



TOBY DOUGLAS  
*Director*

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
Department of Health Care Services



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
*Governor*

February 16, 2011

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No.: 11-09  
ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS  
ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES  
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY FOR FOSTER CARE CHILDREN WHO RUN  
AWAY FROM THEIR PLACEMENTS  
(References: All County Welfare Directors Letters (ACWDL) Nos. 01-36,  
01-40, 02-14, 02-20, 02-59, 07-24)

The purpose of this letter is to clarify eligibility policy guidelines for foster care children/youth, who leave their court-ordered placements or placements made as a result of a voluntary family reunification agreement. The youth's whereabouts may be known or may be unknown. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) recognizes it is critical to ensure all measures are taken to maintain uninterrupted Medi-Cal coverage for eligible foster care youth to ensure they are able to access health care services.

### **Policy Clarification**

If the youth runs away from his/her foster care placement, a discontinuance of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children - Foster Care (AFDC-FC) payment (aid code 42 for federal and aid code 40 for state-only foster care) occurs and there is a "change in circumstance" to the foster care case.

A discontinuance of the foster care payment, or any other cash assistance, e.g. Supplemental Security Income, CalWORKs, does not trigger a discontinuance of Medi-Cal benefits. The foster care youth must not be discontinued from Medi-Cal because of the AFDC-FC discontinuance until the county worker fully evaluates all avenues of eligibility for Medi-Cal programs in accordance with the Senate Bill 87 (SB 87) redetermination process required by Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 14005.37.

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During the SB 87 redetermination process, the county worker should place the foster care youth in the full-scope Medi-Cal transitional aid code 38 until there is a determination of continued eligibility or ineligibility. County workers should sequentially follow the three step SB 87 requirements, and timelines outlined in ACWDLs: 01-36, 02-59, and 07-24, prior to discontinuing the foster care youth's Medi-Cal case and must issue a timely Notice of Action (NOA). If whereabouts are unknown, the NOA should be sent to the last known address of the minor. If the Foster Care Agency responsible for the child's placement notifies the county worker that they are aware of the child's whereabouts, the NOA may be sent to the Foster Care Social Worker.

Further, it should be noted that foster care youth, who are eligible for no-cost Medi-Cal, remain eligible under the continuous eligibility for children (CEC) program for up to 12 months, or until the next annual redetermination, even if there is a change in their income or other circumstances. Exceptions to the CEC policies include death, youth who are no longer residents of the state, or youth who are incarcerated (Note: Medi-Cal should not be terminated for youth who are incarcerated, per SB 1147 (see ACWDLs 10-06 & 10-22)). Eligibility under CEC is appropriate only if the child has no eligibility for another no-cost Medi-Cal program. For more detailed information about CEC, please refer to ACWDLs: 01-40; 02-14; 02-20; and 09-31, Section III, Rules of CEC Availability.

DHCS appreciates the efforts county workers have taken to increase access to health care for youth in foster care and those who were former foster care participants. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Ms. Rose Pankratz at [rose.pankratz@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:rose.pankratz@dhcs.ca.gov) or (916) 650-0140.

Original signed by:

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