

Senate Bill No. 1147

CHAPTER 546

An act to amend Section 14029.5 of, and to add Section 14011.10 to, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2008. Filed with
Secretary of State September 28, 2008.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1147, Calderon. Medi-Cal: eligibility: juvenile offenders.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, and under which qualified low-income persons receive health care benefits. The Medi-Cal program is governed, in part, by federal Medicaid provisions.

This bill would, commencing the later of January 1, 2010, or the date that all necessary federal approvals are obtained, require, to the extent permitted under federal law, Medi-Cal benefits provided to an individual under 21 years of age who is an inmate of a public institution to be suspended, rather than terminated. This bill would require county welfare departments to notify the department within 10 days of receiving information that an individual under 21 years of age on Medi-Cal in the county is or will be an inmate of a public institution. This bill would also require, by a specified time period, the department, in consultation with the Chief Probation Officers of California and the County Welfare Directors Association, to establish the protocols and procedures necessary to implement these provisions.

By expanding the duties of county welfare departments, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

Existing law requires a county juvenile detention facility to provide specified information relating to a ward of the county who is scheduled to be released to the appropriate county welfare department, and requires the county to initiate an application and determine the individual's eligibility for the Medi-Cal program. Existing law also requires a county juvenile detention facility, prior to providing the information to the county welfare department, to notify the parent or guardian of a ward who is a minor of its intention to submit the information. Existing law requires the parent or guardian be given a reasonable time to opt out of the Medi-Cal determination.

This bill would provide that if the cooperation of the minor's parent or guardian is necessary to complete the application, but the parent or guardian fails to cooperate in completing the application, the county shall deny the application in accordance with due process requirements.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 14011.10 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

14011.10. (a) Benefits provided under this chapter to an individual under 21 years of age who is an inmate of a public institution shall be suspended in accordance with Section 1396d(a)(28)(A) of Title 42 of the United States Code as provided in subdivision (c).

(b) County welfare departments shall be required to notify the department within 10 days of receiving information that an individual under 21 years of age on Medi-Cal in the county is or will be an inmate of a public institution.

(c) If an individual under 21 years of age is a Medi-Cal beneficiary on the date he or she becomes an inmate of a public institution, his or her benefits under this chapter and under Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 14200) shall be suspended effective the date he or she becomes an inmate of a public institution. The suspension will end on the date he or she is no longer an inmate of a public institution or one year from the date he or she becomes an inmate of a public institution, whichever is sooner.

(d) Nothing in this section shall create a state-funded benefit or program. Health care services under this chapter and Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 14200) shall not be available to inmates of public institutions whose Medi-Cal benefits have been suspended under this section.

(e) This section shall be implemented only if and to the extent allowed by federal law. This section shall be implemented only to the extent that any necessary federal approval of state plan amendments or other federal approvals are obtained.

(f) If any part of this section is in conflict with or does not comply with federal law, this entire section shall be inoperable.

(g) This section shall be implemented on January 1, 2010, or the date when all necessary federal approvals are obtained, whichever is later.

(h) By January 1, 2010, or the date when all necessary federal approvals are obtained, whichever is later, the department, in consultation with the Chief Probation Officers of California and the County Welfare Directors Association, shall establish the protocols and procedures necessary to implement this section, including any needed changes to the protocols and procedures previously established to implement Section 14029.5.

(i) Notwithstanding Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, the department shall implement this section by means of all-county letters or similar instructions without taking regulatory action. Thereafter, the department shall adopt regulations in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 3.5 (commencing

with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

SEC. 2. Section 14029.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code is amended to read:

14029.5. (a) (1) Commencing January 1, 2008, immediately following the issuance of an order of the juvenile court, pertaining to the disposition of a ward of the county, committing that ward to a juvenile hall, camp, or ranch for 30 days or longer, the county juvenile detention facility shall provide the appropriate county welfare department with the ward's name, his or her scheduled or actual release date, any known information regarding the ward's Medi-Cal status prior to disposition, and sufficient information, when available, for the county welfare department to begin the process of determining the ward's eligibility for benefits under this chapter, including, if the ward is a minor, contact information for the ward's parent or guardian, if available.

(2) If the ward is a minor, prior to providing information to the county welfare department pursuant to paragraph (1), the county juvenile detention facility shall notify the parent or guardian, in writing, of its intention to submit the information required by that paragraph to the county welfare department. The parent or guardian shall be given a reasonable time to opt out of the Medi-Cal eligibility determination provided for under this section, in which case the county juvenile detention facility shall not comply with paragraph (1).

(3) For purposes of this section, "ward" means a person in the custody of a county juvenile detention facility.

(b) (1) Upon receipt of the information described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), and pursuant to the protocols and procedures developed pursuant to subdivision (c), the county welfare department shall initiate an application for any ward not already enrolled in the Medi-Cal program, and determine the individual's eligibility for benefits under the Medi-Cal program. If the ward is a minor, the county welfare department shall promptly contact the parent or guardian to arrange for completion of the application. If the cooperation of the minor's parent or guardian is necessary to complete the application, but the parent or guardian fails to cooperate in completing the application, the county welfare department shall deny the application in accordance with due process requirements. The county shall expedite the application of a ward who, according to the information provided pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), is scheduled to be released in fewer than 45 days.

(2) If the county welfare department determines that the ward does not meet the eligibility requirements for the Medi-Cal program, the county welfare department, with the consent of the ward's parent or guardian, if the ward is a minor, shall forward the ward's information to the appropriate entity to determine eligibility for the Healthy Families Program, or other appropriate health coverage program, as determined by the department.

(3) If the county welfare department determines that a ward meets eligibility requirements for the Medi-Cal program, the county shall provide

sufficient documentation to enable the ward to obtain necessary medical care upon his or her release from custody.

(c) Notwithstanding Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, the department shall implement this section by means of all-county letters or similar instructions, without taking any further regulatory action. Thereafter, the department shall adopt regulations, as necessary, to implement this section in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(d) The department shall seek any federal waivers necessary for the implementation of this section.

SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.