



Immigrant and Foster Care Children's Eligibility for Medi-Cal Under the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA)

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Do immigrant children now have to provide proof of U.S. citizenship and identity for Medi-Cal benefits?

No. The recent changes in the law do not affect individuals who are not U.S. citizens. In other words, immigrant children who are receiving Medi-Cal or are eligible for Medi-Cal and who are **not** claiming to be U.S. citizens do not need to provide proof of U.S. citizenship. Most immigrant children who are already receiving Medi-Cal will continue to be eligible for Medi-Cal and have no new documentation requirements for proving their eligible immigration status.

Will immigrant children have to become U.S. citizens to receive or continue to receive Medi-Cal benefits?

No. The DRA changed the *documentation* requirements U.S. citizens to receive Medi-Cal, not the *eligibility* requirements for Medi-Cal. In other words, the law says that most U.S. citizens must now prove their U.S. citizenship status to receive Medi-Cal – not that everyone must be a U.S. citizen to receive Medi-Cal. There are no new documentation requirements for non-citizen Medi-Cal recipients.

Do children receiving Foster Care or Adoption Assistance have to prove their U.S. citizenship and identity to receive Medi-Cal?

It depends. Foster children who are not U.S. citizens are not required to prove citizenship and identity to be entitled to Medi-Cal benefits.

Foster children who are U.S. citizens are not otherwise exempt from the citizenship documentation requirements under the DRA and may have to prove their U.S. citizenship. However, children receiving foster care benefits under Title IV-E should not be required to provide citizenship documentation. They may need to demonstrate their citizenship in order to obtain foster care benefits. This does not necessarily mean that they must show the same documentary evidence they would need for Medi-Cal under the DRA. Therefore, if they have been found eligible for foster care, then they should be eligible for Medi-Cal benefits without meeting all of the other citizenship documentation requirements under the DRA.

What other children are exempt from the new documentation requirements?

Infants born to mothers who are receiving Medi-Cal at the time of birth (regardless of the mother's citizenship status) do not have to prove their citizenship status and can automatically receive Medi-Cal during their first year of life. Also, infants eligible under the Abandoned Baby Program who are also born in the U.S. and lack documentation and children receiving Title IV-B services do not have to prove their citizenship to apply for Medi-Cal.