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**Section A: Introduction**

**A1: Welcome to CenCal Health -& Summary of Managed Care**

CenCal Health is a County Organized Health System (COHS) model for California’s Medi-Cal Managed Care Program that administers health insurance programs for Santa Barbara County and San Luis Obispo County. All Medi-Cal beneficiaries in the service area are automatically enrolled into a COHS program, and each COHS is created by a county board of supervisors and governed by an independent commission. We work with a vast network of dedicated and compassionate doctors, pharmacies, and other types of providers and facilities that take care of our members. CenCal Health provides health coverage for 1 in 4 people in Santa Barbara County, and 1 in 5 in San Luis Obispo County. We provide services to children, low-income families, seniors, and persons with disabilities. CenCal Health’s insurance programs are built on a foundation of comprehensive and coordinated patient-centered care through the collaboration of physicians, care managers, and other healthcare providers. Our aim is to help our members obtain quality healthcare.

CenCal Health recognizes the strength of our programs depends upon strong collaboration and communication with our provider partners and their staff. We look forward to working with each provider and their staff to provide our members with high-quality, cost-effective care. CenCal Health is a COHS plan that manages programs funded by the State and Federal governments, and operates independently. CenCal Health is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County Boards of Supervisors, and is made up of members, providers, business leaders, and local government representatives.

**A2: Intent of this Manual**

The Provider Manual describes operational policies and procedures for CenCal Health. Topics covered in this Provider Manual include, but are not limited to: member eligibility, authorizations, referrals, covered services, services covered by other agencies, care management, cultural and linguistic services, utilization management, quality assurance and improvement, health assessment and screening, member and provider grievances, billing, coordination of benefits, reporting, credentialing, and dispute resolution for providers and their staff.

CenCal Health uses State policies determined by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to administer Santa Barbara Health Initiative (SBHI) and San Luis Obispo Health Initiative (SLOHI). CenCal Health interprets and modifies the policies with the approval of our Board of Directors. This Provider Manual contains policy information for the SBHI and SLOHI programs. DXC Technology Services, LLC maintains the [Medi-Cal Provider Manuals](#) that offer specific guidelines for the State Medi-Cal program.



CenCal Health drafted the Provider Manual as a tool to easily search via the Table of Contents page or through our website. Providers can search for particular topics by reviewing any line item or page number in the table of contents.

We encourage providers to become familiar with the contents of the Provider Manual and to refer to it frequently. Please contact the Provider Services Department with any suggestions for additions or improvements to this Provider Manual at (805) 562-1676.

For additional information on CenCal Health, visit our website at [www.cencalhealth.org](http://www.cencalhealth.org).

**Reference Link:**

DHCS Medi-Cal Manual

<https://mcweb.apps.prd.cammiis.medi-cal.ca.gov/publications/manual>

### **A3: Overview of CenCal Health Programs**

CenCal Health is a publicly-funded Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plan. Once a resident is identified as eligible for Medi-Cal, they are automatically enrolled into the CenCal Health Plan for Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo County low-income residents. New members receive a Welcome Packet that provides a Member Handbook, also known as an Evidence of Coverage, that explains the benefits available to members along with a listing of doctors, specialty providers, hospitals, behavioral health (ABA) and mental health providers, Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports (CS), and pharmacies available to members of CenCal Health.

Medi-Cal ensures that children and adults with limited income and resources can receive physical and behavioral health services at little or no cost.

This low-income program includes:

- Families with children
- Foster care children
- Pregnant women
- Childless adults
- Seniors
- Persons with disabilities

Individuals and families apply for Medi-Cal through their County Department of Social Services and through Covered California. Applications may be completed in person, online, through the mail, or over the phone. Elderly and disabled individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) automatically receive Medi-Cal along with their SSI benefit.

Eligibility for Medi-Cal is month-to-month. Medi-Cal recipients must re-certify their eligibility periodically. It is not uncommon for individuals or families to lose Medi-Cal eligibility and then regain it at a later date. Please note that a member's eligibility must be verified before delivery of services and that the CenCal Health identification card alone is not a guarantee of eligibility. Please refer to [Section G: Eligibility Verification and Enrollment](#) of the Provider Manual for further [eligibility information](#) or verify on CenCal Health's website.

