

# NEW Medi-Cal Proof of Citizenship Requirements

A new law requires most people on Medi-Cal or applying for Medi-Cal who claim to be U.S. citizens or nationals to provide original or certified documents to prove their citizenship and identity.

## **If I am NOT a U.S. citizen or national, has my Medi-Cal changed?**

No. If you are not a U.S. citizen, the requirements for Medi-Cal have not changed. You do not need to do anything differently when you apply for Medi-Cal or when you fill out the annual redetermination. You do not need to worry about the information in the rest of this brochure. You may want to read the rest of the brochure if you have family members on Medi-Cal who are U.S. citizens. If you are undocumented, you are probably only eligible for emergency and pregnancy-related services.

## **If I am a U.S. citizen, what has happened to my Medi-Cal coverage?**

There are no changes in the services you can get. But you may now need to show papers that prove your identity and that you are a U.S. citizen.

## **Which citizens are not affected by these new rules?**

Some people on Medi-Cal will not need to show their eligibility worker proof of citizenship and identity because they are exempt from this rule. You do not need to provide proof of citizenship or identity if you are:

- Receiving or have ever received SSI
- Receiving Social Security Disability payments based on your own disability
- Receiving Social Security Retirement and Survivors payments
- On Medicare
- Applying only for Minor Consent Services or receiving only Minor Consent Services
- On Cal-WORKS
- A foster child, on Adoption Assistance or receiving Kin-GAP
- An infant born to a mother on Medi-Cal.

Materials developed by:



The Health Consumer ALLIANCE

NOTE: You may be asked for proof of identity because of other Medi-Cal rules.

## **What if I or a member of my family was born in California?**

If you were born in California, the state should already have a record of

your birth certificate. If you get a Medi-Cal notice that says they have a record of your birth, you only have to prove your identity. Please check with your eligibility worker to see if the worker can get your proof of California birth. It will be easier for them to find it if you show them a copy you have or give them other information that is on the certificate (for example, your birth name rather than your married name). It may be easier to ask your worker to do this before you try to get your birth certificate or other documents yourself.

### **How do I prove that I am a U.S. citizen if I was not born in California?**

The easiest way is to show your passport, certificate of naturalization, or U.S. citizenship certificate to your eligibility worker. You may also prove your citizenship and identity by showing an original or certified birth certificate. You can also show a variety of other original documents that your worker can describe or that are listed on a flyer from the state.

When your worker asks for your documents, follow the worker's instructions. Your worker will make a copy of the papers and return the originals to you. You can use these documents even if they are expired. Remember to get a receipt showing that you have given the worker the documents.

Do NOT send the original documents to the Medi-Cal office in the mail.

### **How can I prove my identity?**

You can use your driver's license. If you do not have one, you can use almost any ID with a photo. For example, you can use a state ID that you get from the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) or a military or school ID. If you do not have photo identification, you can use a document that describes how you look. If you do not have any of these, there may be other types of identification that the county can tell you about. Expired IDs will also work.

The parent's signature on a Medi-Cal application can be used to prove identity for children under 16 years of age.

### **What if I do not have or cannot get my birth certificate?**

If you were born in California, tell your worker and ask the worker to get proof of your birth from the State. Be sure to tell the worker the exact name that is on your birth certificate. If you were not born in California or if the county cannot find your birth certificate, you can send a letter to the office of vital records in the state where you were born. Ask for a "certified copy" of your birth certificate. That state may charge you some money for the copy.

There are also other ways to prove citizenship. You may have or be able to get papers like your hospital birth record or an insurance record that shows where you were born. If you served in the military, your official record should show where you were born. If you cannot get any of these papers, you may be able to give the worker a sworn statement. You can only use a sworn statement if you are unable to find any other document to prove your citizenship. The sworn statement is called an “affidavit.”

Also, if you were on CalWORKS, Food Stamps or Foster Care in the last few years, remember to tell your worker. The county may be able to find evidence in the old files.

Some people who are having problems getting documents and do not have anyone to help them can get extra help from the county. This includes people who are homeless or who have a mental or physical disability.

**How can I make an “affidavit?”**

An affidavit is a signed statement that can be used when other documents are not available. If you know two people who are U.S. citizens and who have personal knowledge that you are a U.S. citizen, they can write down on a piece of paper how they know that you are a U.S. citizen. For example, these people knew you or your family when you were born in the U.S. or when you became a U.S. citizen. Only one of these two people can be related to you. Both people need to be able to prove that they are U.S. citizens too. And you must also write down why you are unable to give your worker a document that proves your citizenship.

**When do I have to show these to my Medi-Cal worker?**

You should check with your county to see when it will start asking for these documents or wait until you hear from them.

If you are applying for Medi-Cal – You will need to show the worker these papers once the county asks for them for the state to pay for your full-scope Medi-Cal. However, you should not wait to apply for Medi-Cal just because you do not have the documents with you. Once you give the county the documents, your Medi-Cal will go back to the date you applied.

If you are already on Medi-Cal – You will need to show your worker these papers if the worker asks for them at your annual redetermination. You can use your Medi-Cal as usual until you are asked for these papers. You can stay on Medi-Cal as long as you can show you are trying to get them.

**How much time do I have to provide these documents?**

If you are applying for Medi-Cal – You have 45 to 90 days to show these

papers to your worker. You may have even more time if you are still trying to obtain the documents.

If you are on Medi-Cal now – You will stay on Medi-Cal while you try to find these documents. If you run into trouble and need help, ask your Medi-Cal worker for help. If you still need help, call us at the Health Rights Hotline at **1-800-354-4474**. Calls to this number are free.

**What if I do not provide the documents or do not know I have to provide them?**

If you are on Medi-Cal now – You will get a notice from your worker telling you to bring in these papers. If you do not do it, then you will get another notice from Medi-Cal. The notice from Medi-Cal may tell you that you will lose some Medi-Cal coverage if you do not take in these papers. If you get a notice saying you now have only limited benefits, please call us right away at the Health Rights Hotline at **1-800-354-4474**. Calls to this number are free. If you appeal the notice within 10 days or before the change in coverage will take place and ask for “aid paid pending,” your full Medi-Cal coverage will continue while you are waiting for a hearing. We may be able to help you.

Whether you get a notice or not, if you might lose some Medi-Cal coverage because you did not take papers showing that you are a citizen to your eligibility worker, you should ask for a fair hearing.

How to request a hearing – You can ask for a hearing by filling out the back of the notice and sending it to the address on the notice. You can also call **1-800-952-5253** to ask for a hearing. Calls to this number are free. You should also ask for “aid paid pending” so that your Medi-Cal can continue while you are waiting for your hearing.

If you are applying for Medi-Cal – If you apply for Medi-Cal and cannot provide these documents, you may be able to get emergency and pregnancy-related care and other services covered. Please call us for help at the Health Rights Hotline at **1-800-354-4474**. Calls to this number are free.

**I still have questions. Who can I call?**

Call us at the Health Rights Hotline. Our number is **1-800-354-4474**. Calls to this number are free. We are here to help you!

