

# Medi-Cal Program Guide Letter No. 670

February 18, 2009

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**Subject** EIGHT-MONTH PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY AND DETERMINATION OF ONGOING MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY FOR REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/ENTRANT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (RMA/EMA) AND TIME-LIMITED ELIGIBILITY FOR IRAQI AND AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANTS

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**Effective Date** Upon Receipt.

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**Reference** ACWDL 08-43, 08-53

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**Purpose** This letter provides:

- Clarification regarding RMA/EMA time-limited eligibility,
- New regulations regarding Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant status, eligibility requirements and period of RMA eligibility,
- Notices of Action for approval and discontinuance of RMA/EMA, and
- Instructions regarding use of new Special Indicators and tracking RMA/EMA cases.

This letter also reissues MPG Article 5, Section 8 to conform to current program guide formatting.

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**Background** Refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, citizen children of refugees, victims of severe forms of trafficking, and certain family members are entitled to receive either RMA or EMA for a specific period of time, as determined by their individual immigrant status.

The RMA/EMA program provides full-scope medical assistance, but it is not a Medi-Cal program. RMA/EMA is administered at the federal level by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and is 100 percent federally funded.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 initially authorized RMA eligibility for resettlement assistance to Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants (SI) for a period *not to exceed six months*. SI status is

granted to certain Iraqi and Afghan translators and interpreters who worked directly with the U.S. Armed Forces, including their spouses and children.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 extended resettlement assistance for only Iraqi SIs and certain family members from the initial six months of eligibility to a period *not to exceed eight months*.

In no case may RMA eligibility for Iraqi and Afghan SIs begin prior to December 27, 2007 as the Consolidated Appropriations Act was signed into law on that date.

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**Clarifications**     Clarifications on RMA/EMA eligibility

- The RMA/EMA program is a special program that provides full-scope medical assistance through the Medi-Cal program but is not a Medi-Cal program.
- RMA/EMA grants medical assistance for a period of six- or eight-months and that eligibility must be terminated at the end of the time limited eligibility period.
- Asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, citizen children of refugees, and Amerasians are also potentially eligible to RMA/EMA benefits.
- Victims of severe forms of trafficking and certain family members are also potentially eligible to RMA/EMA benefits.
- The Date of Entry is determined differently for refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, citizen children of refugees, victims of severe forms of trafficking, and certain family members.
- There are different requirements for determining Medi-Cal eligibility for RMA/EMA beneficiaries before expiration of the six- or eight-month period of RMA/EMA eligibility.
- A determination of ongoing eligibility to Medi-Cal must be **completed** before the end of the six- or eight-month RMA/EMA eligibility period. This review is intended to avoid unnecessary breaks in aid for RMA/EMA eligible individuals who meet the Medi-Cal eligibility requirements when RMA/EMA eligibility ends.

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**Changes**     Afghan Special Immigrant Status

- The six-month clock for RMA eligibility for Afghan SIs and their eligible family members that establish their SI status *prior to* arriving in the U.S. begins on the date they are admitted to the U.S. as an Afghan SI.
- The six-month clock for RMA eligibility for Afghan SIs and their eligible family members who adjust to SI status domestically from

some other immigration status, such as visitor or student, begins on the date they are granted Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status.

- The date LPR status is granted is typically based on the earlier grant of SI status.
- No additional services shall be provided for the months of eligibility that occurred prior to the effective date of law or prior to application for RMA benefits.

**Example:** An Afghan SI who arrives in the U.S. on March 1, 2008, and first applies for RMA on May 1, 2008, is eligible to receive RMA benefits only from the date of application to August 31, 2008, six months after the date of entry to the U.S. as an Afghan SI.

#### Iraqi Special Immigrant Status

- The eight-month clock for RMA eligibility for Iraqi SIs and their eligible family members that establish their SI status *prior to* arriving in the U.S. begins on the date they are admitted to the U.S. as an Iraqi SI.
- The eight-month clock for RMA eligibility for Iraqi SIs and their eligible family members who adjust to SI status domestically from some other immigration status, such as visitor or student, begins on the date they are granted Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) status.
- The date LPR status is granted is typically based on the earlier grant of SI status.
- No additional services shall be provided for the months of eligibility that occurred prior to the effective date of law or prior to application for RMA benefits.

**Example:** An Iraqi SI who arrives in the U.S. on March 1, 2008, and first applies for RMA on May 1, 2008, is eligible to receive RMA benefits only from the date of application to October 31, 2008, eight months after the date of entry to the U.S. as an Iraqi SI.

