



The monthly bulletin consists of alerts and notices posted to the [Bulletin & 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.

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# 1. Changes to the Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs List

The below changes have been made to the [Medi-Cal Rx Contract Drugs List](#) posted to the Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal, effective March 1, 2024.

Drug Name	Description	Effective Date
Adalimumab-bwwd	Added to CDL with diagnosis, quantity, and labeler restrictions.	March 1, 2024
Alogliptin/Metformin HCL	Labeler restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Buprenorphine/Naloxone	Labeler restriction removed from sublingual film.	March 1, 2024
Carglumic Acid	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Doxylamine/Pyridoxine HCL	Diagnosis and quantity restrictions removed.	March 1, 2024
Eflornithine	Added to CDL with prior authorization required.	March 1, 2024
Elbasvir/Grazoprevir	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Epoetin Alfa	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Fruquintinib	Restriction updated to prior authorization required.	March 1, 2024
Glecaprevir/Pibrentasvir	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Lamivudine	Diagnosis restriction removed from 100 mg tablets.	March 1, 2024
Ledipasvir/Sofosbuvir	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Methotrexate	<b>Effective February 1, 2024:</b> Additional strength (2 mg/ml oral solution) added to CDL with labeler restriction.	March 1, 2024
Perampanel	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Secukinumab	Additional strength (300 mg/2 ml) added to CDL with diagnosis, quantity, and labeler restrictions.	March 1, 2024
Sodium Phenylbutyrate	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Sofosbuvir	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Sofosbuvir/Velpatasvir	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024
Tenofovir Alafenamide	Diagnosis restriction removed.	March 1, 2024

Drug Name	Description	Effective Date
Tobramycin	Diagnosis restriction removed from inhalation powder.	March 1, 2024
Zenpep (Amylase/Lipase/Protease)	Additional strength (60,000 USP units of lipase; 189,600 USP units of protease; 252,600 USP units of amylase) added to CDL with labeler restriction.	March 1, 2024

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

The updates/additions below have been made to the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#) version 16.0.

### Updates

Section	Update Description	Effective Date
<i>Section 12.5.2 – Specialized Products</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed ICD-10 diagnosis code V45.1 Renal dialysis status from table.</li> </ul>	March 1, 2024
<i>Section 13.4 – Diabetic Supplies – CGM Systems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) prior authorization (PA) request requirements for members with insulin-dependence.</li> </ul>	March 1, 2024

## 3. Commercial Paxlovid™ Reimbursement and Update on Billing for Pharmacists Prescribing Paxlovid

### Background

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is providing the following policy update and billing guidance to pharmacy providers about Paxlovid™ (nirmatrelvir and ritonavir tablets), approved or authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of COVID-19 when independently initiated and furnished by a pharmacist, and about the commercialization of Paxlovid.

### What Pharmacy Providers Need to Know

On May 25, 2023, the FDA approved the use of Paxlovid for the treatment of adults at high risk of progression to severe COVID-19. Paxlovid is still available through an FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in non-hospitalized adolescents from 12 to 17 years of age and weighing  $\geq 40$  kg.

## Commercialization

On October 13, 2023, Pfizer, the manufacturer of Paxlovid, reached an agreement with the federal government on a timeline to transition Paxlovid from government-managed EUA-Paxlovid distribution to traditional commercial distribution. The commercial transition began on November 1, 2023, as the federal government began to discontinue the distribution of Pfizer's EUA-Paxlovid. Pfizer provided New Drug Application (NDA)-labeled commercial supply to all channels by the end of 2023.

Commercial NDA-labeled Paxlovid is now a covered Medi-Cal Rx benefit for claims with dates of service (DOS) on or after November 1, 2023. Pharmacy providers are encouraged to submit retroactive claims if applicable.

Pharmacy providers will be reimbursed the ingredient cost for commercialized products. The professional dispensing fee will be reimbursed for both NDA and EUA-labeled products. Claims for the dispensing fee and ingredient cost should be billed to Medi-Cal Rx.

