



# Medi-Cal Rx Monthly Bulletin

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May 1, 2023

The monthly bulletin consists of alerts and notices posted to the [Bulletins & News](#) page on the Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal. Sign up for the [Medi-Cal Rx Subscription Service](#) to be notified when new information is posted.

1. [Changes to the Contract Drugs List \(CDL\)](#)
2. [Changes to the Contract Drugs List \(Over-the-Counter Drugs\)](#)
3. [Changes to the Family PACT Pharmacy Formulary](#)
4. [Updates to the Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#)
5. [30-Day Countdown – Phase III, Lift 2: Retirement of the Transition Policy for Beneficiaries 22 Years of Age and Older](#)
6. [Medication Abortion: Coverage of Misoprostol-Only Regimen](#)
7. [Extended Duration Prior Authorizations for Maintenance Medications](#)
8. [Mpox Vaccine: No Longer a Family PACT Pharmacy Benefit](#)
9. [Mpox Vaccine: Change in Reimbursement Rate](#)
10. [Updated: Patient Counseling Signature Requirements in Provider Manual](#)
11. [Prior Authorization Submission in Advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy – Processing Issue Resolved](#)

# 1. Changes to the Contract Drugs List (CDL)

The below changes have been made to the [Contract Drugs List](#) posted to the Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal, effective May 1, 2023.

Drug Name	Description	Effective Date
Apalutamide	Additional strength (240 mg) added with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Buspirone	Additional strength (7.5 mg) added.	May 1, 2023
Calaspargase pegol-mknl	Added to CDL with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Canagliflozin	Added to CDL with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Clobetasol Propionate	Additional formulation (shampoo) added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Cyclosporine	Added to CDL with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Efavirenz	Labeler restriction removed (600 mg tablets).	May 1, 2023
Estradiol	Additional formulation (vaginal cream) added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Insulin Lispro	Labeler restriction updated (3 ml vial).	May 1, 2023
Insulin Regular, Human	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Linaclotide	Added to CDL with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Mifepristone	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Norethindrone/ Ethinyl Estradiol/Iron	Additional strength (1.5 mg-30 mcg) added with restriction.	May 1, 2023
Omega-3 Acid Ethyl Esters	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Pegaspargase	Diagnosis and prior authorization restriction added.	May 1, 2023
Sotorasib	Additional strength (320 mg) added with restriction.	May 1, 2023

## 2. Changes to the Contract Drugs List (CDL) – Over-the-Counter Drugs

The below changes have been made to the [Contract Drugs List – Over-the-Counter Drugs](#) posted to the Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal, effective May 1, 2023.

Drug Name	Description	Effective Date
Calcium Carbonate	Additional strengths (500 mg, 600 mg) added.	May 1, 2023
Calcium Carbonate/Vitamin D3	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Ferrous Gluconate	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Ferrous Sulfate	Additional formulation (enteric coated tablets) added.	May 1, 2023
Insulin (human)	Additional formulation (pens) added.	May 1, 2023
Magnesium Oxide	Additional strength (500 mg) added.	May 1, 2023
Prenatal Vitamins	Removed restriction and ingredient description.	May 1, 2023
Saline Nasal Spray	Added to CDL.	May 1, 2023
Simethicone	Additional formulation (chewable tablets) added.	May 1, 2023
Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol)	Additional strength (10 mcg) added.	May 1, 2023

### 3. Changes to the Family PACT Pharmacy Formulary

The below changes have been made to the Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment (Family PACT) Pharmacy Formulary.

For more information, see the [Family PACT Pharmacy Formulary](#) on the Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal.

Drug Name	Description	Effective Date
Anti-Fungals, Antilfectives, Anti-Virals, and Topicals	Verbiage added to narrative: A Quantity Limit PA request may be submitted, and evaluated for medical necessity, for claims that exceed the dispensing limits set by the program.	October 1, 2022
Moxifloxacin	Quantity limit restrictions added.	May 1, 2023

### 4. Updates to the Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual

The updates/additions below have been made to the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) version 7.0.