Not all Medi-Cal beneficiaries are CenCal Health members. Those who are not CenCal Health members are eligible under the Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service system (FFS Medi-Cal). Providers seeing these beneficiaries would bill and be reimbursed directly for covered services by Affiliated Computer Services, the state Medi-Cal fiscal intermediary.

**Reference Link:**

CenCal Health Provider Eligibility Resources

[www.cencalhealth.org/providers/eligibility/](http://www.cencalhealth.org/providers/eligibility/)

#### A4: Acronyms & Glossary of Terms

CenCal Health uses many acronyms. To view a list of these special, unusual, or technical works or expressions in alphabetical order, please reference the online Glossary of Terms section of our website at [cencalhealth.org/explore-cencal-health/glossary-of-terms/](https://cencalhealth.org/explore-cencal-health/glossary-of-terms/)

#### A5: Provider Newsletters & Communication

CenCal Health shares provider news to keep contracted providers, contractors, and subcontractors informed of Medi-Cal updates, CenCal Health campaigns, resources on regulatory requirements, new programs, benefit changes, claims information, clinical updates, pharmacy updates, Behavioral Health (BH) & Mental Health updates, educational opportunities, and more.

The [Provider Bulletin Newsletter](#) is a quarterly publication that is printed in March, June, September, and December and sent to contracted provider groups via USPS mail.

In addition, CenCal Health produces monthly digital Provider Pulse E-Newsletters which is emailed to contracted provider groups. All newsletters contain helpful information for all individuals at a provider practice. Individual provider staff are encouraged to sign up to receive an electronic newsletter via email by filling out CenCal Health's electronic [registration form](#).

Non-contracted providers do not receive the quarterly and monthly publications, however, they do have the ability to sign-up for the electronic newsletter via email.

Publications can also be referenced online at [cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin/](https://cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin/).

##### Reference Link:

Provider Bulletin News

[www.cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin-newsletter/](https://www.cencalhealth.org/providers/provider-bulletin-newsletter/)

Provider Bulletin electronic Registration Form

<https://cencalhealth.us4.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=7dd3f5945f5855d9526b91b0f&id=ca9deefab>

#### A6: CenCal Health Mission, Vision, and Values

**Our Mission:** To improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve by providing access to high-quality health services, along with education and outreach, for our members.

**Our Vision:** To be a trusted leader in advancing health equity so that our communities thrive and achieve optimal health together.

##### Our Values:

- **Collaboration** - *Coming together to achieve exceptional results.*
- **Compassionate Service** - *Serving and advocating for all customers with excellence.*
- **Improvement** - *Continually improving to ensure our growth, success, and sustainability.*
- **Integrity** - *Doing the right thing, even and especially when it is hard.*

#### A7: 2023-2025 CenCal Health Strategic Plan

CenCal Health is pleased to share our 2023-2025 Strategic Plan and emerging vision, which prioritizes working with you, our community partners.

Our vision is: To be a trusted leader in advancing health equity so that our communities thrive and achieve optimal health together.

Our priorities are to cultivate community partnerships, advance quality and health equity for all, and expand our service role and reach through the transformational and ground-breaking CalAIM program. This requires that we organize for impact and effectiveness now and in the future. The guidance CenCal Health offers and the priorities it sets have been thoughtfully considered through a broad and inclusive process that began with hearing your voices and then extended to a wide array of stakeholders, including community leaders, local stakeholders, our provider partners, and the members we serve.



Within CenCal Health, we are committed to achieving our Strategic Plan, recognizing that it serves as an important framework going forward. **The value of a local health plan to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties is more important than ever.** As we turn our attention to the journey we will collectively embark on over the next three years, we look forward to collaborating closely with you, our partners who work tirelessly to improve the health and well-being of our communities.

To read the complete 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, visit [cencalhealth.org/strategicplan](https://cencalhealth.org/strategicplan).