

# California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative

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## Dental Services Now Available to All Pregnant Medi-Cal Recipients!

Preventive dental services are available to all pregnant women receiving Medi-Cal, including women with “pregnancy only” or “limited scope” Medi-Cal. Pregnant women, regardless of immigration status, can get this care.

### **Which dental services are covered?**

Women receiving pregnancy-related Medi-Cal can get basic dental exams, cleanings, and follow-up treatment for gum disease. In addition, all Medi-Cal recipients (including men, children and non-pregnant women with “emergency only” coverage) can get emergency dental services.

### **When did the dental coverage start?**

Dental coverage for all pregnant Medi-Cal recipients was expanded on October 7, 2005, when the Governor signed SB 377 into law. Before the law was signed, women receiving “full-scope” services and only some of the women with “pregnancy-related” Medi-Cal were able to get this care.

### **Where do I go to get these services?**

You can go to any dentist who accepts Denti-Cal (Medi-Cal’s dental program), including community clinics with dental programs. Use your Medi-Cal card — there is no separate dental card.

### **I paid for dental services I received in October 2005. Will Medi-Cal pay me back?**

If you were on Medi-Cal in October 2005, you may be able to get a refund for dental services received since that date from the dentist or clinic where you received the services. If you were eligible for Medi-Cal but not enrolled, you can apply now to cover services received up to three months ago. For example, you have until the end of January 2006 to ask Medi-Cal to cover bills from October 2005. Ask for help from the agencies listed below if you have questions.

### **I am undocumented and have “limited scope” Medi-Cal. Can I get dental care?**

Yes. While you are pregnant and during the 60 days after you give birth, Medi-Cal will cover the basic dental services described above and any emergency dental care that you may need. Medi-Cal also will cover prenatal care services, labor and delivery of your baby.

### **I have Medi-Cal through “presumptive eligibility” but haven’t sent a Medi-Cal application yet. Can I get dental care?**

Yes. If you have “presumptive eligibility” or “P.E.” Medi-Cal, you can get prenatal care, basic and emergency dental services right away. You do not need to wait until your Medi-Cal application has

been approved. But you will need to file an application either in the month when you applied for P.E. or by the end of the following month, in order to keep your Medi-Cal.

**I am a pregnant teenager getting “minor consent” or “sensitive services” through Medi-Cal. Can I get these preventive dental services?**

Yes, and emergency dental services too.

**Why should I see a dentist while I am pregnant?**

Taking care of your teeth and gums will improve your health and help ensure that your baby is born healthy. Recent medical studies show that dental cleanings and treatment during pregnancy reduce the chances of premature deliveries and low-birth weight babies, the leading cause of infant death or disease. Gum disease during pregnancy can be as harmful to a newborn as smoking or alcohol use, since the infection from gum disease can spread throughout the body.

**Will I be reported to the immigration authorities if I apply for Medi-Cal?**

No. If you are seeking only pregnancy-related or emergency services, you do not need to say anything about your immigration status or Social Security number. You will need to give information about your income, and whether you live and intend to stay in California (or came here to work or seek a job). You do not need to tell anyone that you or someone in your family is undocumented, and should not give a false Social Security number to the agency.

If you are seeking “full-scope” services under Medi-Cal, you will need to answer questions about your immigration status and Social Security number. Information about Medi-Cal recipients is private and can only be used to make sure you are eligible for services. Immigration authorities can’t use this information against you unless a criminal violation (such as fraud) is involved.

**Will I be considered a “public charge” if I get Medi-Cal?**

No, your use of Medi-Cal services (other than nursing home care) will not be considered in deciding whether you are likely to become a “public charge” and will not affect your chances of getting a green card on this basis.

**Will it hurt my chances of becoming a U.S. citizen if I use Medi-Cal?**

No. Using Medi-Cal will not make it more difficult to become a citizen. But you may have trouble becoming a citizen if you get Medi-Cal based on false information (for example, if you don’t tell the truth about your income). If you think you received services that you were not supposed to get, you should get legal help before you apply to become a citizen. Call one of the numbers listed on page 3 (below) to find out where to get legal help.

*Thanks to Maternal and Child Health Access for this information, and for the agency’s important work on this issue.*

<b>FOR HELP, CALL:</b>	
<b>OR CALL:</b>	
<b>LOS ANGELES</b> <b>Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 888 624-4752 Spanish/English</li></ul> <b>Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 213 977-7500 English</li><li>• 800 520-2356 Mandarin</li><li>• 800 267-7395 Vietnamese</li><li>• 800 867-3126 Khmer</li><li>• 800 867-3640 Korean</li></ul>	<b>NORTHERN CALIFORNIA</b> <b>Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 408 453-3017 Spanish</li><li>• 408 453-3013 English/Vietnamese</li></ul> <b>HELPLINK:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 800 273-6222 Northern CA only</li><li>▪ 415 772-HELP (Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin)</li></ul> <b>Administered by the Northern California Council for Community</b>

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