#### Updates

Section	Update Description	Effective Date
<i>Section 12.3.5 – Specialty Infant Products Criteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjusted formatting of requirements in the Renal Specialty Infant Products subsection.</li> </ul>	May 1, 2023
<i>Section 18.0 – Mpox Vaccine Coverage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated reimbursement language.</li> </ul>	May 1, 2023
<i>Appendix G – Medi-Cal OHC Carrier Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated contact information for Other Health Coverage carriers.</li> </ul>	April 7, 2023
<i>Appendix H – List of Physician Administered Drugs (PADs) with Reject Code 816</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added to the list.</li> </ul>	April 3, 2023

## 5. 30-Day Countdown – Phase III, Lift 2: Retirement of the Transition Policy for Beneficiaries 22 Years of Age and Older

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

On April 21, 2023, Phase III, Lift 2 (P3/L2) will be implemented, lifting the Transition Policy for 17 Standard Therapeutic Classes (STCs). This is the second in a series of lifts to retire or phase out the grandfathering of historical prior authorizations (PAs) and claims by lifting the override of **NCPDP Reject Code 75 – Prior Authorization Required**.

The following 17 STCs will be impacted with implementation of P3/L2 on April 21, 2023:

Phase III, Lift 2 (P3/L2) Drug Classes *			
Contraceptives and Hormones (STC 59 – 64)	Ophthalmic, Nasal, and Otic Preparations (STC 19, 20)	Thyroid Agents (STC 55, 57)	Topical Anesthetic Agents (STC 45)
Dermatologic Agents (STC 93, 95)	Biologic Agents (STC 90)	Glucocorticoids and Corticotropins (STC 50, 51)	Anti-Parkinson's (STC 9)

\* STC refers to the Standard Therapeutic Classification number.



- Beneficiaries 21 years of age and younger are exempt from Phase III: Retirement of the Transition Policy.
- Enteral nutrition products for beneficiaries of all ages are also exempt from Phase III: Retirement of the Transition Policy.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

If a beneficiary is currently receiving a medication in the STCs identified for P3/L2 as listed in the table above, pharmacy providers and prescribers should prepare for the retirement of the Transition Policy in the following ways:

1. Consider covered therapies that may not require a PA, if clinically appropriate. Review the following:
  - [Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs Lists & Covered Products Lists](#)
  - [Medi-Cal Rx Approved NDC List](#)
  - Prescribers: Refer to your ePrescribing application.
2. If a change in therapy is not appropriate, submit a PA request via one of the approved Medi-Cal Rx Submission Methods:
  - [CoverMyMeds®](#)
  - [Medi-Cal Rx Secured Provider Portal](#)
  - NCPDP P4 Transaction
  - Fax
  - U.S. Mail

## Resources

- For more information about Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement, visit the [Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach](#) page on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#) and select **Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement**.
- Review the [Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement of Prior Authorizations and Retirement of the Transition Policy: Phases II, III, and IV](#) slide deck.
- Review [Medi-Cal Rx Phased Reinstatement Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#).
- Review the [Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement Phases II-III](#) webinar recording.
- Review the [30-Day Countdown – Phase III, Lift 1: Retirement of the Transition Policy for Beneficiaries 22 Years of Age and Older](#) alert.
- Refer to the [Medi-Cal Rx Bulletins & News](#) and [Medi-Cal Rx Forms & Information](#) pages of the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#) for guidance to successfully submit PAs.

## 6. Medication Abortion: Coverage of Misoprostol-Only Regimen

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) clinical guidelines regarding medication abortion up to 70 days of gestation ([Practice Bulletin Number 225](#), as reaffirmed in 2023) recommend a combined mifepristone-misoprostol regimen as the preferred therapy for medication abortion. Guidelines also state that if a combined mifepristone-misoprostol regimen is not available, a misoprostol-only regimen is the recommended alternative regimen for medication abortion.

Based on potential disruptions in the availability of mifepristone as a result of ongoing litigation, this alert reiterates that:

- Medi-Cal Rx covers misoprostol when substituted for a combined mifepristone-misoprostol regimen and administered consistent with clinical guidelines issued by ACOG.
- Misoprostol is on the [Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs List](#) (CDL) with no prior authorization (PA) requirements.

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

Pharmacy providers and prescribers can reference the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) and the [CDL](#). Pharmacy providers and prescribers are also encouraged to check the [Medi-Cal Rx Bulletins & News](#) page and [abortion.ca.gov](http://abortion.ca.gov) for future updates.

