volume of customer who then have to call back. Amazon Web Services have been on site to identify the source of the problem with the system in order to make the appropriate adjustments.