

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM)

*Overview of Pre-Release  
Medi-Cal Application Mandate*

*Tuesday, November 15*

*1:00 – 2:30 pm PT*

# Housekeeping Guidelines

*In order to keep the webinar focused, productive, and efficient:*



Webinar participants may ask questions of the presenters using Zoom's Q & A function.



All participants will be muted throughout the course of the presentation.



Please feel free to reach out to [calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov) with any additional questions or comments.

# Agenda

- » **Overview of the CalAIM Justice-Involved Initiative**
- » **Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application Mandate**
- » **Unlimited Suspension for Individuals Who Are Incarcerated**
- » **Q&A**
- » **Next Steps**

# Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwinding

- » **The COVID-19 PHE will end soon, and millions of Medi-Cal beneficiaries may lose their coverage.**
- » **Top goal of DHCS:** Minimize beneficiary burden and promote continuity of coverage for our beneficiaries.
- » **How you can help:**
  - » Become a **DHCS Coverage Ambassador.**
  - » Download the Outreach Toolkit on the [DHCS Coverage Ambassador webpage](#).
  - » Join the [DHCS Coverage Ambassador mailing list](#) to receive updated toolkits as they become available.

# DHCS PHE Unwinding Communications Strategy

- **Phase One: Encourage beneficiaries to update contact information.**
  - **Launch immediately.**
  - Multichannel communication campaign to encourage beneficiaries to update their contact information with county offices.
    - » Flyers in provider/clinic offices, social media, call scripts, website banners.
- **Phase Two: Watch for renewal packets in the mail. Remember to update your contact information!**
  - **Launch 60 days prior to COVID-19 PHE termination.**
  - Remind beneficiaries to watch for renewal packets in the mail and update their contact information with county offices if they have not done so yet.

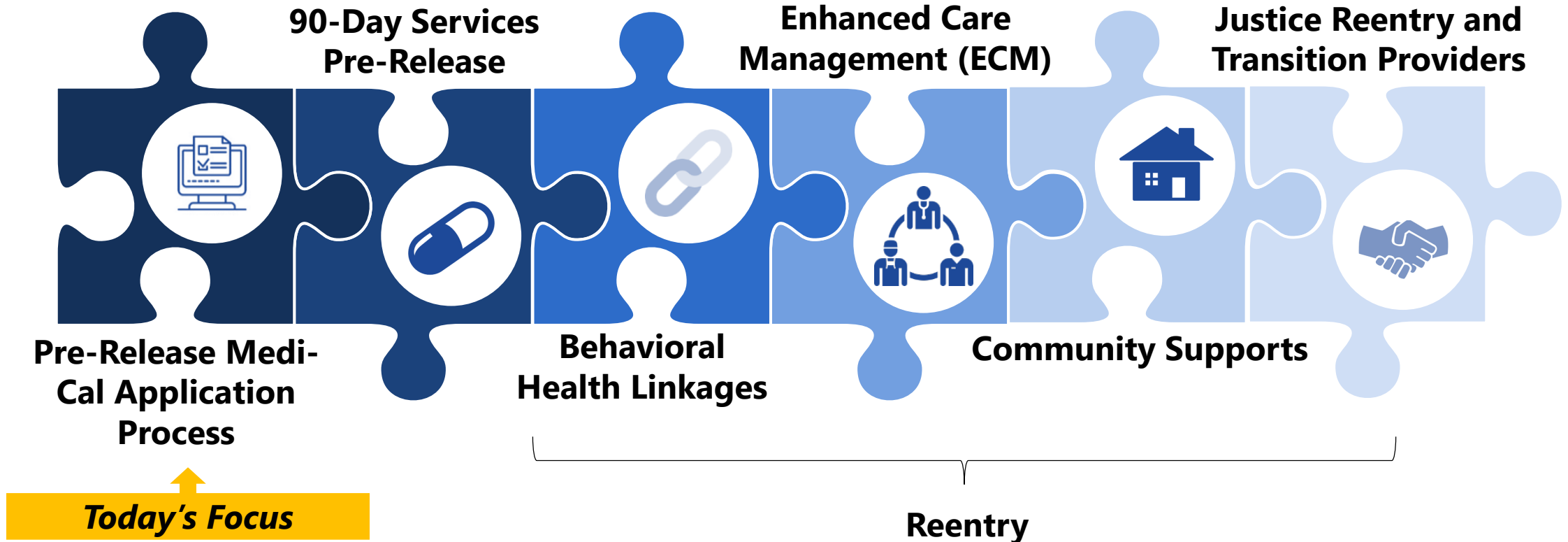
# Overview of the CalAIM Justice-Involved Initiative

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# CalAIM Initiatives to Support Justice-Involved Populations

CalAIM supports the justice-involved population by providing pre-release Medi-Cal enrollment, pre-release services, and connection to health care and social services in the community upon reentry.

