

This is a resource for uninsured Californians and those that assist them in enrollment to learn about county indigent programs and their eligibility requirements.

Most Californians get coverage through employers, through state and federal public programs like Medicare or Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California), or by buying a health plan with affordability assistance through Covered California. While California has taken aggressive steps to implement and improve on the Affordable Care Act, including by expanding Medi-Cal to all who are income eligible, regardless of family composition, age, or immigration status, some Californians above that poverty-level income might fall through gaps in state coverage options, due to affordability or administrative burden, or missing open enrollment periods for Covered California or employer-based coverage. For those uninsured Californians, there may be county-level options to get the care they need.

Background on County Health Care Programs:

California counties are required by [California Welfare and Institutions Code 17000](#) to provide care of last resort to low-income uninsured “medically indigent” residents who have no other options. However, counties vary widely on what they do, how they do it, and who they serve. The code does not define any specific eligibility requirements, allowing counties to create and implement their own programs, including differing coverage based on income and immigration status. Unfortunately, this results in a patchwork of coverage that varies county by county, where the level of an uninsured person’s health care coverage may depend on where they reside.

- Twelve counties run public hospitals or hospital systems and clinics that have a focus on serving uninsured and Medi-Cal patients; some others fund community clinics, and yet others contract with private providers.
- Some counties have medically indigent care programs, providing residents who sign up with a medical home. While these are generally much more limited than a traditional health plan in benefits and network (for example, it would not provide any care outside the county), these programs offer a regular source of primary and preventive care, and sometimes connections to specialists and hospital care.

- Counties place differing limits on age, income, and immigration status for such programs.

Undocumented people have been historically one of the biggest groups excluded from state and federal coverage options, but California has taken steps in the last decade to undo those barriers, with expansion to children, then young adults aged 19–26, then older adults 50 and over, and finally, people aged 26–49 in 2024. Yet with Medi-Cal eligibility limited to people under 138% of the Federal Poverty Level—currently \$20,783 for one person and \$43,056 for a family of four—over a half-million Californians are not eligible for Medi-Cal, and yet excluded from Covered California due to immigration status.

While county programs once served tens or even hundreds of thousands of Californians, many of those enrollees are now covered by Medi-Cal through the Affordable Care Act and more recent expansions. This provides the opportunity for counties to focus their indigent care programs on the remaining uninsured, who are lower income but just above the poverty threshold, and in some cases undocumented.

- During the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid expansion, over 36 counties created or expanded their indigent care programs to cover the undocumented as a major percentage of the remaining uninsured.
- During the last year with the expansion of Medi-Cal regardless of immigration status, some counties like Contra Costa and the County Medical Services Program that serves many small and rural counties, raised their income eligibility to 300% of the poverty level to better serve the remaining uninsured.

The following is a list of county health care programs, many that provide primary and preventive care, and other services within county lines. The eligibility listed is a general guide, but for updated information and specific eligibility requirements, please contact your county. We hope this helps individual Californians connect with care in specific counties and helps advocates and assisters in the effort to strengthen the safety-net options for uninsured and underinsured Californians. (Updated August 2024)

