

Advocate Questions to
the California Department of Health Care Services Medi-Cal Eligibility Division
re: the Affordable Care Act and Former Foster Youth

1. How is DHCS planning to ensure continuous enrollment for youth aging out of foster care and the current FFCC (Former Foster Care Child) program?

Currently DHCS and CalHEERS is working to create programming to help move kids from their current foster care aid code into the FFCC aid code 4M. This will be done based on age (>18 or higher) and residency. Once in 4M, the beneficiary should remain until 26th birthday unless a change of circumstance is detected electronically. For beneficiaries in 4M, the age edit to age 26 occurred on July 1, 2013, which enabled those who were aging out between July 1 and December 31, 2013, to remain in coverage until their 26 birthday. For those beneficiaries that already aged out of the FFCC aid code, they can reapply using the single streamlined application as long as they are <26 years old and the system should be able to identify them as a former foster care recipient. If verification can be determined, they will be placed in 4M, if not, they will still be placed in 4M with a defined time frame for the county or the individual to verify and get the information.

2. What procedures is DHCS developing to identify and enroll eligible former foster youth, including those who lost coverage because they turned 21?

Currently DHCS is working to ensure that policy is clearly defined and the CalHEERS programming is implemented to make the process as straight forward as possible for the beneficiary and the counties alike.

3. How will former foster youth contacting CalHEERS, the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System, be identified and referred to the appropriate application for Medi-Cal?

There is a question on application that asks if applicant is a former foster youth.

- A. How is CalHEERS programmed to deal with a youth who checks the FFC box on the application?

The programming is being designed to evaluate former foster care status if box is checked and determine eligibility immediately if able to. This could result in cases being sent to the counties.

- a. Will the youth be allowed to submit application without submitting income information?

Yes, no income test for this coverage group.

- b. If the foster care box is checked (no matter what income says), will CC send them to county to be determine eligibility and enroll the youth?

Yes, counties to determine eligibility. In most cases they will have the necessary age and residence information.

- c. Will the CalHEERS online application be updated to include a question about former foster youth status?

Yes

- B. Can there be a simplified enrollment process (*i.e.*, name, DOB, box checked, electronic signature) that the counties use?

Any new application would have to be approved by CMS and CC. Moving forward; there may be a time when changes may need to be made. This is dependent upon initial programming and operability.

- C. Can these youth be screened by phone and transferred to the county in all cases where no application has already been submitted?

The ability to phone in and apply is available through the quick sort process At Covered California Call Center.

- D. Will the CalHEERS online application be updated to include a question about former foster youth status?

Yes, it is there

4. What procedures is DHCS developing to verify eligibility for former foster youth who attest to having been in foster care at age 18 in California?

For former foster youth who were in foster care and on Medi-Cal on their 18th birthday in California, the programming in CalHEERS should be able to identify those youth who were on a foster care aid code. Possible verification by a county (of origin) may be needed.

5. What procedures is DHCS developing to verify eligibility for former foster youth who attest to having been in foster care at age 18 in another state?

Former foster youth from another state may be put on coverage if they have proof with them from their former state or temporarily put into coverage while the county or individual collects the verification needed to enroll the beneficiary on a more permanent basis until age 26.

6. What is the status of DHCS efforts to develop and implement a simplified redetermination form for former foster youth? Have you communicated with CMS re: a renewal process that allows beneficiary to remain covered by Medi-Cal if redetermination form is returned until there is a finding of ineligibility?

At 42 CFR 435.916, it states that redetermination or renewal is to be attempted with the information available to the system (ex parte).

If there is enough data to make the determination based on the programming, there is no need to contact the beneficiary except to send a Notice of Action stating they are covered for another year. If a change is detected *i.e.*, receiving aid in another state, the beneficiary may have to provide proof of California residency.

7. Will there be a MEDIL with all of this explained?

There will be guidance provided as needed with this process.

8. A group of foster youth, former foster youth, advocates, and others are engaged in various outreach activities to ensure that former foster youth are aware of their eligibility for coverage and are able to obtain it. We want to be sure that everyone is giving these young adults the same information. How would DHCS like us to stay in touch on these issues?

The advocate meetings are a good place to address issues. Also check the CC website as well as DHCS website. Information can also be obtained from the E & E workgroup. If there is a more urgent matter, contact Bernie Finneran at (916)327-0420 or Bernard.Finneran@dhcs.ca.gov or Todd Johnson at (916)319-9356 or Todd.Johnson@dhcs.ca.gov .