



*This publication is up-to-date as of March 20, 2020. More information on COVID-19 is available here:

<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/post/announcement-coronavirus-and-how-disability-rights-california-can-help-you> and here <https://www.covid19.ca.gov/healthcare/>

Accessing Medi-Cal Services During the COVID-19 Public Emergency

Because of the COVID-19 emergency, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) which runs California's Medi-Cal program, is helping Medi-Cal beneficiaries get the services and care that they need.

Medi-Cal Testing and Screening for COVID-19

COVID-19 testing and screening is free for all people who get Medi-Cal.ⁱ In fact, all insurance has to pay for this.ⁱⁱ Californians should not have to pay even if they receive testing and screening at hospital emergency rooms and urgent care facilities.

This means that:

- You should not pay out-of-pocket for all COVID-19 testing and screening.
- Medi-Cal or your Medi-Cal managed care plan does not need to wait for approval for services related to coronavirus testing and screening.

To receive information on options for testing and screening for the Coronavirus, contact your county public health department here:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/LocalHealthServicesAndOffices.aspx>.

Medi-Cal Access to Treatment of COVID-19

Medi-Cal covers treatment for COVID-19.ⁱⁱⁱ DHCS also told all Medi-Cal managed care plans that they must provide no-cost care to people who need testing and treatment for COVID-19.^{iv}

This means that:

- You should not pay out-of-pocket for all COVID-19 treatment.
- Medi-Cal or your Medi-Cal managed care plan does not need to wait for approval for services related to COVID-19 treatment.

Changes to Medi-Cal Services Because of COVID-19

Medi-Cal is giving additional services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Annual Redeterminations, Denials, and Terminations

On March 16, DHCS told counties to delay Medi-Cal annual redeterminations, terminations, and reductions or denials for 90 days.^v

Telehealth

Medi-Cal is expanding telehealth coverage.^{vi} Telehealth helps people get services from their doctors without having to travel. Telehealth services include outpatient care, preventive services, ambulance services, and durable medical equipment like wheelchairs.^{vii} Call your doctor or Medi-Cal managed care plan for information on telehealth.

Virtual Communication

Medi-Cal is expanding virtual communication.^{viii} Virtual communications are communication with a healthcare provider, such as a doctor, therapist or specialist. Virtual communication allows beneficiaries to communicate with providers even if they are not able to be face-to-face. Call your doctor or Medi-Cal managed care plan for information on virtual communications.

Transportation

Medi-Cal continues to pay for Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT).

What is Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)?

- Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) is private or public transportation, like your own car or a taxi, to and from your doctor's appointment for eligible beneficiaries. You have to show you cannot get there by yourself.
- To get Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) your doctor has to write you a prescription that says you cannot travel by public or private transportation. With Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) you get an ambulance, wheelchair van or litter van to get to the doctor.

Medi-Cal has to provide both of these to someone who may have COVID-19 and has to go in person to the doctor or emergency room.^{ix}

You can get Non-Medical Transportation by:

- Calling your managed care plan and say you can't get to your appointment without help to get there.
- Calling your county Medi-Cal office to see if they can help you locate NMT providers.
- Calling your Medi-Cal provider and ask about a transportation provider in your area.
- You can find providers here: <http://dhcs.ca.gov/mymedi-cal>.

You can get Non-Emergency Medical Transportation NEMT by:

- Calling your managed care plan. You will also need a prescription from your doctor about your need for NEMT.
- Calling the medical provider who prescribed NEMT and the provider will put you in touch with a transportation provider to coordinate your ride to and from your appointment(s).

In-Home Support Services (IHSS)

IHSS helps Medi-Cal beneficiaries remain safely in their own homes. For more information on IHSS you can go here:

<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/publications/in-home-supportive-services-ihss>.

If you have IHSS already, your annual evaluation is on hold for 90 days from March 17, 2020.^x This means there will be no changes to your services for at least 90 days.

If you need more services, you should call your county now. For more information about IHSS and Covid-19, see our fact sheet [Information for IHSS Recipients](#)

Medi-Cal State Fair Hearing during COVID-19

If you requested a Medi-Cal State Fair Hearing, the state is only holding hearing by phone through April 17, 2020.^{xi} You have a right to an in-person hearing. When the state contacts you, you can request an in-person hearing for the future.

We want to hear from you! Please complete the following survey about our publications and let us know how we are doing!

[Click here to complete the DRC Publication Survey Form.](#)

To request assistance, you can call 800-776-5746 or complete a request for assistance form. [Click here to fill out the DRC Intake/Assistance Questionnaire.](#)

Disability Rights California is funded by a variety of sources, for a complete list of funders, [click here for the DRC website Grants and Contracts page.](#)

-
- ⁱ http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/newsroom/newsroom_30339.asp?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=medi-cal-newsflash&utm_content=30339
- ⁱⁱ <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/NR20-012.aspx>
- ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/COVID-19_Medi-Cal_Services_and_Telehealth_Notice.pdf
- ^{iv} <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/Managed-Care-COVID-19-Memo-031620.pdf>
- ^v <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/eligibility/Documents/MEDIL/2020/120-07.pdf>
- ^{vi} https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/COVID-19_Medi-Cal_Services_and_Telehealth_Notice.pdf
- ^{vii} APL 10-009,
<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2019/APL19-009COVID-19.pdf>
- ^{viii} https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/COVID-19_Medi-Cal_Services_and_Telehealth_Notice.pdf
- ^{ix} <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/Managed-Care-COVID-19-Memo-031620.pdf>
- ^x <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.17.20-N-29-20-EO.pdf>
- ^{xi} <https://healthconsumer.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CDSS-Advocates-Letter-Covid-19-03.12.20.pdf>