



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

January 17, 2014

Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter No.: I 14-05

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS

SUBJECT: Treatment of Former Foster Care Children's (FFCC) Program

The purpose of this Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter is to notify County Welfare Departments (CWDs) of policy changes that will affect the handling of youth aging out of the foster care system, as well as youth who were in foster care in any state on their 18th birthday.

The FFCC program extension under the Affordable Care Act is effective January 1, 2014, counties shall enroll any new applicants who are between the ages of 18 and up to age 26, that were in foster care on their 18th birthday in any state, regardless of when or if they were previously transferred into the FFCC group. Those applicants who were previously enrolled in aid codes 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 4C,4H, 4L, 4N, or 5K are all eligible under the ACA FFCC extension with aid code 4M up to the age of 26. If an applicant has previously aged out of the FFCC aid code 4M, but is under age 26, they still qualify until the month of their 26th birthday. There may be situations where a child may have one of these aid codes that were not in foster care. If this is the case, after confirmation by the county that the applicant was not in foster care, the county does not have to grant FFCC benefits to the applicant, but must determine whether the applicant is nevertheless eligible for Medi-Cal. If the applicant is not eligible for any Medi-Cal program, the county should refer the applicant for other health insurance affordability programs.

After verification of FFCC status by the county, the applicant may be placed into this coverage group. There may also be situations where a child may have been in foster care on his/her 18th birthday, but was not enrolled in any of the aid codes listed above or from out-of state, they would be eligible for this program. Applicants and beneficiaries, if found eligible, will remain eligible with aid code 4M up through the month in which they attain age 26 and are residents of California.

COUNTY INSTRUCTION:

Until the Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS) are programmed to accommodate this change, county staff must manually override the SAWS systems to issue aid code 4M to the beneficiaries. The FFCC coverage group does not go through a modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) determination. Eligibility is based on being in foster care on their 18th birthday, age 18-26, and California residency. All income is disregarded for this group.

- For those beneficiaries that are currently in foster care, when they turn 18 or older, if aging out of a foster care program that expires at age 19-21, the county eligibility worker should roll the beneficiary into 4M from their current aid code using the aging out edit process.
- For individuals who were in foster care on their 18th birthday, are currently not enrolled in the foster care system and are not a current Medi-Cal beneficiary, they may go to the county office and apply using the MC 250A. The current MC 250A refers to individuals 18-21; however, with the ACA expansion, it can be used to age 26 until it is updated or a new form is developed. Counties will be notified when the new form is available. The current MC 250A can be found on the California Department of Health Care Services' website under Forms and Publications at: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/forms/Forms/mc250a.pdf> or a sample copy is available in All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) 01-60.
- If the former foster care child applies in his or her county of origin, or county they were in upon aging out, verification of having been in foster care should be readily verifiable and the individual should be placed into coverage immediately. Verification may be made via the county case files, use of the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) data base, or other means available to the county.
- If the county that the former foster care child is applying in, is not the county of origin of the foster care case, the county should initially determine the individual eligible and put into aid code 4M based on self-attestation with a 30 days reasonable opportunity period for verification of being a FFCC. During this period, the county shall verify with the county of origin, the foster care status on the individual's 18th birthday. Counties can access the Department of Social Services' CWS/CMS data base to verify if an applicant was in foster care at age 18 in California. If the county does not have an available person to access the CWS/CMS data base, phoning the county of origin should enable verification. Counties must work together to verify information and facilitate the verification process in a timely fashion.

- For those applicants who were in foster care out of state, documentation that verifies former foster care on or after their 18th birthday from a public agency should be sufficient to enroll the individual. If the applicant does not have the verification, the county shall contact the state the applicant was in foster care to obtain the information and verify that the applicant is truly a FFCC. If the county cannot obtain the needed information after their request, and the applicant's reasonable opportunity period has expired, and cannot obtain the information for eligibility under this coverage group, the county shall ask for needed income information to determine eligibility on another MAGI basis coverage group until FFCC verification is received.
- Counties should also be aware that the California Healthcare Enrollment, Eligibility and Retention System (CalHEERS) is not currently programmed to disregard income for this eligibility group. Until this functionality is available, counties should expect applications to be forwarded to them from CalHEERS in a timely manner for eligibility and enrollment. For the FFCC coverage group, an application is considered complete, when the applicable questions on pages 2-3, page 4 down to the question asking if they are between 18-26, and if "yes", were you in foster care on your 18th birthday, and page 17 is signed and dated. Pages 5-16 ask for information not required for this group's eligibility determination, such as income, household tax information and employment status. Applicants who self-attest to having been in foster care at age 18 should be immediately enrolled in coverage while the county verifies eligibility.

RETROACTIVE FFCC COVERAGE:

Retroactive coverage for any prior FFCC beneficiaries who lost eligibility under aid code 4M prior to July 1, 2013, does not start until January 1, 2014. Use the chart below to determine what month(s) an applicant is eligible for retroactive coverage in 2014:

| Application Month | Eligible Retro Month(s) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| January | N/A |
| February | January |
| March | January, February |
| April | January, February, March |

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OTHER INSTRUCTIONS:

For other information and FFCC processing instructions, refer to ACWDLs 00-41, 00-61, and 01-41 and Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Information Letter 13-03. The eligibility information in these ACWDLs, other than the special extensions, should continue to be followed when processing FFCC eligibility.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or need further information, please contact Mr. Todd Johnson at (916) 319-9356 or email Todd.Johnson@dhcs.ca.gov.

Tara Naisbitt, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division