May 4, 2022

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS   Letter No: 22-11
           ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
           ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
           ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
           ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
           ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS
           ALL PROBATION DIRECTORS
           ALL FOSTER CARE ELIGIBILITY WORKERS
           ALL FORMER FOSTER YOUTH ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR UPDATING THE FORMER FOSTER YOUTH FLAG IN
           THE MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY DATA SYSTEM (Reference: All County
           Welfare Directors Letters 14-41, 14-41E, 19-08 and 21-07)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to provide counties with information and guidance on the implementation of new Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) functionality of Former Foster Youth (FFY) tracking and related impacts to the FFY flag. The update focuses on recording and preserving the verification of the Foster Care (FC) status for the FFY in MEDS.

Background

A youth may be eligible for FFY Medi-Cal up to age 26 if the youth was in Foster Care under the responsibility of any state or tribe on their 18th birthday or later. It does not matter what state the youth was in for FC. Income and assets are not considered when determining eligibility for FFY Medi-Cal.

When a youth exits FC at age 18 or older, counties must verify the former FC status and enroll the youth in the most beneficial aid code. Once a youth is verified FFY eligible, the youth maintains this eligibility until age 26 regardless of the aid code in which they are enrolled. Historically, county eligibility workers (CEWs) stored the verification information in their county Statewide Automated Welfare System (SAWS). Counties were unable to share FC status verification data across SAWS, which interfered with the ability to confirm whether a FFY had already been verified. This disruption of FFY

verification could jeopardize the FFY's continuous Medi-Cal enrollment when they change residences or change aid codes.

New MEDS FFY Flag Field

In April 2021, the newly implemented FFY Flag field in MEDS (see ACWDL 21-07) began being displayed on the Other Client Eligibility Information (INQE) page. The FFY flag is a two-character alphanumeric/special character field that the CEWs manually update. The field provides counties with a single location in MEDS to store the FC verification information obtained by any county in California (CA). When a youth changes counties, the new county will simply check the INQE page to determine if the youth has been verified eligible or not eligible.

"*P" Will be Added to the MEDS FFY Flag Field at Renewal

Beginning in October 2021, a MEDS indicator of "*P" was added to the FFY MEDS Flag field at renewal for youths who are/were in a FC aid code at any time up to age 21. If a "*P" exists in the FFY MEDS Flag field, the full verification process must still be completed by the CEWs.

New EW33 Online Transaction

The EW33 transaction is an online-only transaction available to authorized MEDS users to send FFY information and verification to MEDS. Once the CEWs or MEDS Coordinators complete the full verification process and the former FC status has been verified, the initial FFY verification information must be entered into the FFY MEDS Flag field by using the new EW33 online transaction.

All users with access to EW12 will automatically get access to the EW33 online transaction. If a CEW has a MEDS account but doesn't have access to EW33 or EW12, the CEW must request access to EW33 through their MEDS Coordinator.

When the EW33 transaction is completed, the FFY MEDS Flag field will display one of the following:

- A two-character alphanumeric or abbreviation for the county, state or U.S. territory, or
- NQ for Not Qualified

MEDS users with access to the INQE screen will be able to view the FFY Flag to determine if the youth has already been verified as eligible or NOT ELIGIBLE for the FFY program.

After the EW33 online transaction is completed, if there was a "*P" in the field, it will be replaced with the new indicator. Once the FFY flag is updated, MEDS will no longer update the FFY flag except through receipt of another EW33. Counties have the ability to override a previous verification by another county. Another EW33 online transaction may be completed if a youth subsequently becomes eligible for FFY Medi-Cal.

The verification information is to remain in the field regardless of the individual's age. Counties will update the FFY MEDS Flag field with verification information on a prospective basis.

Definitions and Content for Each EW33 Field

The EW33 online transaction has the following fields to be completed at the time a youth is verified regardless of whether they are placed in the FFY aid code or another Medi-Cal aid code:

The seven EW33 online transaction fields are identified below with the definitions and contents for each EW33 field:

- **1. RESP FC STATE, CA COUNTY, or NQ**
  - Fill this required field with the existing two-digit indicator for where the youth exited FC if the youth is a verified FFY:
    - 01-58 for a CA County, or
    - two character abbreviations for a state other than CA, or for a U.S. territory.
  - If the youth is verified as NOT an eligible FFY, insert NQ for not qualified in the field
  - Upon completion of the EW33, the *P in the FFY MEDS Flag field will be removed and the responsible FC state, U.S. Territory, or CA County code will show.
- **2. CA FC QUALIFYING AID CODE**
  - The CA FC Qualifying Aid Code is the aid code the youth was in at the time of exiting FC In CA.
  - If the youth was in FC in another state or does not qualify (NQ), the field will not display.
  - If the youth was in FC in a California County, the field is mandatory.

- Fill this field with a two-character alphanumeric or numeric digits for the qualifying Medi-Cal aid code.
  - o **3. FC EXIT DATE**
    - The FC Exit Date was the date the youth exited FC.
    - If the youth was in FC in California, this field is mandatory.
    - If the youth was not in FC in California, the field is optional.
    - Fill this field with two digits for the month and four digits for the year MMCCYY.
  - o **4. VERIFYING EW CODE**
    - The Verifying EW Code is the CEW code identifying the CEW who contacted the FC county, state or U.S. territory to verify the youth's eligibility for the FFY Program.
    - Complete the required field with the CEW's assigned EW Code with up to four alphanumeric characters.
  - o **5. VERIFYING DISTRICT OFFICE CODE**
    - The Verifying District Office is the District Office for the CEW who contacted the FC County.
    - Complete the required field with the CEW's District Office's code with up to three alphanumeric characters.
  - o **6. VERIFYING COUNTY CODE**
    - The Verifying County is the County of the CEW who contacted the FC County.
    - Fill this required field with the County's two-digit indicator (01-58).
  - o **7. VERIFICATION DATE**
    - The Verification Date is the date on which the CEW verified the youth's FC care status.
    - Fill this required field with the two digits each for the month and day and four digits for the year, MMDDCCYY

The information in the RESP FC STATE OR CA COUNTY field will display in the FFY Flag field on the INQE screen in MEDS. The information from the remaining EW33 online transaction fields will be stored in the Management Information System, Decision Support System (MIS/DSS) database. A request for a specific report of the data in the MIS/DSS database may be submitted to FFY@dhcs.ca.gov.

FFY MEDS Flag Project Phase Updates

The FFY MEDS Flag project development will continue in multiple phases. Guidance for the new developments in each remaining phase will be provided in ACWDLs, Medi-Cal Eligibility Division Letters (MEDILs) and/or Change Cycle Letters.

If you have any questions or if we may provide further information, please contact the Access Unit in the Eligibility & Access Branch by email at FFY@dhcs.ca.gov.

Original Signed by

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