



Immigrant Youth Access to Medi-Cal and Managed Care

Medi-Cal eligibility and services are being cut back for some immigrants. **These changes do not apply to youth under age 19, current and former foster youth up to age 26, or pregnant people, as they are exempt from this requirement.** These cuts also do not apply to immigrants of any age with a "satisfactory immigration status." This factsheet outlines Medi-Cal coverage and access to managed care for immigrant youth populations.

1. Youth with Satisfactory Immigration Status (SIS)

SIS = Lawful Permanent Residents who have met or are exempt from the 5-year waiting period, Cuban/Haitian entrants, and COFA nationals.

Additionally, in California, **youth under age 21 and pregnant people have SIS if they are lawfully residing in the U.S.** This includes Special Immigrant Juvenile status applicants and holders, family unit beneficiaries, asylees, refugees, survivors of trafficking, and others *if they are under age 21 or pregnant.*

Youth of all ages with SIS are eligible for **full-scope Medi-Cal**, which includes comprehensive coverage of doctor's visits, hospital services, medications, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, vision, dental, and more.

These same youth are also eligible for **Medi-Cal managed care**, which means they can enroll in a health plan and access benefits like Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports.

2. Youth with Unsatisfactory Immigration Status (UIS) Who Qualify for an Exemption from Medi-Cal Cuts

UIS = All immigration statuses not listed as SIS, including undocumented status.

Exemptions = All youth under age 19, foster youth, nonminor dependents, former foster youth up to age 26, and pregnant persons.

Youth with UIS who qualify for an exemption are eligible for **full-scope Medi-Cal**, which includes the same comprehensive coverage provided to youth with SIS. The only difference is that, for this population, these services are state-funded.

These youth are also eligible for **Medi-Cal managed care**, which means they can enroll in a health plan and access benefits like Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports.

3. Youth Age 19 and Older with UIS Who Are Not Exempt

Youth age 19 and older who have an immigration status that is considered UIS and who are not exempt are eligible for **full-scope Medi-Cal with no dental**, which covers all Medi-Cal benefits except routine dental services. These youth will also be subject to new premium payment and verification requirements starting July 1, 2027.

Youth age 19 and older who are **undocumented** and who are not exempt are only eligible for this coverage if they applied or were enrolled in full scope Medi-Cal before January 1, 2026. These youth must remain continuously enrolled in Medi-Cal to retain this comprehensive coverage. If they lose coverage, then they would only be eligible for emergency scope or “restricted” Medi-Cal upon reapplication (see #4 below).

Youth in this category are eligible for **Medi-Cal managed care**, which means they can enroll in a health plan and access benefits like Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports.

4. Undocumented Youth Age 19+ Who Are Not Exempt AND Who Were Not Enrolled in Full-Scope Medi-Cal on January 1, 2026 or Who Lost Medi-Cal Coverage After That Date

These youth are eligible for **emergency scope Medi-Cal** (also called “restricted scope” Medi-Cal), which only covers emergency medical services, dialysis, pregnancy-related care, emergency dental, and long-term care.

These youth **do not qualify** for Medi-Cal managed care enrollment or managed care benefits.

Additional Resources

- [Defining SIS and UIS](#)
- [Immigrant Medi-Cal Eligibility Chart](#)
- [DHCS Guidance on Immigrant Eligibility](#)
- [Medi-Cal Benefits](#)
- [Medi-Cal Managed Care](#)
- [ECM and Community Supports](#)

Questions?

If a youth is unsure about how changes to Medi-Cal affect them, they can [contact their local Medi-Cal office](#) or call 800-541-5555. If they encounter issues accessing Medi-Cal coverage or services, they can call the [Health Consumer Alliance](#) at 888-804-3536 for free legal help.

* This factsheet reflects information current as of May 12, 2026; however, these policies are subject to ongoing state review and may change based on future federal or state actions.