
Subject: DHCS Stakeholder News
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From: DHCS Communications



Dear Stakeholders,

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is providing this update of significant developments regarding DHCS programs, as well as guidance related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests Available by Request

Beginning on January 19, anyone with a U.S. residential address can request COVID-19 tests directly to their home through a new federal government website: www.covidtests.gov. DHCS encourages Californians to take advantage of this opportunity. At this time, there is a limit of four at-home tests per household.

To place an order provide your name and residential address; no other identification, credit card, or insurance information is required. These tests will be delivered in the mail through the U.S. Postal Service. There is also an option to provide an email address to receive email notifications with shipping information. According to the federal government, tests will typically ship within 7-12 days after ordering.

Medi-Cal to Cover At-Home COVID-19 Tests Obtained at Pharmacies

Starting February 1, Medi-Cal will begin covering at-home COVID-19 tests obtained at pharmacies through Medi-Cal providers. Coverage will be billed and reimbursed as a pharmacy-billed medical supply through Medi-Cal Rx, the state's fee-for-service prescription drug system for Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal managed care plans are not required to cover at-home tests since all beneficiaries will receive coverage of at-home COVID-19 tests through Medi-Cal Rx.

DHCS submitted a State Plan Amendment (SPA) for federal approval that describes the proposed changes. At-home COVID-19 tests dispensed from a pharmacy and covered by Medi-Cal Rx will require a clinical assessment, which can be provided by a pharmacist at the time the tests are dispensed. Similar to the federal requirements for private health plans to cover at-home COVID-19 tests, DHCS has proposed a limit of eight tests per beneficiary per month (or, four test kits that each include two separate tests). This limit can be waived if a test is ordered or administered by a provider following an individualized clinical assessment. Further guidance and detailed pharmacy billing instructions will be issued before February 1.

For all at-home test kits purchased between March 11, 2021, and January 31, 2022, DHCS will reimburse beneficiaries the retail cost with a receipt, using the process outlined [here](#).

Update on Detailed PATH Program Design Webinar

On January 28, DHCS will host the first in a series of webinars focused on the Providing Access Transforming Health (PATH) initiative. California received federal approval to implement the PATH part of the state's 1115 demonstration waiver. PATH will support the implementation of California and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), starting this year with Enhanced Care Management (ECM) Supports, by making funding opportunities available to "on the ground" partners, including former Whole Person Care lead entities, community-based organizations, Tribes, and others who will implement ECM/Community Supports. The webinar will provide interested stakeholders with program approval updates and a detailed overview of the following PATH initiatives:

- Technical Assistance Marketplace
- Collaborative Planning and Implementation
- Capacity and Infrastructure Transition, Expansion, and Development

This webinar will also serve as a venue to answer general questions from stakeholders on PATH. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the webinar to CalAIMECMILOS@dhcs.ca.gov. Attendees will also have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar. [Advance registration](#) is required.

Published COVID-19 Information

- [Equity and Practice Transformation Grants](#)
- [Post COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Medication Abortion Proposal](#)
- Updated: [APL 20-022 \(Revised\) - COVID-19 Vaccine Administration](#)
- [SPA 22-0004: Request for COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage and Reimbursement](#)
- [MEDIL I 22-01: Federal COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Additional Contact Requirements](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Administration Approval Letter](#)

Additional updates will be posted on the [DHCS COVID-19 Response page](#).

Thank you,

Department of Health Care Services
www.dhcs.ca.gov



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