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#### **Required Action**

Under no circumstances is RMA/EMA eligibility to continue beyond the six- or eight-month federal time limit. To ensure that RMA/EMA eligibility is terminated timely, workers must:

- Manually track all Afghan SIs and their eligible family members who are activated in MEDS so that MEDS coding can be updated in the future.
- Manually track all Afghan SIs and eligible family members who are active in CalWIN so that the six-month time-limited eligibility can be

manually terminated at the end of the period of eligibility.

To ensure uninterrupted medical coverage for refugees who are Medi-Cal eligible at the end of the RMA/EMA eligibility period, workers must:

- Send the appropriate RMA/EMA Discontinuance Notice of Action and an MC 210 to all RMA/EMA beneficiaries, including Iraqi and Afghan SIs, no later than 60 days before the end of the six- or eight-month eligibility period.
- Evaluate all RMA/EMA refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, citizen children of refugees, victims of severe forms of trafficking, Iraqi and Afghan SIs, and eligible family members according to the appropriate RMA/EMA regulations.
- Request a Disability Determination Services Division (DDSD) evaluation for any refugee who claims to be disabled as part of their RMA/EMA application, even if the refugee is RMA/EMA eligible. If disability is established during the six- or eight-month eligibility period and the refugee is otherwise eligible for Medi-Cal, the worker must place the refugee in the appropriate Medi-Cal program upon receipt of the DDSD determination.
- Request additional information from the beneficiary regarding changes in income, property, medical condition, disability status, or household composition. RMA/EMA beneficiaries are not required to re-submit information they have already provided if that information has not changed.

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**Automation  
Impact**

MEDS Functionality

Effective with MEDS Renewal in January 2009 (January 31, 2009), MEDS will automatically terminate RMA/EMA eligibility at the end of the eight-month eligibility period only. Two new worker alerts will be generated to notify workers:

- 9554 – ENDING 8 MONTH RMA/EMA OR RCA/ECA ELIG-NOA & APP REQUIRED \*URGENT\*
- 9555 – EXCEEDS 8 MONTH RMA/EMA OR RCA/ECA ELIG-NOA & APP REQUIRED \*URGENT\*

These alerts **will not** be generated on Afghan SIs and their eligible family members with six-month time-limited eligibility. Workers will be informed when additional MEDS functionality for Afghan SIs and their eligible family members is available.

Special Indicators

In order to help identify cases that will need to be re-evaluated at the end of the six- or eight-month federal eligibility period, two new Special Indicators have been added to CalWIN. The new Special Indicators are as follows:

- Afghan – Afghan-SIV
- Iraqi – Iraqi-SIV

The appropriate Special Indicator must be set at **case level** with the effective begin date as the current date. The worker will enter the end date only after evaluating the RMA case for regular Medi-Cal.

The entry of Special Indicators enables SPOS to generate monthly lists of cases requiring a change in funding status (end of time-limited eligibility). This new management report will be distributed by SPOS to FRCs via email. The report will contain the following information:

- Case number,
- Affected participants,
- Program,
- Special characteristic code/description, and
- Worker number.

An initial listing of Iraqi and Afghan SIs will be distributed to FRCs via email along with this Letter. As the new Special Indicators are not yet in use, they are not included in this report.

Workers must review their cases on the list to determine which cases need to be closed each month.

***When updating the effective begin date of special indicator or entering a new special indicator, EDBC will be triggered to run in batch for the effective begin date for ongoing cases. EDBC will not be triggered to run in batch if benefits have not been authorized.***

***To stop another program (CW and FS) from authorizing in batch, select the special indicator for a batch exception for that particular program, e.g., "Batch AU Exception-FS" for Food Stamps or Batch AU Exception-CalWORKs" for CalWORKs.***

The following "How Tos" which were developed for the Food Stamp program, will also guide Medi-Cal workers in making corrective entries:

- How To #322 - "Create and Send a Case Level Alert"
- How To #323 - "Enter Special Indicators for Afghan/Iraqi SIV"

Holders” Refugees Admitted Under Section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)

- How To #324 - “Update Special Immigrant Visas Status (SIV)”
- To Change Funding From Federal to State

“How Tos” may be found at [CIG/How To](#) on the CalWIN Intranet.

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**Forms Impact** Notices of Action for Non-Iraqi and Afghan SIs

DHCS has provided the following Notices of Action to be used in non-SI RMA/EMA cases:

- DHCS 7110 – DISCONTINUANCE FOR RMA/EMA (09/08)
- DHS 7111 – APPROVAL FOR BENEFITS UNDER RMA/EMA (09/08)

Notices will be translated into the threshold languages and workers will be notified when translated NOAs become available.