## *Justice-Involved Initiatives*



# Update on CMS Negotiations and Go-Live Dates

**Go-live of Pre-Release Services depends on CMS approving California's Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver Demonstration Five-Year Renewal and Amendment Request.**

***Go-live of the pre-release Medi-Cal application mandate does not depend on CMS approval and will go live January 1, 2023.***

- » **Due to the delay in approval of California's 1115 Waiver, the complexity of the policy proposal, and the need to work through operational requirements, the originally planned launch date of CalAIM Justice-Involved Pre-Release Services on July 1, 2023, is not likely viable.** DHCS is reevaluating the effective date for the following:
  - » 90-Day Pre-Release Services for correctional facilities that demonstrate readiness;
  - » Behavioral health linkages; and
  - » ECM for the justice-involved population of focus.
- » When more information becomes available, DHCS will provide updated timelines for the launch of Pre-Release Services and the associated PATH funding that will be available to support planning and implementation.



# Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application Mandate

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# Policy Context: Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application

California statute mandates all counties implement pre-release application processes in county jails and youth correctional facilities by January 1, 2023.

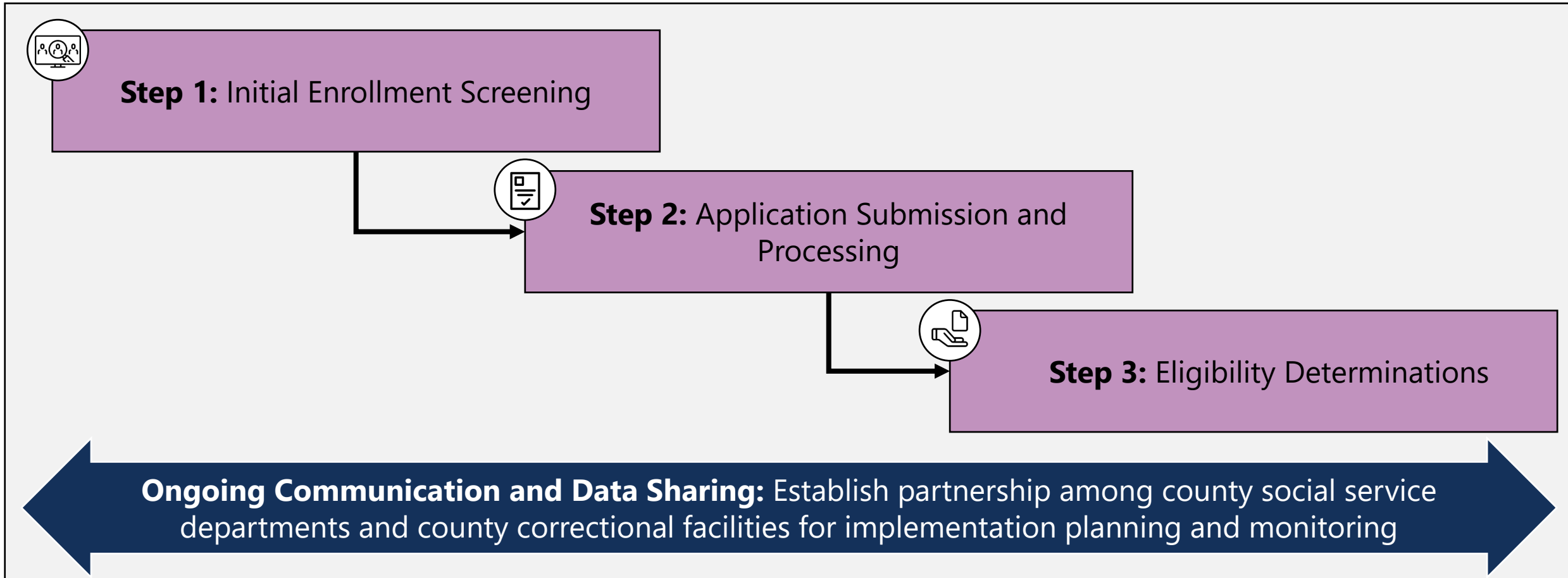
## Rationale

The pre-release application process will help ensure justice-involved individuals have Medi-Cal coverage upon reentry into the community in order to facilitate access to needed Medi-Cal covered services. **Establishing a pre-release application process is foundational to providing Medi-Cal services in the 90 days pre-release.**

## *2021 Amendment to the California Penal Code Section 4011.11 Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application Process*

- By January 1, 2023, the board of supervisors in each county, in consultation with the county sheriff, shall designate an entity or entities to assist both county jail inmates and juvenile inmates with the Medi-Cal application process.

