

Understanding H.R. 1 Changes Affecting CalFresh & Medi-Cal Programs

Quick Reference Guide & Fact Sheet

Purpose: This provides a user-friendly Q&A to respond to inquiries about federal and state policy changes under H.R. 1 affecting CalFresh and Medi-Cal benefits. This is a summary of hundreds of pages of policy and therefore does not reflect every policy nuance.

Part 1: CalFresh Fact Sheet & FAQs

What is CalFresh?

[CalFresh](#) improves people's nutrition in low-income households by increasing their food-buying power so that they can purchase food. It is an essential food assistance program serving nearly 1.5 million Los Angeles County residents.

CalFresh Implementation Timeline At-a-Glance (2026–2028)

Effective Date	Policy Change	Who Is Affected?
Nov 1, 2025	State Utility Assistance Subsidy (SUAS)	CalFresh households without an elderly member (age 60+) or a disabled member in the household are no longer eligible for SUAS.
Apr 1, 2026	Ineligibility for Certain Non-Citizens	Certain non-citizens, including but not limited to, asylees, refugees, parolees, individuals with deportation or removal withheld, conditional entrants, and victims of trafficking.
Jun 1, 2026	Work Requirements	Some adults aged 18-64 who receive CalFresh may need to meet work requirements to keep their CalFresh benefits.

CalFresh Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is H.R. 1?

- House of Representatives Bill No. 1 (H.R. 1) is federal legislation that establishes new nationwide eligibility requirements, deduction criteria, and work requirement policy changes for CalFresh. In California, the first implementation changes began November 1, 2025.

State Utility Assistance Subsidy (SUAS)

2. Who is affected?

- Only households including a member 60 years or older, or who has a disability and without heating or cooling utility expenses separate from their housing costs, will receive the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) deduction with the issuance of a State Utility Assistance Subsidy (SUAS) payment.
- Allowing the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) deduction may increase a household's monthly CalFresh benefits or make the household eligible for benefits. Under H.R. 1, this option is now limited to households with a member 60 years or older or with a disability.

- Because of this change, households without a member 60 years or older or with a disability who previously received an annual energy assistance payment for this purpose may experience a reduction in their monthly CalFresh benefit. A smaller number of these households may lose CalFresh eligibility.

Non-Citizens

3. CalFresh: Who is affected?

- CalFresh eligibility will be limited to individuals who reside in the United States (U.S.) and are:
 - Citizens;
 - U.S. Nationals;
 - Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs);
 - Cuban or Haitian Entrants; or
 - Residing in the U.S. in accordance with a Compact of Free Association (COFA) agreement.
- Certain non-citizens, such as but not limited to asylees, refugees, parolees, individuals with deportation or removal withheld, conditional entrants, battered non-citizens, and victims of trafficking, will no longer be eligible to receive CalFresh benefits.
 - These impacted individuals may be eligible for CalFresh if their immigration status changes to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) and they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Work Requirements

4. CalFresh Work Requirements: Who is affected?

- Certain adults ages 18–64 are subject to work requirements. The affected adults will be subject to CalFresh work rules if they do not meet any exemptions.

5. CalFresh Work Requirements: Who qualifies for an exemption?

- CalFresh recipients may not need to meet CalFresh work requirements if they are:
 - Earning at least \$217.50 a week;
 - Caring for a child under the age of six (6) or caring for someone who is sick or disabled;
 - Applied for or getting unemployment insurance, disability or veterans' disability benefits;
 - Unable to work due to domestic violence, alcohol or drug use or treatment;
 - Going to school at least part time;
 - Pregnant;
 - Residing in a CalFresh household in which a child under age 14 is included as a member of the CalFresh assistance unit;
 - Participating in an Office of Refugee Resettlement Training Program;
 - Identify as an Indian, Urban Indian, or California Indian under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCA); or
 - Medically certified as mentally or physically unfit to work;

6. CalFresh: What if someone doesn't qualify for an exemption?

- If a CalFresh recipient doesn't meet an exemption, they are considered to be an Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD).
 - ABAWDs are subject to the CalFresh time limit and can only receive three countable months of CalFresh benefits without needing to meet work requirements within a 36-month period.

7. CalFresh: How can work requirements be met if someone doesn't qualify for an exemption?

- CalFresh recipients will need to meet work requirements by completing:
 - 80 hours of employment, self-employment, or in-kind work;
 - 80 hours of an education or job training program, such as Trade Act Programs, CalFresh Employment and Training, or WIOA;
 - 80 hours of community service or volunteer work; or
 - A combination of the above.
- **Workfare Program:** Additionally, a CalFresh recipient may also complete a Workfare Program. Workfare allows recipients to meet the work requirements by volunteering at a local public or private nonprofit agency and provides unpaid hands-on work experience.
 - The number of Workfare hours a person needs to meet work requirements is determined by dividing the amount of monthly CalFresh benefits the household receives by the County's minimum wage.
- **Countable Months:** If you receive a full month of CalFresh benefits but do not meet the work requirements and do not qualify for an exemption, that month may count as a countable month.
 - You can reach three countable months within a fixed 36-month period; after which your CalFresh benefits may be stopped or reduced.

