

California has made historic progress toward removing barriers to health care for all, regardless of immigration status. However, hundreds of thousands of Californians remain unjustly excluded from access to affordable health coverage due to their status.

Health Care for Some, Not All

In 2010, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) expanded access to affordable health insurance to millions in the U.S. by empowering states to extend Medicaid coverage to more low-income people as well as establish federally subsidized health insurance marketplaces. However, the ACA explicitly excluded millions of undocumented immigrants from both programs.

Despite these unjust exclusions, several states have taken action to expand health coverage to excluded immigrants using state funds, and California has been at the vanguard of those efforts.

The Health4All Coalition organized a successful multi-year campaign to eliminate barriers for undocumented Californians to Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program. As of January 2024, California is the first state in the U.S. to extend Medi-Cal to all income-eligible residents, regardless of age or immigration status. This achievement brings us closer than ever to a universal health care system for all who call California home.

Lawfully present Californians who have incomes that exceed the Medi-Cal limit of 138% of the Federal Poverty Level can turn to Covered California, the state's online health insurance marketplace, to enroll in a health plan. However, over 600,000 undocumented Californians who fall in this income range are explicitly excluded from Covered California.¹ This means many families continue to face barriers to getting the care that they need simply because of their immigration status.

California Can Continue to Break Down Barriers

Harnessing the momentum from our historic achievements on Medi-Cal coverage, the Health4All Coalition will continue the fight for access and affordability in Covered California. By ensuring that everyone can get the care they need, no matter their income or immigration status, we can move closer to our vision of a health care system that promotes the well-being of all Californians. When we meet this most basic human need—the ability to live a healthy life—we build a more equitable system for all.

AB 4 (Arambula), along with a budget allocation, would remove these unjust exclusions to eligibility in Covered California. In addition to the issue of eligibility, the state will need to provide subsidies to ensure that everyone shopping on Covered California is actually able to afford their coverage.

The Legislature must remove barriers to affordable health coverage for all Californians, regardless of immigration status, and move CA towards #Health4All.

For comments, questions, or information on how to get involved, please contact:

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¹ Dietz, Miranda and Laurel Lucia, et al. March 2023. "[California's Uninsured in 2024](#)". UC Berkeley Labor Center.