# Pre-Release Medi-Cal Enrollment Process



***There is no one-size-fits-all approach for pre-release Medi-Cal enrollment.***

*Please refer to [Strategies for Conducting Pre-Release Medi-Cal Enrollment in County Jails](#) for detailed best practices for implementing a pre-release Medi-Cal application process in a county correctional facility.*

# Establishing a Pre-Release Application Process

DHCS recommends that each county social service department (SSD)\*, county sheriff, and county probation office collaborate with their county board of supervisors to identify the best way to implement a pre-release Medi-Cal application process in compliance with the state's mandate.

- » **Counties may leverage and build upon existing pre-release application processes** that meet the requirements of the CalAIM Mandatory Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application Process to comply with this mandate.
- » **DHCS recommends that SSDs and county correctional facilities (CCFs) establish:**
  - » Dedicated points of contact to support initial planning and ongoing collaboration.
  - » Establish a secure form of communication to transmit and receive information between organizations. This can be via encrypted email or other forms of secure communication to ensure that information is exchanged effectively and expeditiously.
- » **DHCS is identifying opportunities to automate certain processes** by collaborating internally and with our Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS) partners.
- » **Counties may request technical assistance from DHCS if they experience challenges establishing a pre-release Medi-Cal application process.**

**Requirement:** Within 30 days of the release of ACWDL 22-27, CCFs and county SSDs must provide the name, address, phone number, fax number, and email address of a contact person and a designated backup(s) responsible for the CalAIM Mandatory Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application Process to [calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov).

**Note:** \*In other documents, including ACWDL 22-27, county SSDs are referred to as "County Welfare Department" (CWDs). **Source:** [ACWDL 22-27](#)

# Operational Requirements:

## Step 1: Initial Enrollment Screening

### CCF Responsibilities

1. **Screen individual for Medi-Cal** during/near intake.
2. **Verify Medi-Cal enrollment** through DHCS enrollment verification system or in collaboration with county SSD and identify individuals who are not currently enrolled in Medi-Cal.
  - a. ***If individual is enrolled in Medi-Cal and incarceration is not reported***, CCF shall communicate incarceration details to SSD (including incarceration date and expected release date, if known).
  - b. ***If individual is enrolled in Medi-Cal and incarceration or suspension is displayed***, CCF shall communicate expected release date to county SSD, if known.
  - c. ***If individual is not enrolled in Medi-Cal***, CCF shall assist the individual with completing/submitting a Medi-Cal application.

### SSD Responsibilities

1. **Collaborate with CCF to verify current Medi-Cal enrollment status** of the individual to assist CCF with identifying individuals that require a pre-release Medi-Cal application.
  - a. ***If individual is enrolled in Medi-Cal and incarceration is not reported***, county SSD can obtain incarceration details from CCF, including incarceration date and expected release date (if known). **If applicable, county SSD shall suspend benefits.**
  - b. ***If county SSD determines that the individual is not enrolled in Medi-Cal***, county SSD shall notify CCF of current enrollment status so CCF can assist the individual with completing/submitting a pre-release application.

**Note:** See [ACWDL 22-27](#) for details on how to support individuals under 18 in applying for Medi-Cal.

# Operational Requirements:

## Step 2: Application Submission and Processing

CCF Responsibilities	SSD Responsibilities
<p><b>3. Complete and submit the Medi-Cal application.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. CCF shall ask individual for desired mailing address and use this address on application.</li> <li>b. If CCF uses a paper application, it should submit the application to the county where the individual intends to reside upon release.</li> <li>c. DHCS also recommends submitting a cover sheet/transmittal form. <u>Note:</u> Cover letter requirements can be found in ACWDL 22-27.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Communicate with SSD to troubleshoot application questions,</b> requests for follow-up information, and other necessary information for county SSD to process the pre-release application.</p> <p><b><i>CCFs shall submit Medi-Cal applications <u>at least 135 days</u> before release, if release date is known, to ensure SSD has time to determine eligibility.</i></b></p>	<p><b>2. Receive and process pre-release applications for CCFs.</b> SSDs must accept Medi-Cal applications via mail, online, phone, fax, or in person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If county SSD receives an application for an individual expected to be released in a different county, county SSD should coordinate with the county of responsibility to transition the application.</li> <li>b. SSDs must work with the county YCF to ensure that the application for an incarcerated youth is processed appropriately.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Communicate with CCF to troubleshoot application questions,</b> requests for follow-up information, and other necessary information to process the application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. County SSD should initiate an inter-county transfer (ICT) if necessary.</li> </ul>