Guide to County Health Care Programs for Uninsured Californians - 2022

County	Medically Indigent Program(s)	Income Limit	Age	Cost	Providers	Phone Number
● Alameda	Health Program of Alameda County (Health PAC)	≤200% FPL	19+	Copayments >138% FPL	County health authority Alameda Health System and contracts with network of nine community clinics	(510) 618-3452
● Contra Costa	Basic Health Care Program	≤300% FPL	19+; <19 if undocumented	No copayment. 100–150% FPL: \$0 151–200% FPL: Adults—\$25 mo., \$75/qtr; Children—\$5/mo., \$15/qtr; 201–250% FPL: Adults—\$50/mo., \$150/qtr; Children—\$5/mo., \$15/qtr; 251–300% FPL: Adults—\$75/mo., \$225/qtr; Children—\$5/mo., \$15/qtr;	Contra Costa Regional Medical Center or one of our Health Centers located throughout Contra Costa County including emergency medical care	1 (800) 771-4270
Fresno	Fresno County Medically Indigent Services Program (MISP)	≤224% FPL Must meet asset limit	19–64	Depends on household size. For house of 10, max payment is \$9,000	Medical services are provided at Community Regional Medical Center (CRMC) by a Central California Faculty Medical Group (CCFMG) medical provider	(559) 600-6580
● Kern	Kern County Medi-Cal	≤138% FPL	19–64	Copayments >138% FPL	Health Net and Kern Family Healthcare	(661) 631-6000
Orange	Orange County Medical Safety Net Program (MSN)	138-200% FPL	19–64	The MSN Program has co-pays for all medical services	County contracts with community clinics and designated private hospitals	(714) 834-6248
● Riverside	Riverside County Medically Indigent Services Program (MISP)	≤200% FPL	21–64	Copayments if <100% FPL & SOC 100%–200% of FPL	County hospital – Riverside University Health System Medical Center and contracted community clinics	(877) 501-5085
Sacramento	Sacramento County Medically Indigent Services Program (CMISP)	≤400% FPL	21–64	SOC begins at 138% FPL	County clinics for primary care, pharmacy and laboratory contracted speciality, emergency and hospital providers (Dignity Health and Sutter Health)	(916) 874-9670
● San Diego	San Diego County Medical Services (CMS)	≤165% FPL	21–64	No copayments	Network of community health centers; private physicians and hospitals	1 (800) 587-8118

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● San Francisco	Healthy San Francisco	≤500% FPL	18+	Participation fee for 100% FPL and above. Copayment amount depending on clinic/hospital. For <100% FPL most services \$0 copayments	County hospitals and affiliated clinics San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium clinics; private community providers	(415) 615-4555
San Joaquin	San Joaquin Medical Assistance Program (MFAP)	≤200% FPL	21-64	Yes	County hospital and clinics – San Joaquin General Hospital	(209) 468-6679
San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo Medically Indigent Services Program (SLO-MISP)	138-250% FPL; Must meet asset limit	19-64	SOC varies	Community Health Centers of the Central Coast Limited local specialists All local hospitals accept SLO-MISP patients	(805) 781-5500
● San Mateo	San Mateo Access and Care for Everyone (ACE)	≤200% FPL	19-64	Copayments may be waived depending on income; \$15 co-pays for most; \$360 for application and annually	County hospital and clinics, San Mateo Medical Center, Ravenswood Family Health Center, and North East Medical Services	(650) 616-2133
Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara Indigent Care Program (ICP)	138-200% FPL	21-64	SOC	Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (PHD) Health Care Centers Services outside of PHD centers must be preauthorized. Many local providers accept ICP, including all hospitals in the county	(805) 681-5393
● Santa Clara	Ability to Pay Determination Program	≤350% FPL	19+	Copayments based on sliding scale	County hospital Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and affiliated clinics	(408) 885-7470
Stanislaus	Medically Indigent Adult Program	≤144% FPL (21-29 yrs); ≤175% FPL (60-64 yrs)	21-65	SOC	County-based physicians and family practice residents at county clinics and Doctor's Medical Center of Modesto; Primary Care provided by Health Services Agency HSA clinics	(209) 558-7232
Tulare	Tulare County Medical Services (TCMS)	≤275% FPL	21-64	\$5 copayment minimum	County-operated clinics, local hospital coverage/ some speciality coverage	1 (866) 238-6026

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● Ventura	Sliding Fee Discount Payment Program	≤200% FPL	No age restriction	<100% FPL: nominal charge 100–200% FPL: SOC based on 3-tier sliding scale	County hospital – Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) and affiliated clinics; some discounted services purchased from outside the county system; Ventura also has a program for low income children run by the Public Health Dept	(888) 472-4463
CMSP Counties	Includes: Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Napa, Nevada, Plumas, San Benito, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, Yuba					
	The County Medical Services Program (CMSP)	138%-300% FPL	21–64	No copayments; Maximum coverage duration is 6 months. Undocumented immigrants receive emergency services only. Share of cost depends on FPL but can be none		