## Extension of Temporary Allowance to Bill for Prescribing Paxlovid Under Pharmacist Services

DHCS had previously made a temporary allowance to reimburse pharmacists for the prescribing (consultation and assessment of need for treatment) of Paxlovid when performed in accordance with the California State Board of Pharmacy (BOP) Waiver and the FDA's EUA. This allowed pharmacies to bill DHCS on a medical claim for prescribing Paxlovid under Pharmacist Services, using CPT codes 99202 (new patient) and 99212 (existing patient), until the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) on May 11, 2023. **DHCS is extending this temporary allowance through September 30, 2024.**

Paxlovid may be prescribed for an individual member by a state-licensed pharmacist for the treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in adults and pediatric members (12 years of age and older, weighing at least 40 kg) who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death, in accordance with the FDA-approved Prescribing Information or authorized labeling, as applicable, and subject to the conditions specified by the FDA.

## Important Billing Instructions

- DHCS will reimburse the ingredient cost for the commercialized NDA-labeled Paxlovid. The ingredient cost will not be reimbursed for the EUA-labeled products.
- The professional dispensing fee will be reimbursed for both NDA and EUA-labeled products.
  - Claims for reimbursement of the professional dispensing fee and ingredient cost must be submitted to **Medi-Cal Rx** for processing.

## Claims Submission to DHCS for Prescribing

- DHCS will continue to reimburse pharmacists for the prescribing (consultation and assessment of need for treatment) of all Paxlovid products.

- Claims must continue to be billed to **DHCS** as a medical claim on a *CMS-1500* form as a Pharmacist Service using CPT codes 99202 (new patient) and 99212 (existing patient); the claim will be reimbursed with the current methodology for pharmacist services found in the [Pharmacist Services](#) section of the [DHCS Provider Manual \(Part 2 – Pharmacy\)](#).
  - Eligible claims must have an ICD-10-CM diagnosis code, U07.1 (COVID-19).
  - DHCS is extending the temporary allowance to allow billing with these CPT codes from the end of the PHE (May 11, 2023) through September 30, 2024.

### Retroactive Claims Processing

- DHCS will reprocess all claims with DOS on or after May 12, 2023, until policy implementation for these CPT codes.
- DHCS will reprocess all claims for the reimbursement of ingredient cost for commercialized products for DOS on or after November 1, 2023. Pharmacy providers are encouraged to resubmit claims from November 1, 2023, to December 20, 2023.

Any concerns regarding delay in reimbursement should not cause pharmacy providers to decline dispensing Paxlovid to members.

### Resources

Pharmacy providers should refer to the following resources:

- [California Department of Public Health – COVID-19 Treatment Resources for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Paxlovid – nirmatrelvir and ritonavir: Full Prescribing Information](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers: Emergency Use Authorization for Paxlovid™](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Patients, Parents, and Caregivers: Emergency Use Authorization \(EUA\) of Paxlovid for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Paxlovid \(nirmatrelvir co-packaged with ritonavir\): A Preferred Oral Antiviral Drug to Treat COVID-19](#)

For more information on services covered by Medi-Cal Rx, pharmacy providers should refer to the [Medi-Cal Rx Web Portal](#).

## 4. Upcoming Transitions for Medi-Cal Rx Applications

### Background

In 2023, Prime Therapeutics acquired Magellan Rx, necessitating the migration of Medi-Cal Rx applications to Prime Therapeutics' platforms. As part of this migration effort, there will be a series of transitions for Medi-Cal Rx users who currently access Medi-Cal Rx applications.

**Note:** Individual applications have not been changed; migrations will only impact the path to access each application for which a user is registered.

## What Providers Need to Know

All impacted users will be notified in advance of the migration dates for each application; migration dates are scheduled for the first half of 2024. Information about each application migration will be sent to impacted users and will include:

- Key dates;
- Instructions for users who are required to take action prior to an application migration date; and
- Dates for informational meetings to learn more about migration activities and required user action.

Support services will be available throughout the migration process to assist users.

## 5. State of Emergency Override Activation: Submission Clarification Code 13 (Published February 2, 2024)

### Background

The purpose of this alert is to notify pharmacy providers and prescribers that, pursuant to the Governor's recent [Proclamation of a State of Emergency](#), due to severe winter storms and flooding in San Diego and Ventura counties, Medi-Cal Rx is permitting emergency overrides on pharmacy claims for members residing in the impacted counties. These overrides will be accepted for 31 days; effective for dates of service (DOS) January 31, 2024 – March 1, 2024, however, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) may extend this duration if needed.

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

This emergency override will allow applicable claim submissions to bypass certain edits by utilizing the Submission Clarification Code (SCC) of 13. An SCC of 13 will indicate a Payer-Recognized Emergency/Disaster Assistance Request.