**Note:** See [ACWDL 22-27](#) for additional details on how county SSDs must work with YCFs.

# Operational Requirements:

## Step 3: Eligibility Determinations

### CCF Responsibilities

**5. Ensure the individual has their SSD's contact information upon release.**

**For individuals being released, the CCF shall notify the SSD of the individual's release date, once known.**

- CCF shall submit information to the county SSD within one week of the individual's expected release and no later than one business day before release, unless release is unplanned.
- At minimum, the CCF shall provide the county SSD with the individual's full name (and any known aliases), DOB, CIN/SSN, and known/estimated release date.

### SSD Responsibilities

**4. Notify CCF if Medi-Cal determination is not expected to be complete before release** (if release date is known).

**5. Notify the applicants of the outcome of their eligibility determination**, provide all necessary Medi-Cal documentation (i.e., Notices of Action), and issue a Benefits Identification Card (BIC), if applicable.

- In cases where there is an immediate need for services, SSD shall arrange with the CCF to issue a temporary BIC to the individual so they can access Medi-Cal benefits upon release.

**6. Provide contact information for SSD in the county in which the individual will reside.**

**7. Once notified of release, SSD must activate/unsuspend Medi-Cal benefits by reporting the release date in MEDS.**

# Operational Requirements: Data Sharing

**Penal Code § 4011.11 authorizes CCFs and SSDs to share records and other data. All data shared must comply with state and federal regulations to protect the information of the beneficiary/applicant.**

## **Requirements:**

- ✓ County SSDs and CCFs shall enter into written agreements that impose, at a minimum, the same restrictions and conditions with respect to Medi-Cal personally identifiable information (Medi-Cal PII) that apply to the SSD through the Medi-Cal Privacy and Security Agreement between the SSD and DHCS, released via [ACWDL 19-16](#) or any applicable superseding ACWDL. These shall include:
  1. Restrictions on disclosure of Medi-Cal PII;
  2. Conditions regarding the use of appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards to protect Medi-Cal PII; and, where relevant,
  3. The requirement that any breach, security incident, intrusion, or unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of Medi-Cal PII be reported to the SSD.

**Note:** County SSDs may include in their written agreement with the CCF language found on page 8 of ACWDL 22-27 to authorize data sharing with CCFs in other counties even though they are not a direct party in the agreement.

A release of information (ROI) is **not required** for CCFs/SSDs to share information to enable a pre-release Medi-Cal application process, including submission of applications. An authorized representative (AR) is **not required** for a CCF to submit an application on behalf of an individual, but an individual may appoint an AR if they choose.



# Operational Requirements: Readiness Assessment

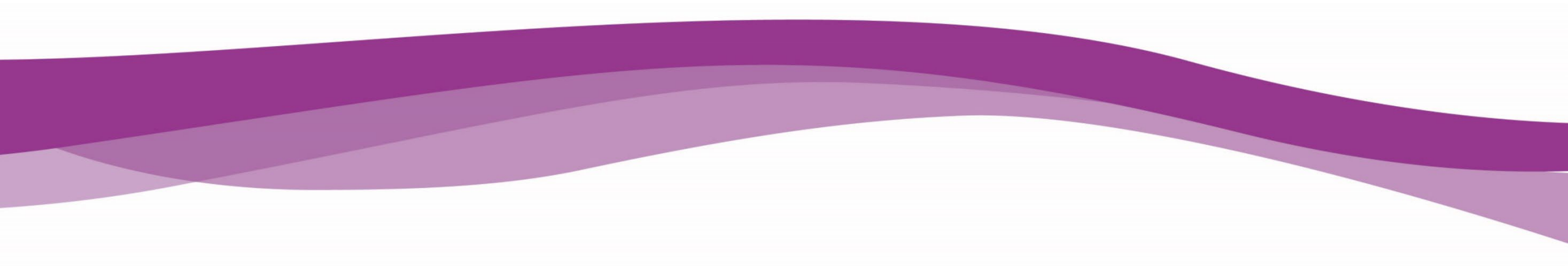
DHCS is requiring county justice agencies and SSDs to submit a readiness assessment to DHCS by December 1, 2022. The readiness assessment will ask them to self-attest that their organization currently has processes in place or will have processes in place by January 1, 2023, to support pre-release Medi-Cal applications.