8. CalFresh: How is DPSS helping customers meet the work requirements?

- DPSS has partnered with Community Partners to recruit both community-service/volunteer and Workfare sites. Additionally, DPSS provides information on our Skill Up Los Angeles partners, who offer CalFresh Employment and Training activities.

9. CalFresh: What should customers do to keep their benefits?

- Keep contact information updated with DPSS (including on benefitscal.com).
- Submit SAR 7 reports and renewal forms on time.
- Report any changes in immigration status at renewal and provide verification.
- Carefully read all DPSS notices.

10. Should constituents still apply for CalFresh even with these new rules?

- Yes! DPSS encourages anyone needing food assistance to apply for CalFresh. Staff will assess eligibility and help connect applicants to exemptions, resources, or supportive work programs.

Part 2: Medi-Cal Fact Sheet & FAQs

What is Medi-Cal?

Medi-Cal provides low-cost or free health coverage for doctor visits, prescriptions, hospital visits, mental health care, and emergency services.

Medi-Cal Implementation Timeline At-a-Glance (2026–2028)

Effective Date	Policy Change	Who Is Affected?
Jan 1, 2026	Asset Limits Reinstated	Individuals who are 65 or older ; have a disability ; live in a nursing home ; or in a family that makes too much money to qualify under federal tax rules.
Jan 1, 2026	Expansion Enrollment Freeze	New adult applicants (19+) without Satisfactory Immigration Status (SIS)
Oct 1, 2026	Immigration Status Changes	Federal reclassification of certain immigration statuses may affect some adults' eligibility to retain federally funded full-scope Medi-Cal.
Jan 1, 2027	Transition to Fee-for-Service (FFS)	Certain individuals without Satisfactory Immigration Status (SIS), Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) in the 5-year federal waiting period, and those considered Permanently Residing in the U.S. under Color of Law (PRUCOL) will move from a managed care health plan (e.g., L.A. Care) to FFS.
Jan 1, 2027	Six-Month Renewals Begin	Adults aged 19–64 enrolled under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Expansion renew semiannually instead of annually (~1.35M recipients).
Jan 1, 2027	Work & Community Engagement	Adults aged 19-64 enrolled under the ACA Expansion must complete 80 hours/month of work, volunteering, or education unless exempt (~1.3M recipients).
Jan 1, 2027	Retroactive Coverage Reduced	Reduced from 3 months to 1 month for adults aged 19-64 under the ACA Expansion and 2 months for all other populations.
July 1, 2027	Dental Coverage Changes	Adults 19+ without SIS receiving full-scope Medi-Cal will stop receiving full-scope dental services. They will receive emergency dental care. (e.g., extractions, serious pain, infections). Children, pregnant individuals through postpartum, and former foster youth keep full dental coverage, regardless of immigration status.
July 1, 2027	Monthly Premiums	Adults aged 19–59 without SIS in Full-Scope No Dental coverage
July 1, 2027	Asset Limit Changes	The Asset Limit changes for individuals who are 65 or older ; have a disability ; live in a nursing home ; or are in a family that makes too much money to qualify under federal tax rules.
Oct 1, 2028	Co-pays (\$1–\$35)	Adults aged 19-64 enrolled under the ACA Expansion with income above 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) will be required to pay a fee for certain medical services. The fee will not exceed 5% of the household's annual income.

Medi-Cal Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Medi-Cal: Asset Limits

1. What are the current Medi-Cal Asset Limits?

- To qualify for Medi-Cal, the countable assets for individuals must be at or below the asset limit if you are:
 - Aged **65 or older**;
 - Have a **disability**;
 - Live in a **nursing home**; or
 - Are in a **family that makes too much money** to qualify under federal tax rules.

Current Limits (Reinstated Jan 1, 2026):	Effective July 1, 2027:
\$130,000 for 1 person	\$21,000 for 1 person
+\$65,000 for each additional household member (up to 10).	\$31,000 for 2 people +\$1,550 for each additional household member (up to 10).

Note: Primary residence (the home they live in) and primary vehicle remain **exempt**.

Medi-Cal: Delivery System, Coverage & Dental Changes

2. What is the Medi-Cal Expansion Enrollment Freeze?

- As of January 1, 2026, the Medi-Cal Expansion Enrollment Freeze has paused new full-scope enrollments for adults 19+ without SIS.
- New applicants: Adults 19+ without SIS will only be eligible for restricted-scope Medi-Cal.
- Existing Members: Adults 19+, without SIS, who enrolled in full-scope Medi-Cal through the expansion program prior to January 1, 2026, may retain their full-scope coverage through June 30, 2027, provided they continue to meet eligibility requirements.

3. Medi-Cal: How do recent federal policy changes affect some immigrant groups?

- Federal Funding Rules:** Some Qualified Non-Citizens (QNC) will no longer be eligible for federally funded full-scope Medi-Cal, including:
 - Refugees and asylees
 - Humanitarian parolees
 - Survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking
- State-Funded Safety Net:** Some QNCs may be eligible and will transition to state funded full-scope Medi-Cal through June 30, 2027.
- Access to care:** If the QNC is moved to state funded full-scope Medi-Cal, recipients will transition from a managed care plan to Fee-for-Service effective January 1, 2027.