Notices of Action for Iraqi and Afghan SIs

DHCS has created additional Notices of Action to be used in Iraqi and Afghan SI RMA cases. The following notices address the differences in the length of eligibility for the two SI types:

- 14-103 (Temp) DHCS - IRAQI DISC NOA (09/08)
- 14-104 (Temp) DHCS - IRAQI RMA APPROVAL NOA (09/08)
- 14-105 (Temp) DHCS - AFGHAN DISC NOA (09/08)
- 14-106 (Temp) DHCS - AFGHAN RMA APPROVAL NOA (09/08)

Sample notices are included as attachments to this letter. Workers will use shelf stock RMA/EMA approval and discontinuance NOAs until such time as the new NOAs are available in CalWIN. The Iraqi and Afghan SI Approval and Discontinuance NOAs have been uploaded into iWAY and are available to be ordered upon receipt of this Special Notice.

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**Quality Assurance Impact**

Effective with April 2009 review month, Quality Assurance will cite the appropriate error on any case that does not comply with the requirements outlined in this letter.

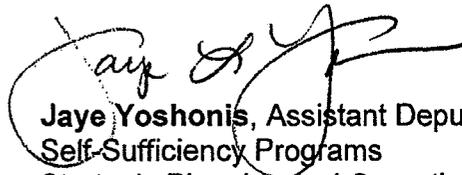
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**Summary of Changes**

The table below lists the changes made in the MPG:

Section	Summary of Change
Article 5, Section 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replaced with Article 5, Sections 8;</li> <li>• Added TOC;</li> <li>• Added RMA eligibility for Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants</li> </ul>
Article 5, Section 8, Appendices A, B, C	Infomapped
Article 5, Section 8, Appendix D	Added Refugee Entry Date Determination Chart
Article 5, Section 8, Appendix E	Added Special Immigrant Documentation & Entry Date Chart
Article 5, Section 8, Appendix F	Renamed and Infomapped Appendix C, Bridging Q & A

Manager  
Approval



Jaye Yoshonis, Assistant Deputy Director  
Self-Sufficiency Programs  
Strategic Planning and Operational Support Division

ECC

**MEDI-CAL  
NOTICE OF ACTION**

**DISCONTINUANCE FOR  
REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/  
ENTRANT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE  
(RMA/EMA)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(County Stamp)

Notice date: \_\_\_\_\_

Case number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker name/number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

This affects \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your eligibility for RMA/EMA is limited to eight months.**

**As of \_\_\_\_\_ your eligibility for RMA/EMA will stop because:**

**You are at the end of your eight-month eligibility period for RMA/EMA.**

**You have received more than the appropriate number of months of RMA/EMA.**

**Your eight-month eligibility period for RMA/EMA began with your date of entry into the United States, the date asylum was granted, or the date of your Certification Letter depending on your refugee status.**

**We are sending you a Medi-Cal application. You must fill it out and return it to us if you want Medi-Cal. Please return the completed application to the address on this notice if you want us to see if you can receive Medi-Cal. When we receive your application, we will review it to see if you are eligible for Medi-Cal. If you return the enclosed application, you will receive another notice to tell you whether you are eligible for Medi-Cal.**

**IMPORTANT: If there are any changes that could affect your eligibility such as changes in your income, property, medical condition, disability status, or household situation, please report them to the County Eligibility Worker listed above.**

**Do not throw away your plastic Benefits Identification Card (BIC). You can use it again if you become eligible for Medi-Cal.**

**The regulation which requires this action is Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 50257.**

**MEDI-CAL  
NOTICE OF ACTION**

**APPROVAL FOR BENEFITS UNDER THE  
REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/  
ENTRANT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE  
(RMA/EMA)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(County Stamp)

Notice date: \_\_\_\_\_

Case number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker name/number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

This affects \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**We have reviewed all information available to us about your circumstances, and after evaluating you for all Medi-Cal programs and RMA we find that you are eligible for the RMA Program. You may receive RMA benefits for up to eight months beginning on the date that you were admitted into the United States as a Special Immigrant. You are entitled to receive medical services as follows:**

- You are eligible for the program at no cost beginning the first day of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Your income exceeds the 200% Federal Poverty Level limit. Therefore, you are eligible for this program with a monthly share of cost of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**Income used to determine share of cost:**

<b>Net non-exempt income</b>	<b>\$_____</b>
<b>Less 200% Poverty Level</b>	<b>\$_____</b>
<b>Share of Cost</b>	<b>\$_____</b>

**IMPORTANT:** If there are any changes that could affect your eligibility such as changes in your income, property, medical condition, disability status, or household situation, please report them to the County Eligibility Worker listed above.