*DHCS will use the readiness form to gauge overall preparedness to implement a pre-release Medi-Cal application process.*

- » All county justice agencies and county SSDs must complete a readiness assessment indicating their level of readiness to implement a pre-release Medi-Cal application process.
- » They must also describe the process they have in place or how they plan to implement a process.
- » If they are not prepared to implement a pre-release Medi-Cal application process, they may request technical assistance from DHCS.

**Please transmit your completed readiness assessment to DHCS at [CalAIMJusticePreReleaseApps@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:CalAIMJusticePreReleaseApps@dhcs.ca.gov) by December 1, 2022. Please reach out to [CalAIMJusticePreReleaseApps@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:CalAIMJusticePreReleaseApps@dhcs.ca.gov) with any questions.**

# Unlimited Suspension for Individuals Who Are Incarcerated



# Policy Changes Under SB 184

Effective January 1, 2023, Welf. & Inst. Code § 14011.10(e) requires county SSDs to suspend Medi-Cal benefits for inmates of public institutions, regardless of age, for the duration of their incarceration as long as they remain otherwise eligible for Medi-Cal. The SSD shall unsuspend Medi-Cal upon release (i.e., when the individual is no longer an inmate of a public institution).

## Policy Changes Under SB 184

- » This requirement allows counties to activate suspended Medi-Cal benefits upon release from the public institution as long as the inmates remain otherwise eligible throughout their incarceration.
- » An individual is considered incarcerated or an “inmate of a public institution” when that individual is booked into a correctional facility.
- » According to federal law and clarification provided by CMS in SMD#21-002, a 10-day notice is required for the suspension of Medi-Cal benefits for adult and eligible juvenile inmates.

# Suspension for Short-Term Sentences

## Suspension Guidance for Short-Term Sentences

- » **To ensure Medi-Cal-enrolled individuals who are released from a correctional facility can seamlessly access services upon reentering the community, DHCS has implemented a policy that requires SSDs to suspend Medi-Cal benefits only after an individual has been incarcerated for 28 days.**
- » **Under the proposed policy, DHCS requires that:**
  - » **Correctional facilities notify SSDs of impending release within a week of the expected release date and no later than one business day prior to release date/time** so that if Medi-Cal was suspended, the SSD can begin the process to effectuate unsuspension.
  - » **SSDs unsuspend coverage for individuals who qualify for Pre-Release Services within one business day of notification**, as their need for post-release services would qualify as “immediate need” under Medi-Cal policy.

# Q & A and Next Steps

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# Next Steps

## Key Dates

<b>December 1, 2022</b>	Pre-release Medi-Cal application readiness assessment due
<b>March 31, 2023</b>	PATH Round 2 application due
<b>January 1, 2023</b>	Pre-release Medi-Cal application mandate go-live
<b>2024 (Date TBD)</b>	Go-live of re-release services

## Next Steps

### County SSDs and correctional facilities to:

- Submit readiness assessments by December 1, 2022
- Contact [calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:calaimjusticeprereleaseapps@dhcs.ca.gov) with any questions about the readiness assessment or pre-release Medi-Cal application mandate
- Contact [justice-involved@ca-path.com](mailto:justice-involved@ca-path.com) with any questions about the PATH application

# Appendix

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# Best Practices: Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application (Slide 1/2)

DHCS developed the pre-release Medi-Cal application process best practices described below based on a survey and interviews with counties. There is not a one-size-fits-all approach, so county SSDs and CCFs must collaborate on an approach that suits their needs.



## Step 1: Identify Uninsured Individuals Potentially Eligible for Medi-Cal

- ✓ Complete Medi-Cal application as part of or near intake process



## Step 2: Assist in the Completion of a Medi-Cal Application

Recommended features of successful Medi-Cal pre-release application partnerships:

- ✓ Conduct initial and ongoing training for Medi-Cal application assisters
- ✓ Ensure county jails provide proper security clearance and safety assurances
- ✓ Identify a private space for eligibility interviews



## Step 3: Submit and Troubleshoot Medi-Cal Application With County Social Services Departments

- ✓ Submit Medi-Cal application during or near intake process
- ✓ Allow jail/application assisters to submit Medi-Cal applications by mail, hand delivery, fax, or online portal
- ✓ Ensure application assisters have effective avenues for troubleshooting, including clear points of contact for support
- ✓ Submit a cover sheet with the Medi-Cal application to identify pre-release applications
- ✓ Provide individuals a permanent or temporary Benefits Identification Card upon release

# Best Practices: Pre-Release Medi-Cal Application (Slide 2/2)

**Ongoing:** Establish partnership among county eligibility office, sheriff's office, and jail for implementation planning and monitoring