3. (Continued) How do recent federal policy changes affect some immigrant groups?

Coverage: Effective July 1, 2027, affected QNCs will only be able to get pregnancy-related care and emergency services.

- H.R. 1 limits federally funded full-scope Medi-Cal to:
 - Lawful Permanent Residents who have met the five-year bar or are exempt from it.
 - Cuban/Haitian Entrants
 - COFA Migrants
 - Lawfully present children under 21 and pregnant individuals

4. Medi-Cal: What is the Fee-for-Service (FFS) transition on January 1, 2027?

- Beginning January 1, 2027, certain populations without Satisfactory Immigration Status (SIS) including Lawful Permanent Residents within the federal five-year waiting period, and PRUCOL residents will transition from managed care health plans (like L.A. Care or Health Net) to Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal.
- This changes how recipients access care, meaning they can select and be treated by any provider accepting Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal. It does not mean they lose eligibility or receive less coverage. Also, “Fee-for-Service” does not mean the recipient must pay; Medi-Cal still pays for the care.
- Recipients will continue to receive services such as specialty mental health, prescriptions, and chronic care management. Enhanced Care Management and Community supports are not covered under Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal (only available under managed care plans).

5. What dental coverage is available for recipients losing dental coverage on July 1, 2027, affected by the H.R. 1 changes to Medi-Cal?

- Starting July 1, 2027, adults 19+ without SIS receiving full-scope Medi-Cal will transition to Full-Scope Medi-Cal with No Dental (FSND). Dental coverage will be limited to emergency dental services such as treatment for severe tooth pain, infections, and extractions.
- **Exemptions:** Children (18 and under), pregnant/postpartum individuals, and former foster youth keep full dental benefits.

Medi-Cal: Renewal Schedule

6. Who moves to six-month renewals?

- Effective January 1, 2027, adults aged 19–64 enrolled under the ACA Expansion will renew eligibility every 6 months instead of annually.

7. Who stays on 12-month annual renewals?

- Children under 19 and adults over 64, parents/caretaker relatives, pregnant/postpartum individuals, and American Indians/Alaskan Natives.

Medi-Cal: Work Requirements

8. Who is exempt from Medi-Cal Work and Community Engagement Requirements?

Some recipients may be exempt, including:

- Parents/caregivers of children age 13 or younger or a disabled individual
- Pregnant or postpartum individuals
- Foster/former foster youth under 26
- Fully disabled veterans
- Incarcerated or recently released (within 90 days)
- American Indians/Alaskan Natives
- Individuals meeting CalWORKs/CalFresh work requirements
- Medically frail individuals who have medical needs that significantly impair their ability to comply with the Work Requirements
- Individuals enrolled in or entitled to Medicare Part A or Part B
- Individuals participating in a substance use treatment program

Medi-Cal: Premiums & Co-Pays

9. Who will pay monthly premiums starting July 1, 2027?

- Adults aged 19–59 without Satisfactory Immigration Status enrolled in Full-Scope No Dental coverage will be required to pay a monthly premium per person to maintain coverage.
- **Exempt from monthly premium:** Children (18 and under); pregnant/postpartum individuals; and current/former foster youth under age 26, are exempt.

10. Who will have co-pays, and what services are exempt from co-pays in 2028?

- Effective October 1, 2028, adults aged 19-64 enrolled under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Expansion with income above 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) may have co-pays between \$1 and \$35 per service (capped at 5% of the household's annual income).
- **Exempt Services in 2028:** Co-pays will not be charged for primary care check-ups, emergency care, prenatal care, pediatric care, mental health/substance use disorder treatment, or community health center visits.

Medi-Cal: Retroactive Coverage

11. How far back will Medi-Cal cover past medical bills?

- Effective January 1, 2027, retroactive Medi-Cal coverage is reduced from 3 months to 1 month for adults aged 19-64 under the ACA Expansion and 2 months for all other populations (including children).

Part 3: Need Assistance?

Official online resources:

- **Apply Online & Manage Benefits:** [BenefitsCal.com](https://benefitscal.com)
- **DPSS Official Website:** dpss.lacounty.gov
- **H.R. 1 Updates & Information:** [Keep Your Benefits](#)
- **CalFresh Work Rules:** [CalFresh Work Rules Webpage](#)
- **CalFresh and Medi-Cal Work Requirements:** [Work Requirements Webpage](#)
- **[Customer Service Center](#) (CSC):** Call (866) 613-3777 (Mon–Fri, 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM)
- **Apply for [IHSS](#):** Call (888) 944-4477 or (213) 744-IHSS (Mon–Fri, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
- **[IHSS Helpline](#):** Call (888) 822-9622 (Mon–Fri, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
- **Find Your Local DPSS Office:** [Office Locations](#)
- **Immigrant Resources & Public Charge Information:** [Office of Immigrant Affairs Website](#)