SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES PROGRAM (CMSP)

For CMSP Clients:

Your Guidebook to New & Better Healthcare Coverage in 2014

Your CMSP coverage is ending soon, and you need to act now or risk not having healthcare coverage as of January 1, 2014.

This guidebook tells you what's happening, what you need to do, and how to get help.

UNDERSTAND THE CHANGES

Important Dates

OCTOBER 1, 2013

- Enrollment period begins.

DECEMBER 15, 2013

- Need to be enrolled in new plan to start coverage by Jan 1.

DECEMBER 31, 2013

- CMSP office closes.

JANUARY 1, 2014

- Coverage can start.
- New law requires every US citizen and legal resident have health insurance.

MARCH 31, 2014

- Insurance enrollment period ends, but you can still enroll if your circumstances change.*
- Medi-Cal enrollment is year round.

*Special enrollment periods allowed for reasons such as birth, adoption, changes in job or marital status. Otherwise, Covered California's next enrollment period for insurance plans is October 2014.

Why CMSP is Closing

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), which is also called Healthcare Reform or ObamaCare, is a federal law that makes changes to our healthcare system. The purpose of the ACA is to increase the number of Americans with health insurance and cut the costs of healthcare. It will do that by allowing more people to qualify for Medi-Cal, a free public health insurance program and by making private insurance more affordable.

These changes bring new and better opportunities, especially for CMSP clients. Starting January 1, uninsured legal residents can obtain health insurance through the state run Health Benefits Exchange, known as Covered California. To make sure health coverage is affordable, Covered California will help people find out whether they qualify for Medi-Cal or if they qualify for federal financial assistance that will reduce their costs to purchase a health insurance plan. As a result, **most CMSP clients will now qualify for Medi-Cal or for Covered California's discounted private health insurance**. Both Medi-Cal and private insurance through Covered California provide full-scope coverage, which is a big improvement over the limited and short-term coverage provided by CMSP.

Why Coverage is Important

It's the Law

- Starting January 1, 2014, every U.S. citizen and legal resident must have health insurance.
- You can get insurance through your job or retirement benefits, by buying insurance, or by applying for Medicare or Medi-Cal.
- If you decide not to enroll in insurance, you will be fined a tax penalty, which will increase over the next three years.
- In some situations, an individual can be exempt from paying the tax penalty. Check with Covered California to find out if you qualify for an exemption.

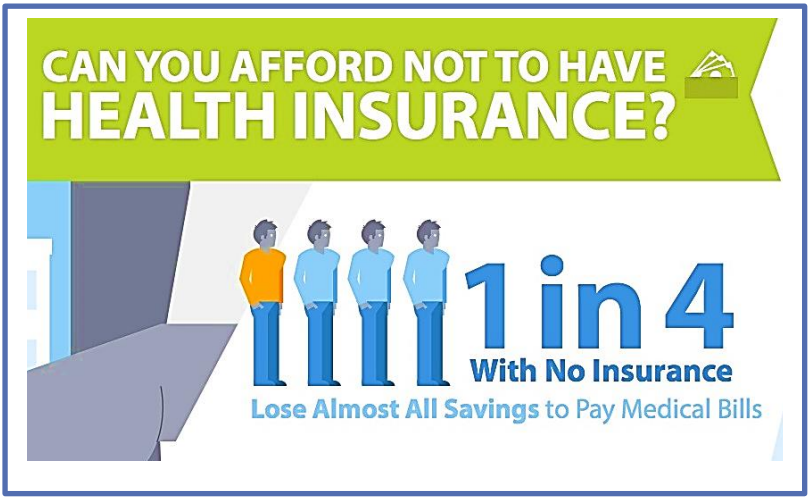
Penalty Phase-In Schedule *Pay the greater of the two amounts*		
Year	**% of Income**	**Minimum Penalty**
2014	1%	$95
2015	2%	$325
2016	2.5%	$695

Better Health

- Receive free regular primary care checkups and preventative care services from a doctor, including additional health services for women and children.
- Preventive care helps you stay healthy. A doctor isn't someone to see only when you're sick. Doctors also provide services that help keep you healthy.
- Peace of mind.

Financial Protection

- The average cost of a 3-day hospital stay is $30,000. Fixing a broken leg can cost upwards of $7500.
- In addition to covering a portion of the expenses, health plans negotiate discounted rates with providers. You benefit from their discounts on the portion of the bill that you pay.
- More than half of the reported personal bankruptcies were due to unforeseen medical expenses.
- Protect yourself and your family from high medical debt than can be caused by unexpected illness or injury.