## 7. Extended Duration Prior Authorizations for Maintenance Medications

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

On March 24, 2023, as part of Phase III of Reinstatement, Medi-Cal Rx will initiate a series of transition policy lifts for beneficiaries 22 years of age and older. Refer to the alert titled [90-Day Countdown – Phase III: Retirement of the Transition Policy for Beneficiaries 22 Years of Age and Older](#) for additional information.

To reduce administrative burden while ensuring continued medication safety for beneficiaries, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has enabled extended duration/multi-year prior authorizations (PAs) for up to five years for certain maintenance medications used for chronic conditions. Qualified prescriptions have been automatically extended.

The list of medications eligible for an extended duration/multi-year PA is referred to as the *Medi-Cal Rx Extended Duration Prior Authorization List*. DHCS will notify pharmacy providers and prescribers of the availability of this list once it is published.

This extended duration/multi-year PA is provided for certain maintenance medications with a PA requirement. Additional restrictions such as quantity limits, age limits, diagnosis restrictions, and other clinical edits may apply.

- **For a maintenance medication requiring a PA, for which a claim was paid during the transition period based upon historical claim data or an existing PA, the renewal prescription will not require a new PA. This only applies to beneficiaries 22 years of age and older at this time.**

The table below lists examples of maintenance drug classes with drugs that may require a PA:

Maintenance Drug Classes *		
Anti-depressants	Anti-convulsants	Anti-hypertensives
Anti-lipemic agents	Anti-Parkinson’s agents	Anti-psychotic agents
Antiviral agents	Asthma inhalers	Cardiovascular agents
Coronary vasodilators	Diabetes medications	Diuretics
Glaucoma agents	Hormone agents	Multiple Sclerosis agents
Oncology agents	Rheumatoid Arthritis agents	

\* Not all maintenance drug classes are listed.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

For a maintenance medication with an approved PA or paid claims history **within the 15-month lookback period**, and eligible for extended duration PAs, **no action is required**. These prescriptions will be automatically extended per the PA policy.



New PA requests for maintenance medications will automatically be considered for extended duration as part of the PA review process.

## Resources

- For more information about Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement, visit the [Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach page](#) on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#) and select **Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement**.
- [90-Day Countdown – Phase III: Retirement of the Transition Policy for Beneficiaries 22 Years of Age and Older](#)
- [How to Prepare for Retirement of the Transition Policy](#)
- [Medical Supplies: How to Prepare for Retirement of the Transition Policy](#)
- [30-Day Countdown – Reinstatement of Prior Authorization Requirements for 46 Drug Classes Including Medical Supplies](#)
- [Medi-Cal Rx: Transitioning Medi-Cal Pharmacy Services from Managed Care to Fee-for-Service Frequently Asked Questions](#): Questions 33, 35, and 55.
- [Medi-Cal Rx Approved NDC List](#)

## 8. Mpox Vaccine: No Longer a Family PACT Pharmacy Benefit

Effective for dates of service on or after February 1, 2023, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will no longer reimburse the administration of mpox vaccine as a pharmacy benefit under the Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment (Family PACT) Program.

On December 2, 2022, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced its intention to end the mpox public health emergency (PHE) on January 31, 2023. The December 21, 2022 alert, [Mpox Vaccine as a Family PACT Pharmacy Benefit](#), provides information about coverage between August 17, 2022 through January 31, 2023.

## 9. Mpox Vaccine: Change in Reimbursement Rate

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

Effective for dates of service on or after February 1, 2023, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will no longer reimburse the administration of mpox vaccines (JYNNEOS) based on the enhanced Medicare rate approved by the U.S. Federal Government since the mpox public health emergency (PHE) has ended.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) had approved State Plan Amendment (SPA) 22-0062 which established the Medi-Cal fee-for-service reimbursement rate for mpox vaccine administration at 100 percent of the corresponding Medicare rate for the same or similar service, effective August 17, 2022, through the end of the mpox PHE. The U.S. Federal and California State governments have since declared the end of the PHE for mpox effective January 31, 2023. Therefore, effective February 1, 2023, DHCS will reimburse the mpox vaccine administration at the Medi-Cal fee-for-service rate currently in effect.