Impacted Counties Eligible for Emergency Override (Utilizing SCC 13 *)	
San Diego	Ventura

\* SCC 13 overrides may be applied to pharmacy claims as needed for members residing within the impacted counties and will be administered based upon the member's residence ZIP code.

### What Pharmacy Providers Need to Do

Pharmacy providers serving members residing within the impacted counties who are requesting an emergency override due to the State of Emergency should enter SCC 13 when submitting claims under the following circumstances:

- **Resolution for displaced persons or medications:**
  - Reject Code 88 – Early refill, ingredient duplication, therapeutic duplication, etc.
  - Reject Code 83 – Duplicate fill

- Reject Code 76 – Quantity and frequency of dispensing limits
- Reject Code 606 – Labeler restriction
- **Resolution for potential issues with newly prescribed medications in addition to the edits listed above:**
  - Reject Code 60 – Age limit
  - Reject Code 61 – Gender limit
  - Reject Code 75 – Prior authorization (PA) request required

- » SCC 13: By submitting SCC 13 on the claim, the pharmacy provider is attesting that the prescription and refill supply is dispensed in response to the natural disaster situation related to the recent *Proclamation of a State of Emergency* due to ongoing winter storms.
- » Drug Use Review (DUR) Reject Code 88: Pharmacy providers maintain their ability to override early refill (DUR Reject Code 88 – DUR Reject Error) at point of sale (POS) if medically necessary. Refer to the following resources for additional information.

## Resources

- California Proclamation of State of Emergency:
  - [December 2023-January 2024 Storms](#)
- [NCPDP Payer Specification Sheet](#)
- [Medi-Cal Rx Billing Tips](#)
- [NCPDP Emergency Preparedness Guidance](#)
- Reject Code 88 Information:
  - [Now Active – Reinstatement of Reject Code 88](#)
  - [NCPDP Reject Code 88 DUR Reference Guide](#)
  - [Appendix A: Reject Code 88 DUR: Service Codes Scenarios](#)

## 6. State of Emergency Override Activation: Submission Clarification Code 13 (Published February 8, 2024)

### Background

The purpose of this alert is to notify pharmacy providers and prescribers that, pursuant to the Governor's recent [Proclamation of a State of Emergency](#), due to severe winter storms and flooding in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties, Medi-Cal Rx is permitting emergency overrides on pharmacy claims for members residing in the impacted counties. These overrides will be accepted for

31 days, effective for dates of service (DOS) February 4, 2024 – March 5, 2024; however, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) may extend this duration if needed.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

This emergency override will allow applicable claim submissions to bypass certain edits by utilizing the Submission Clarification Code (SCC) of 13. An SCC of 13 will indicate a Payer-Recognized Emergency/Disaster Assistance Request.

Impacted Counties Eligible for Emergency Override (Utilizing SCC 13 *)	
Los Angeles	Orange
Riverside	San Bernardino
San Diego	San Luis Obispo
Santa Barbara	Ventura

\* SCC 13 overrides may be applied to pharmacy claims as needed for members residing within the impacted counties and will be administered based upon the member's residence ZIP code.

## What Pharmacy Providers Need to Do

Pharmacy providers serving members residing within the impacted counties who are requesting an emergency override due to the State of Emergency should enter SCC 13 when submitting claims under the following circumstances:

- **Resolution for displaced persons or medications:**
  - Reject Code 88 – Early refill, ingredient duplication, therapeutic duplication, etc.
  - Reject Code 83 – Duplicate fill
  - Reject Code 76 – Quantity and frequency of dispensing limits
  - Reject Code 606 – Labeler restriction
- **Resolution for potential issues with newly prescribed medications in addition to the edits listed above:**
  - Reject Code 60 – Age limit
  - Reject Code 61 – Gender limit
  - Reject Code 75 – Prior authorization (PA) request required

- » SCC 13: By submitting SCC 13 on the claim, the pharmacy provider is attesting that the prescription and refill supply is dispensed in response to the natural disaster situation related to the recent *Proclamation of a State of Emergency* due to ongoing winter storms.
- » Drug Use Review (DUR) Reject Code 88: Pharmacy providers maintain their ability to override early refill (DUR Reject Code 88 – DUR Reject Error) at point of sale (POS) if medically necessary. Refer to the following resources for additional information.



