



Date: October 28, 2019
To: Thomas B. Modica, Acting City Manager *T.M.*
From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services *KC*
For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: Covered CA Open Enrollment and New Health Benefits

The primary mission of the Health and Human Services Department (Health Department) is to promote the health and well-being of all Long Beach residents by helping residents obtain access to preventative and curative healthcare services.

Open enrollment for Covered California (Covered CA) takes place October 15, 2019 through January 31, 2020, and Medi-Cal enrollment is open all year long. To ensure Covered CA coverage begins by January 1, 2020, applicants must submit an application by December 15, 2019. Health Department staff are certified enrollers and are here to help. Residents can contact our Health Access Program at (562) 570-7979 for assistance with both Covered CA and Medi-Cal insurance applications. Health Department staff speak English, Spanish, and Khmer. All other languages will be assisted using the language access line. For those who prefer to be contacted by a certified enroller directly, residents can enter their contact information and best times to call on the [Covered CA & Medi-Cal Interest List form](#), and a staff member will contact them.

The Health Department wants to ensure all Long Beach residents are aware of the upcoming changes to the State's healthcare programs, as well as the implementation of the State Individual Mandate set to begin January 2020.

Effective January 2020:

- Undocumented young adults ages 19–26, regardless of immigration status, may be eligible for Full-Scope Medi-Cal (must still meet income guideline).
- Medi-Cal income limits for persons age 65 and older will increase from 100 percent Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 138 percent FPL, making more seniors eligible for Medi-Cal. Eligibility limits will increase from \$1,271 to \$1,436 per-month for a single adult senior.
- Medi-Cal will restore vision benefits for adults. Currently Medi-Cal only covers vision exams and glasses for children up to age 19. These benefits were cut in 2009 due to the Great Recession.

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- Podiatry services also will return as a Medi-Cal benefit. This benefit is incredibly important to persons diagnosed with diabetes. Covered CA will provide subsidies to those earning 400 to 600 percent FPL. This new provision will make health coverage affordable for more Californians and Long Beach residents. Individuals earning up to \$74,940 annually may be eligible for financial assistance to bring down the cost of their health coverage.
- California will implement an Individual Mandate in January 2020. Those without health coverage for 2020 are at risk of facing a tax penalty from the California Franchise Tax Board in 2021. Previously, based on Federal Tax Reform rules, the Individual Mandate was repealed. However, in California, the Individual Mandate will return at the state level. Penalties are \$695 per-adult, \$347.50 per-child, or 2.5 percent of annual household income, whichever is greater.

Last year, the Health Department's Health Access Program outreached and informed 2,892 individuals, made 450 referrals to other programs, enrolled 1,520 individuals into a comprehensive health insurance program, and provided troubleshooting and navigation assistance to 2,849 individuals to connect them to health insurance.

For further information, please contact me at (562) 570-4016, or by email at Kelly.Colopy@longbeach.gov.

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