

County Medical Services

Behavioral Health Advisory Board

September 03, 2026

Shelly Tregembo, Chief of Agency Operations
Department of Strategy and Community Engagement
Health and Human Services Agency
County of San Diego

County HR 1 Action Plan



Coordinated Countywide Strategy



Proactive Customer Service & Communication



Statewide Engagement & Advocacy



Technology, AI, and Data Solutions



Cross-Sector and Community Partnerships

Board Initiatives



Safety Net Bridge Program

This proposed pilot program is intended to provide primary care with access to social services, medications, and fresh food for people who may *temporarily* lose Medi-Cal coverage due to federal work requirements under HR 1.

County Medical Services Reform

On March 3, 2026, the Board directed an evaluation of County Medical Services (CMS), the State-required indigent care program serving adults who do not qualify for Medi-Cal.



What is County Medical Services (CMS)?

CMS is the State-required indigent care program that funds certain kinds of medical care for some low-income adults living in San Diego County who are uninsured and not eligible for other government health care programs.







Current CMS Eligibility



- Have an immediate or long-term medical need
- 21 through 64 years of age
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Reside in San Diego County
- Denied Medi-Cal
- Sign property lien forms in person
- Meet CMS Financial Eligibility:
  - Income limit of up to 165% of the FPL
  - Property limit of $2,000 for an individual and $3,000 for a couple
- CMS Hardship:
  - Income 165% to 350% of the FPL
  - May be required to pay a Share of Cost for services received

Current CMS Covered Services

Prior approval is not necessary:

- Evaluation of your condition by a primary care provider
- Follow-up care approved by a primary care provider for serious health conditions
- Emergency room care
- Emergency hospital admissions
- Emergency medical transportation
- Emergency dental care
- Prescription medicines from the CMS approved list

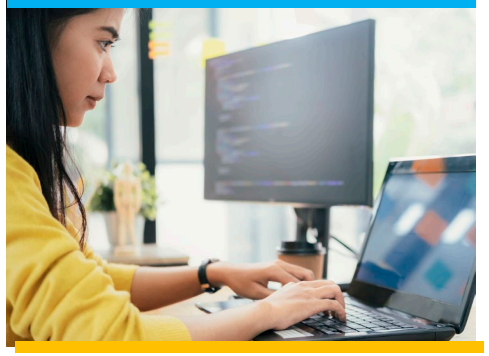
Services that need prior approval:

- Medical care from a specialist physician
- Planned hospital admissions
- Surgical and diagnostic procedures
- Limited rehabilitation, vision, medical equipment, and home health services
- Non-emergency medical transportation
- Prescription medicines not on the CMS approved list
- Medications and treatment related to preventing organ rejection and/or complication

Stakeholder Considerations







Enrollment & Administration

- Simplify CMS application to align with Medi-Cal
- Remove property lien and credit check authorization requirement
- Align property limits with Medi-Cal criteria
- Eliminate repayment requirement
- Increase transparency of enrollment process

Eligibility

- Include individuals who do not meet Medi-Cal work requirements
- Expand minimum eligible age from 21 to 19
- Expand the list of lawful immigration statuses to all Unsatisfactory Immigration Status (UIS)
- Remove the requirement to have a Medi-Cal denial
- Align retroactive coverage and appeal timelines with Medi-Cal
- Eliminate or modernize share of cost for CMS hardship
- Increase the income limit to 350% FPL

Stakeholder Considerations







Recommendations for Covered Services to Include:

- Preventive Care, such as vaccinations and screenings
- Behavioral Health
- Non-Emergency Dental Care
- Transplants
- Pregnancy and Family Planning
- Emergency Department Follow-Up Visits
- Remove pre-approvals for Labs and Diagnostics

CMS Evaluation Next Steps



- **Incorporating stakeholder feedback** into our analysis and report
- **Email us at CSC@sdcounty.ca.gov** if you have additional comments
- **Regular Updates at:**
  - Social Services Advisory Board
  - Healthy San Diego Consumer and Professional Advisory Committee
  - Health Services Advisory Board
  - Behavioral Health Advisory Board
- **Board Item anticipated in late 2026**

Thank you!