## Resources

- California Proclamation of State of Emergency:
  - [February 2024 Storms](#)
- [NCPDP Payer Specification Sheet](#)
- [Medi-Cal Rx Billing Tips](#)
- [NCPDP Emergency Preparedness Guidance](#)
- Reject Code 88 Information:
  - [Now Active – Reinstatement of Reject Code 88](#)
  - [NCPDP Reject Code 88 DUR Reference Guide](#)
  - [Appendix A: Reject Code 88 DUR: Service Codes Scenarios](#)

## 7. Rite Aid Closure in Needles, CA

### Background

The purpose of this alert is to notify pharmacy providers and prescribers that Medi-Cal Rx is working to resolve access to care concerns in response to the February 9, 2024, permanent closure of the Rite Aid pharmacy located at 1020 East Broadway Street, Needles, CA 92363. The last day to fill prescriptions at this location was February 5, 2024.

### What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Know

Medi-Cal Rx has been working with city of Needles leadership and pharmacies across the border in Fort Mohave and Bullhead City, Arizona to ensure there is no interruption in care for Medi-Cal Rx members affected by this pharmacy closure.

The Rite Aid pharmacy in Needles transferred all prescriptions on the evening of February 5, 2024, to:

- **CVS Health Pharmacy (#9309) in Fort Mojave, Arizona**
  - 4744 South Highway 95, Fort Mohave, Arizona 86426
  - 928-763-6822
  - **Note:** This pharmacy is enrolled as a Medi-Cal provider but is not currently reflected in the Medi-Cal Rx Find a Pharmacy tool. We are working to correct this.

**Note:** Prescriptions on automatic refill with Rite Aid Pharmacy will not be automatically filled by CVS Health Pharmacy #9309. Members must contact CVS Health Pharmacy #9309 to request that their prescriptions be filled.

Medi-Cal Rx members may also transfer their prescriptions to the following pharmacies:

- **Safeway Pharmacy (#1474) in Fort Mojave, Arizona**
  - 4823 AZ-95, Fort Mohave, Arizona 86426
  - 928-704-4443

- **24-Hour CVS Health (#8826) in Bullhead City, Arizona**
  - 2350 Miracle Mile, Bullhead City, Arizona 86442
  - 928-758-2212
- **Riverside Pharmacy in Bullhead City, Arizona**
  - 2410 Highway 95, Bullhead City, Arizona 86442
  - 928-219-4700

Members must contact their preferred pharmacy to initiate the prescription transfer and refill process.

Medi-Cal Rx will continue working with the city of Needles leadership and other regional health care organizations on a long-term pharmacy access plan for the Needles community.

Medi-Cal Rx will update the list of additional contracted pharmacies as they become available via the [Pharmacy Tool Locator](#).

## 8. **Error Notification: Omission of the Prior Authorization Form for Notice of Action Letters Mailed Between November 26, 2023, and December 26, 2023**

### **Background**

The purpose of this alert is to inform you that Medi-Cal Rx failed to attach the [Medi-Cal Rx Prior Authorization Request Form \(DHCS 6560\)](#) to Notice of Action (NOA) letters mailed to providers from November 26, 2023, to December 26, 2023.

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

When NOA letters are distributed, Medi-Cal Rx is required to attach a supplemental [Medi-Cal Rx Prior Authorization Request Form \(DHCS 6560\)](#). This form can be used to either resubmit the prior authorization (PA) request or appeal a PA request denial through the appeal process. However, due to an administrative error, those who received an NOA mailed November 26, 2023, through December 26, 2023, did not receive this attachment and erroneously received a *State Fair Hearing Request Form* instead.

**Note:** A State Fair Hearing should only be requested by a member or member's authorized representative.

## What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

If you received an NOA letter for one of your Medi-Cal Rx members with the incorrect attachment, you may either resubmit a PA request or appeal a PA request decision by submitting a [Medi-Cal Rx Prior Authorization Request Form \(DHCS 6560\)](#).

**Note:** PA request appeals will be accepted either through the [Medi-Cal Rx Secured Provider Portal](#) or on paper by fax or U.S. Mail. It must be explicitly noted that this is an appeal by either selecting the "Appeal" option on the Medi-Cal Rx Secured Provider Portal submission or stating the word "Appeal" on the paper submission. For additional information regarding the PA request appeal process, refer to the *PA Adjudication* section of the [Medi-Cal Rx Provider Manual](#).

## 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@primetherapeutics.com](mailto:MediCalRxEducationOutreach@primetherapeutics.com).