**This policy update is applicable to the JYNNEOS Vaccine billed with the following NDC, billing quantity, and Max quantity as outlined below:**

NDC	Label Name	Generic Name	PA required (Y or N)	Min Age	Claim Quantity	Max Quantity
50632000101	JYNNEOS 0.5 ML VIAL (STOCKPILE)	Smallpox and mpox vaccine	N	0	0.5 ml (subcutaneous) <b>OR</b> 0.1 ml (intradermal)	0.5 ml

Providers will receive a 120-day timeliness override to submit the mpox vaccines with dates of service August 17, 2022, through January 31, 2023.

DHCS will reprocess all affected retroactive claims for dates of service on or after February 1, 2023, until policy implementation, to apply the new rate.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

No action is required of providers at this time. DHCS will automatically reprocess affected claims with dates of service on or after February 1, 2023 for appropriate reimbursement.

For the most recent dose updates, see the [Mpox Vaccination](#) page of the California Department of Public Health's (CDPH) website.

## 10. Updated: Patient Counseling Signature Requirements in Provider Manual

The *Patient Counseling Requirements* section of the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) has been updated on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#). These changes are effective on and after May 11, 2023, when the national COVID-19 public health emergency ends (per SPA 22-0069).

### What Pharmacy Providers Need to Know

Details of this change are listed below:

#### Added Details

- Counseling requirements apply to both new and refill prescriptions, except in situations where the patient's agent is not readily available to receive a counseling offer or the counseling itself.
- Documentation in the form of a signature by the patient or patient's agent is required only if counseling is refused and must be retained in the pharmacy for at least one year from the dispense date. Pharmacies are exempt from this requirement during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

#### Removed Details

- Counseling requirements apply to both new and refill prescriptions.
- Pharmacists are required to at least document any refusal by the patient or the patient's agent to accept an offer of counseling.

## What Pharmacy Providers Need to Do

Pharmacy providers must observe the following guidelines regarding counseling:

- The pharmacist is required to discuss with each Medicaid beneficiary or caregiver, in person whenever practicable, any issue the pharmacist deems significant in their professional judgment. Such counseling is to be provided unless refused by the Medicaid beneficiary or caregiver.
- Update existing Standard Operating Practices (SOPs) and workflows (if needed) to state that maintaining documentation in the form of a signature by the patient or patient's agent is only required if counseling is refused.
- Records must be retained in the pharmacy for at least one year from the dispense date.

### 11. Prior Authorization Submission in Advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy – Processing Issue Resolved

#### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

Effective February 24, 2023, pharmacy providers and prescribers could submit prior authorizations (PAs) to Medi-Cal Rx in advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy. However, Medi-Cal Rx identified an internal processing issue that caused PA requests submitted in advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy to close prior to review.

**Medi-Cal Rx has resolved this processing issue. Medi-Cal Rx is now processing PA requests in advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy correctly for beneficiaries 22 years of age and older with historical paid claims for drugs/products, excluding enteral nutrition.**

Medi-Cal Rx is actively reviewing potentially impacted PA submissions and conducting outreach to providers. If you believe you were impacted by this processing error, resubmit the PA request to Medi-Cal Rx today.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

If, in response to a PA submission in advance of the Retirement of the Transition Policy, a pharmacy provider or prescriber received a faxed PA response that did not indicate a status of approve, defer, or deny, or if the PA was blocked from submission, the PA should be resubmitted to Medi-Cal Rx using any of the five approved PA submission methods:

- [CoverMyMeds®](#)
- [Medi-Cal Rx Secured Provider Portal](#)
- NCPDP P4 Transaction
- Fax
- U.S. Mail

## Resources

For more information about Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement, visit the [Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach](#) page on the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#) and select **Medi-Cal Rx Reinstatement**.

For more information regarding Retirement of the Transition Policy, refer to the [Submitting Prior Authorization Requests in Advance of Retirement of the Transition Policy](#) alert.

## Contact Information

You can call the Medi-Cal Rx Customer Service Center (CSC) at 1-800-977-2273, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

For other questions, email Medi-Cal Rx Education & Outreach at [MediCalRxEducationOutreach@magellanhealth.com](mailto:MediCalRxEducationOutreach@magellanhealth.com).