GATHER INFORMATION

Get ready to enroll by first gathering the following information about you and your family:

- Number of people being enrolled (all or part of the family) and the birth date of each person
- Social Security Numbers (or legal immigration information, such as your immigration number)
- Home ZIP code
- Employer and income information (for example, pay stubs and W-2 forms)
- Most recent income tax returns, including dependent tax information and head of household status (if any)
- Any current health insurance plans or programs covering members of your family
- Information about your status as a member of a federally recognized tribe, if applicable

Estimate Your 2014 Income

You'll need to estimate your income for 2014 from each of the following possible sources:

- Wages, Salaries & Tips
- Net income from any self-employment or business (generally the amount of money you take in from your business minus your business expenses)
- Unemployment compensation
- Social Security payments, including disability payments--but not Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Alimony
- Other items to include when estimating your 2014 income are: retirement income, investment income, pension income, rental income, and other taxable income such as prizes, awards, and gambling winnings.

DON'T include the following sources of income:

- Child support
- Gifts
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veterans' disability payments
- Workers' compensation

If Your Income Changes

If your income changes over the year, your assistance level will be adjusted. You are responsible for making sure Covered California is aware of the income change so that you do not have to pay the difference at tax time. If you have Medi-Cal coverage, and your income increases to more than $15,856 a year for an individual or $32,499 for a family of four, you would no longer qualify for this no-cost insurance plan. However, through Covered California, you could find affordable coverage and assistance to help pay the premiums.

Household Size Defined

Household size is important because eligibility for Medi-Cal or for discounts on insurance costs is based on household size and income.

Household size is based on your expected tax filing status for the coming year (2014), and includes you plus each person you expect to claim as a tax dependent (spouses/parents and children living together in the same household).

- Children are included in your household if they are:
  - Living with you
  - Under age 19, or under 21 if a full-time student
  - Claimed as dependents on your tax return
  - Can be your natural, adopted, and step children
- When there is more than one tax filer in a household, then each tax filer will be considered a separate household with his or her own dependents.
- Married couples living together are included in each other's household even if they file separate tax returns.

If you don't file a tax return, then your household size is you plus those living with you who are not claimed as dependents on someone else's tax return.

When in doubt, call Covered California at 800-300-1506 for help determining your household size.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS

Starting in 2014, there will be several government programs that offer financial assistance to reduce the cost of health insurance.

- **Medi-Cal** – A free or low cost health coverage program for those who qualify, including people with disabilities, and those with incomes up to $15,856 for a single individual and $32,499 for a family of four.
- **Premium assistance** — Federal help will be available to reduce the cost of an individual's or family's monthly health insurance payments.
- **Cost-sharing assistance** — Cost-sharing subsidies reduce the amount of health care expenses an individual or family has to pay at the time of medical care.

Covered California is a new marketplace where individuals, families and small businesses can get affordable health insurance. With just one application, you'll find out what you qualify for free or low cost programs such as Medi-Cal, or affordable private insurance programs.

COVERED CALIFORNIA

- **Most CMSP clients will be eligible for the new Medi-Cal or for discounts, known as subsidies, on Covered California's private insurance plans.**
- Both Medi-Cal and private insurance through Covered California provide full-scope coverage, called essential health benefits, which is a big improvement over the limited and short-term coverage provided by CMSP.

There are many new changes affecting your healthcare coverage, but CMSP clients should be aware that insurance companies can no longer deny you coverage just because you have a pre-existing condition, such as diabetes or asthma. And, your insurance company cannot drop your coverage if you become sick.

All health plans now must cover essential health benefits that people expect, such as hospital care, physician services, medication, emergency, preventive and rehabilitative care.

Essential Health Benefits:

- Ambulatory patient services
- Emergency services
- Hospitalization
- Maternity and new born care
- Mental health and substance abuse disorder services, including behavioral health treatment (**NEW!)**
- Prescription drugs
- Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices
- Laboratory services
- Preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management
- Pediatric services, including dental and vision care

Eligibility for financial assistance is based on household size and annual income:

Number of People in Your Household	Annual Household Income	
	Medi-Cal	Discounts on Insurance Premiums
1	$0 - $15,856	$15,857 - $45,960
2	$0 - $21,404	$21,405 - $45,960
3	$0 - $26,951	$26,952 - $45,960
4	$0 - $32,499	$32,500 - $45,960
5	$0 - $38,047	$38,048 - $45,960

Medi-Cal *(Big Changes!)*

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medi-Cal coverage will expand in 2014 making over 15,000 new people in San Luis Obispo County eligible for full health coverage.

