



Sacramento County Health Authority Commission

DATE

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Sacramento
700 H Street, Suite 1450
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Board Members:

We are honored to provide the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors with an update on the Medi-Cal redeterminations process. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the federal government had a pause on the policy requiring Medi-Cal enrollees to annually renew their Medi-Cal coverage. In 2023, after a roughly three-year hiatus, California returned the requirement. As of January 2024, the statewide data on redeterminations shows that approximately 8% of Californians are disenrolled each month, of which 80% are due to procedural reasons, which largely represents paperwork documentation either not submitted or submitted incorrectly.

The Sacramento County Health Authority (SCHA) Commission has been reviewing redetermination data¹ for the County at our general meetings since September 2023 through our most recent meeting in March this year. The commission has collaborated with vital system partners to better understand the successes, challenges and strategies being employed for improvement. In January of this year, we convened a panel on this topic, which included a representative from the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), a representative from the County Department of Human Assistance (DHA) and two representatives from community-based organizations (CBOs), Community Health Works and Legal Services of Norther California.

As of January 2024, the State published data on Medi-Cal redeterminations for each County. In Sacramento, we had 3,025 discontinuances then, of which 80% were due to procedural reasons. DHCS has a new process which makes re-authorization easier, due to the State's ability to verify eligibility and renew benefits with less of a demand on beneficiaries to submit renewal documentation. With this improvement, we still recognize there are additional improvements that can be made with our County's efforts for renewal.

DHCS published key findings from a statewide procedural disenrollment survey, and reported the following:

¹ [Medi-Cal Eligibility Statistics](#)



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- About one-third of all survey respondents (32%) said they did not know they would lose Medi-Cal if they failed to complete their renewal².
- Nearly four in ten (38%) of all respondents said they would like to restart Medi-Cal but did not know how.
- Nearly half of all survey respondents (46%) said they did not receive a renewal form.
- Of those who received a renewal form, six in ten respondents (60%) reported completing it.
- Of those who received a renewal form and completed or tried to complete it, about one-third (32%) said that they called but got no answer, were on hold too long, or got disconnected.
- Respondents who live in households whose members all identify as Hispanic were significantly more likely to experience some challenges compared to other households.

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.**
- Provide the SCHA with a copy of these protocols.
- **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.
- **Lessen the phone wait times** for Medi-Cal beneficiaries calling DHA about their renewal process.

Currently all procedural discontinuances are in one category. 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.

The Commission believes that this analysis and the work to improve continued Medi-Cal coverage are related to the County's 2020 declaration and commitment to addressing racism as a public health crisis. The resolution committed to ensure the consistent collection, analysis and reporting of demographic, socioeconomic and public health data to measure progress toward eliminating racial inequities, and to design, develop and deploy community-based alternatives to prevent trauma and work to improve health and wellness in communities of color. Access to Medi-Cal

² [Medi-Cal Continuous Coverage Unwinding: Procedural Disenrollment survey](#)



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benefits for physical health, mental health and CalAIM benefits which address the social determinants of health are of the utmost importance under this commitment.

Thank you for your support and the opportunity to serve over 500,000 Sacramento County residents through the important work of this Commission.

Sincerely,

Sacramento County Health Authority Commission

cc: Timothy Lutz, Director, Sacramento County Department of Health Services

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