**You will get a plastic Benefits Identification Card (BIC) in the mail soon. Always present your BIC to your medical provider whenever you need care. This card is good as long as you are eligible for Medi-Cal or RMA benefits. DO NOT THROW AWAY YOUR PLASTIC I. D. CARD (BIC).**

**The regulation which requires this action is Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 50257.**



**MEDI-CAL  
NOTICE OF ACTION**

**DISCONTINUANCE FOR  
REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (RMA) FOR IRAQI  
IMMIGRANTS GRANTED SPECIAL IMMIGRANT  
STATUS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(County Stamp)

Notice date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Case number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Worker name/number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Worker telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
This affects \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Your eligibility for RMA as an Iraqi Special Immigrant is limited to eight months.**

**As of \_\_\_\_\_ your eligibility for RMA will stop because:**

**You are at the end of your eight-month eligibility period for RMA.**

**You have received more than the appropriate number of months of RMA.**

**Your eight-month eligibility period for RMA began with the date you are admitted into the United States as a Special Immigrant.**

**We are sending you a Medi-Cal application. You must fill it out and return it to us if you want Medi-Cal. Please return the completed application to the address on this notice if you want us to see if you can receive Medi-Cal. When we receive your application, we will review it to see if you are eligible for Medi-Cal. If you return the enclosed application, you will receive another notice to tell you whether you are eligible for Medi-Cal.**

**IMPORTANT: If there are any changes that could affect your eligibility such as changes in your income, property, medical condition, disability status, or household situation, please report them to the County Eligibility Worker listed above.**

**Do not throw away your plastic Benefits Identification Card (BIC). You can use it again if you become eligible for Medi-Cal.**

**The regulation which requires this action is Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 50257.**

**MEDI-CAL  
NOTICE OF ACTION**

**APPROVAL FOR REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE  
(RMA) BENEFITS FOR AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS  
GRANTED SPECIAL IMMIGRANT STATUS**

(County Stamp)

Notice date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Case number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Worker name/number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Worker telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
This affects \_\_\_\_\_

We have reviewed all information available to us about your circumstances, and after evaluating you for all Medi-Cal programs and RMA and we find that you are eligible for the RMA Program. You may receive RMA benefits for up to six months beginning on the date that you were admitted into the United States as a Special Immigrant. You are entitled to receive medical services as follows:

You are eligible for the program at no cost beginning the first day of \_\_\_\_\_.

Your income exceeds the 200% Federal Poverty Level limit. Therefore, you are eligible for this program with a monthly share of cost of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Income used to determine share of cost:

Net non-exempt income \$\_\_\_\_\_

Less 200% Poverty Level \$\_\_\_\_\_

Share of Cost \$\_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT:** If there are any changes that could affect your eligibility such as changes in your income, property, medical condition, disability status, or household situation, please report them to the County Eligibility Worker listed above.

You will get a plastic Benefits Identification Card (BIC) in the mail soon. Always present your BIC to your medical provider whenever you need care. This card is good as long as you are eligible for Medi-Cal or RMA benefits. **DO NOT THROW AWAY YOUR PLASTIC I. D. CARD (BIC).**

The regulation which requires this action is Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 50257.

**MEDI-CAL  
NOTICE OF ACTION**

**DISCONTINUANCE FOR  
REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (RMA) FOR  
AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS GRANTED SPECIAL  
IMMIGRANT STATUS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(County Stamp)

Notice date: \_\_\_\_\_

Case number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker name/number: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

This affects \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your eligibility for RMA as an Afghan Special Immigrant is limited to six months.**

**As of \_\_\_\_\_ your eligibility for RMA will stop because:**

**You are at the end of your six-month eligibility period for RMA.**

**You have received more than the appropriate number of months of RMA.**

**Your six-month eligibility period for RMA began with the date you are admitted into the United States as a Special Immigrant.**

**We are sending you a Medi-Cal application. You must fill it out and return it to us if you want Medi-Cal. Please return the completed application to the address on this notice if you want us to see if you can receive Medi-Cal. When we receive your application, we will review it to see if you are eligible for Medi-Cal. If you return the enclosed application, you will receive another notice to tell you whether you are eligible for Medi-Cal.**

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