Medi-Cal Share of Cost

Learn about:

• How the Medi-Cal Share of Cost works

• How to eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost to get full Medi-Cal coverage

The Center for Health Care Rights is a non-profit organization that provides free information and help with Medicare and Medi-Cal in Los Angeles County.
What is Medi-Cal with a Share of Cost?

People who have Medi-Cal with a Share of Cost have incomes that are higher than the Medi-Cal income limits shown below:

**2020 Medi-Cal Aged & Disabled Federal Poverty Level Program**

- **Single Person**: $1,482 per month
- **Married Couple**: $2,004 per month

When your countable income is greater than the Medi-Cal income limits, Medi-Cal will give you a monthly Share of Cost.

These income limits go up every April.

How does the Medi-Cal Share of Cost work?

- The Medi-Cal Share of Cost works like a monthly health insurance deductible.
- You must pay the Medi-Cal Share of Cost before Medi-Cal will pay any of your health care expenses.

**Example:**

Bob has a $900 Medi-Cal Share of Cost. Bob is responsible for the first $900 of health care expenses each month. After Bob pays $900, Medi-Cal pays for the rest of his medical care for the month.
How can I eliminate my Medi-Cal Share of Cost to get full Medi-Cal?

There are 2 ways to reduce or eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost:

1. **Use health care expenses to meet the monthly Medi-Cal Share of Cost.**
   - To eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost, the health care expenses must be at least the same dollar amount as the Medi-Cal Share of Cost.
   - You can use any health care expense to reduce or eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost, even if the bill is for health services not covered by Medi-Cal.
   - Health care expenses you have already **paid** for can only be applied to the Medi-Cal Share of Cost for the month that you received those services.

   **Example:**
   A paid dental bill for October 2020 can only be used to meet the October 2020 Medi-Cal Share of Cost.

   - Old or new **unpaid** health care expenses can be applied to the current month’s Medi-Cal Share of Cost.

   **Example:**
   Tonya has a Medi-Cal Share of Cost of $1100. Tonya has $700 of unpaid medical bills from October 2020 and $400 of unpaid dental bills from December 2020. Tonya’s medical providers report the bills to Medi-Cal. Tonya uses the unpaid bills to meet her January 2021 Medi-Cal Share of Cost: $1100 – 1100 = 0

**How to report health care expenses to meet the Medi-Cal Share of Cost**

- When you receive health care services, the provider can report the expenses to Medi-Cal. These expenses will be applied to meet your Medi-Cal Share of Cost.
- To apply unpaid health care expenses from past months to a current month Medi-Cal Share of Cost, provide your Medi-Cal worker with copies of the medical bills.
2. Buy health insurance each month to get rid of the monthly Medi-Cal Share of Cost.

- The money you spend on health insurance premiums each month will reduce your income so that you meet the Medi-Cal monthly income limits of $1468 for a single person or $1983 for a married couple.

- Example: If you are over the income limit by $50, you can buy a dental policy that costs $50 a month.

- Any health insurance premiums can be used to eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost. For example:
  - Dental or vision insurance;
  - Medicare Part D drug plan;
  - Medigap Insurance (private insurance policies that pay Medicare copayments and deductibles).

- Your Medi-Cal worker can tell you how much you need to spend on health insurance to get rid of the Medi-Cal Share of Cost.

Send proof of the extra health insurance to Medi-Cal

- Provide your Medi-Cal worker with written proof that you are buying health insurance on a monthly basis to eliminate the Medi-Cal Share of Cost. Your worker will update your Medi-Cal record to show that you have full Medi-Cal with no Share of Cost.

Do you have questions about Medi-Cal or Medi-Cal Share of Cost?

Call Center for Health Care Rights at 1-800-824-0780.

This project was supported, in part by grant number 90SAPG0094-01-00*, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not represent official ACL policy.