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MINOR CONSENT MEDI-CAL

Minor Consent Medi-Cal, also called Sensitive Services, is a program that provides limited services to people under age 21, regardless of their immigration status, without parental consent or notification. The young person must be living with their parents or legal guardian, or not living with their parents but will be claimed as a tax dependent. However, financial eligibility for Minor Consent services is determined based on the young person's own income and resources, if any.

Who is eligible?

- Minors of any age under 21 needing services related to pregnancy, family planning, sexual assault.
- Minors ages 12 through 20 needing services for sexually transmitted diseases or outpatient mental health or substance use disorders.
- An individual can apply for one or more of these sensitive services.
- The minor must be living at home with their parents, or, living away from home and claimed as a tax dependent by their parents.
- A minor can qualify for the Minor Consent program even if they are already on Medi-Cal as part of their parent's case.
- Retroactive eligibility is available for up to three months before the application date. The request for retro eligibility must be made within one year of the application date.

What services are offered?

- Family planning, pregnancy, and pregnancy-related services, including mental health, substance use, and dental care during pregnancy.
- Abortion
- Sexually Transmitted Infection diagnosis and treatment
- Sexual assault treatment
- Outpatient mental health services
- Substance use disorder treatment

What is the income/resources limits?

- Parent's income is not counted
- Minor's income and resources, if any, are counted

What does it cost?

- Pregnant minors are eligible for free services with no share of cost regardless of their personal income.
- For other Minor Consent services (mental health, STI treatment, etc...) there may be a share of cost if the minor's personal income is over a certain amount (called the Maintenance Need Level).

Does citizenship or immigration status matter?

- No, citizenship and immigration status do not matter.
- Minor Consent applicants are not asked about citizenship or immigration status.

Where do kids apply and renew their eligibility?

Applications and renewals may be made:

- Via the telephone: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/CountyOffices.aspx>
- In person at the County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS). To find your local office, visit: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/CountyOffices.aspx>
- With a county "Out-stationed" Eligibility Worker (EW) at community health clinics, county health clinics, health fairs, or other community sites.

Please Note: Prior to the Public Health Emergency (PHE) declared in March 2020, counties only accepted Minor Consent applications or renewals in person. However, at the onset of the PHE, DHCS modified this policy and instructed counties to follow guidance provided in [ACWDL 19-17](#) to conduct telephonic interviews/appointments, including the Minor Consent program. Forms that would usually require a wet signature to be valid, could be completed and signed via telephonic signature for the duration of the PHE.

Because of the effectiveness of this change in policy, and advocates' pressure throughout the PHE, DHCS has adopted this change ongoing to allow minors to apply and/or renew eligibility for the Minor Consent program either in-person or by telephone. Counties shall continue to accept applications, renewals, and reported changes in information over the telephone for the Minor Consent program beyond the PHE. For more information see [ACWDL 21-09](#).

- The minor's eligibility must be renewed each month except for outpatient mental health services.

Minor Consent mental health services - A letter from a mental health professional must be submitted with the application, indicating that mental health services are needed, with an estimate for how long. The minor is not required to provide a new letter for the monthly in-person renewal process. The one letter is sufficient ([ACWDL 94-63](#)).

- Note: If the child loses Minor Consent for failure to renew eligibility in person or over the telephone for a given month but applies again within three months, services rendered during the gap may be reimbursed by requesting retroactive benefits.
- Minor Consent applicants get paper Medi-Cal cards for each month they are determined eligible.
- Pregnant applicants do not have to provide proof of pregnancy.
 - Note: Infants whose mothers were covered under the Minor Consent Program for the delivery qualify for “deemed eligibility” at birth. This means that the baby is eligible for Medi-Cal up to the first birthday without the mother having to fill out a separate Medi-Cal application for the baby. See ACL 04-02, page 4. The baby will get a Medi-Cal number and card for the year after the mother lets the county know about the birth.
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- A new Notice of Action (NOA) for continuing eligibility is issued for each month that the individual continues to qualify for Minor Consent. If eligibility is denied at the time of initial application or for any month after, a denial NOA should be issued, with information about how to appeal.
- Individuals under 21 who want regular Medi-Cal must have their parents apply on their behalf if they are in school full time or claimed as tax dependent by their parents.

How do teens or youth get services?

- Services are provided through Medi-Cal providers.

What if the teens or youth have other health insurance?

- The teens or youth are still eligible regardless of insurance status.

What should be done if there is a problem getting services though the Minor Consent Program?

If a minor is having problems obtaining services though the Medi-Cal Minor Consent program in Los Angeles, please call:

- Maternal and Child Health Access (MCHA) at 1(213) 749-4261 or
- The Health Consumer Center (HCC) at 1(800) 896-3202.
- For all other counties, use the statewide number for the Health Consumer Alliance (HCA): 1(888) 804-3536 and give your zip code or visit: <https://healthconsumer.org/>