- For the first time, Medi-Cal will cover low-income adults **who do not have children, and there is no property limit** (for example a car, equipment, or a house). Single adults ages 19-64, without children, will be eligible for Medi-Cal.
- Eligibility is based on your household size and annual income.
- Whenever possible, electronic methods will be used to more quickly verify income and other eligibility data.
- Only citizens and legal residents may enroll in the new Medi-Cal; however, undocumented individuals may still be eligible for Medi-Cal's pregnancy related coverage and emergency services.

There are many people available to answer questions and to assist you, especially during this open enrollment period.

Covered California Insurance Plans

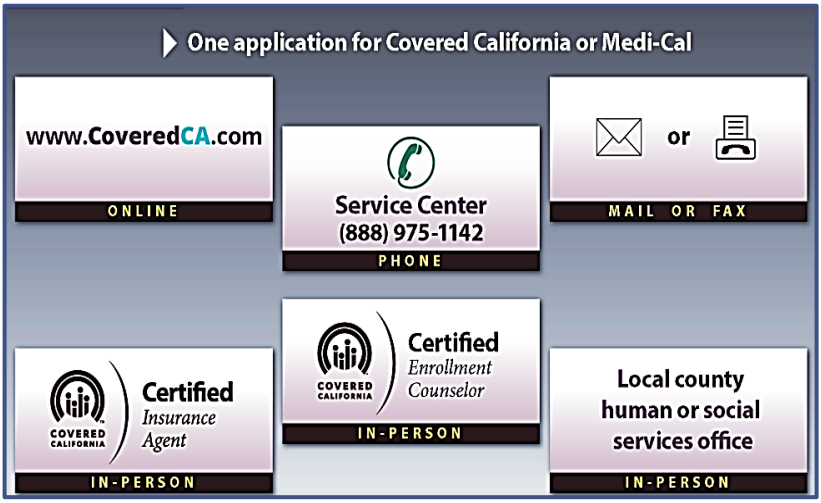
There are four basic levels of coverage: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. This will make it easier to compare plans in the same category or across categories.

The cost of coverage depends on how much coverage you choose to purchase and whether you qualify for financial assistance.

Covered California has a cost calculator on its website: CoveredCA.com that can help you estimate your annual costs and determine if you are eligible for financial assistance. You can also call Covered California at 800-300-1506 to find out if you are eligible for financial assistance.

ENROLL!

With just one application, you'll find out what you qualify for: free or low cost programs, such as Medi-Cal, or affordable private insurance programs.



Get assistance in person, online, and by phone!

In Person:

San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services (DSS), 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday

- 3433 S. Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403
  805-781-1600
- 1086 Grand Ave, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
  805-474-2000
- 9415 El Camino Real, Atascadero, CA 93422
  805-461-6000
- 681 W. Tefft Street Suite 1, Nipomo, CA 93444
  805-931-1800
- 406 Spring Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446
  805-237-3110

Community Health Centers of the Central Coast (CHC) has Certified Enrollment Counselors available at various locations who can answer questions and help you enroll.
Call 805-929-3211 (press #0 to skip the menu) to schedule an appointment.

Covered California Certified Insurance Agents and Certified Enrollment Counselors are available in our community to provide expert advice and support. Find one by calling 800-300-1506, or through www.CoveredCA.com.

Online: www.CoveredCA.com

Ask questions, research, and enroll online.

By Phone:

800-300-1506 ▪ TTY: 888-889-4500,
Help is available in 13 different languages.
8:00 am – 8:00 pm, Monday – Friday
8:00 am – 6:00 pm, on Saturdays

By Mail:

CMSP can provide you with a paper application or you can download one from www.CoveredCA.com. Send applications to:

Covered California Service Center
P.O. Box 3530, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-5667

NOTES

Notes for Covered California Online Registration
User Name: *(Hint)*
Password:*(Hint)*
4 digit PIN:*(Hint)*
Security Questions/Answers:*(Hint)*
Application #:
Pending items needed to complete enrollment:

NOTES

Our best wishes for a happy and healthy future!

San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department

County Medical Services Program (CMSP)

2180 Johnson Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 63401

8:00am – 11:00am & 1:30pm – 3:00pm, Mon – Fri

805-781-4838

OFFICE IS CLOSING 12/31/13