



## Health Coverage Options in California

In California, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients are exempt from the requirement to have health coverage. Covered California, the state's health insurance marketplace established by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (aka "ACA" or "Obamacare") does not allow DACA recipients to purchase health coverage from its health plans. However, DACA recipients can receive health insurance coverage through their employer, buy health insurance on the private health insurance marketplace or qualify for Medi-Cal, California's Medicaid program that provides free or low cost medical services for children and adults with limited income and resources.

DACA recipients who meet the requirements for the Medi-Cal Program can apply for full scope Medi-Cal. For example, a person could be eligible for Medi-Cal if her/his annual income is at or below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), or \$16,642 for one person. Full scope Medi-Cal covers 10 essential health benefits including primary care, preventive check-ups, hospitalization, emergency care, prescription medication, lab services, rehabilitative services, maternity and newborn care, behavioral health, and oral health care.

### 1. Does the recent decision by the current administration to end the DACA Program in six months change my Medi-Cal coverage if I currently have it?

No, nothing will change with regards to your Medi-Cal coverage, unless your eligibility changes in some other way (i.e. your income becomes too high making you ineligible).

### 2. What if I lose my DACA status while I am currently receiving care through Medi-Cal?

You will still be eligible for Medi-Cal even if you are no longer a DACA recipient and should continue to seek health care if you need any health care services. People who have applied for DACA can claim PRUCOL (Permanently Residing Under Color of Law) status, and this should not change when your DACA status ends.

### 3. Can I apply for Medi-Cal if I am a DACA recipient?

Yes, all DACA recipients can still apply for Medi-Cal. There are no deadlines or open enrollment periods to apply for Medi-Cal.

### 4. What are my options for health care after my DACA status expires?

- a) **You are still eligible for full scope Medi-Cal and should apply if you need health coverage.** You will still need to meet Medi-Cal's income guidelines (at or below 138% FPL). Anyone over 19 years old may also qualify for emergency or limited scope Medi-Cal which covers emergency care, pregnancy and postpartum care, breast and cervical cancer screenings, kidney dialysis and long term care services. If you know of other undocumented children and youth under 19 years old, they are also eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal regardless of their immigration status.
- b) **If you have been covered by your employer, you may lose your employee coverage if your employment is terminated.** If this happens, you can continue your coverage through the COBRA

program by paying the full premium yourself. You can also purchase health insurance on the private health insurance marketplace or qualify for Medi-Cal if you meet the income guidelines.

- c) **You can look for other sources of health care in your local area.** There may be community health centers providing comprehensive primary health care to those who are uninsured and underinsured regardless of their ability to pay; some charge for services on a sliding scale. There are over 1,400 community health centers in the country. To find one near you visit:  
<https://www.findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>
- d) **Some California counties offer safety net health programs for low-income residents who do not qualify for Medi-Cal or cannot afford to buy health insurance, regardless of your immigration status.** These programs are not health insurance but offer access to basic health care for county residents age 19 and older. Services can vary from county to county and some require minimum co-pays depending on your income. The following are some examples of county safety net programs:
- In **Alameda County**, the HealthPAC program provides primary care, preventive check-ups, urgent care, hospitalizations, outpatient surgery, radiology and lab services, prescription medicines, mental health services, rehabilitative services, non-emergency medical transportation, and some specialty care. Website: <https://www.acgov.org/health/indigent/pac-all.htm>
  - In **Fresno County**, the Medically Indigent Services Program (MISP) provides short term assistance to pay from basic health care services. Covered services include primary care, hospitalizations, outpatient surgery, lab services, prescription medicines, home health care, rehabilitative services and some specialty care. Website: <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/DivisionPage.aspx?id=48797>
  - In **Los Angeles County**, My Health LA provides primary care, preventive check-ups, hospitalization, emergency care, lab services, prescription medicines, and substance use treatment at some community clinics and county hospitals. Website: <http://dhs.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dhs/coverageoptions/myhealthla>
  - In **Sacramento County**, the County Medically Indigent Services Program (CMISP) provides “medically necessary” primary care, preventive check-ups, prescription medicines, hospitalization, emergency care, some specialty care, and ancillary services. Website: <http://www.dhhs.saccounty.net/PRI/Pages/CMISP/GI-CMISP.aspx>
  - In **San Francisco County**, Healthy San Francisco offers primary care, preventive check-ups, prescription medicines, hospitalization, emergency transportation, substance use treatment, lab services, and family planning services. Website: <http://healthysanfrancisco.org/>
  - In **Ventura County**, Health Care Program for the Uninsured in Ventura County provides access to primary care, urgent care and emergency room visits, lab services, prescription medicines, and mental health visits. Website: <http://www.vhca.org/health-care-programs-for-the-uninsured-of-ventura-county>

### 5. Where can I get assistance to apply for Medi-Cal and other health programs or have any questions about obtaining health care services?

The Health Access Project at Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles can help you to apply for Medi-Cal or answer any questions or concerns about accessing health care now or after you lose your DACA status. Please contact us at [health@advancingjustice-la.org](mailto:health@advancingjustice-la.org) or (213) 241-0262.