



Covering Kids & Families Coalition

ASSISTING FAMILIES WITH THE HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAM FREEZE/WAITLIST & ALTERNATIVE HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

(Information Current as of August 12, 2009)

Why is there a waiting list for enrollment into the Healthy Families Program (HFP)?

- Due to insufficient state funds to provide healthcare coverage for children through the Healthy Families Program, the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB), the administrator of the Healthy Families Program, implemented a freeze on all new enrollments and established a waitlist.

When was the Healthy Families Program freeze/waitlist implemented? Who is impacted? When will the waitlist stop?

- The Healthy Families Program froze all new enrollments and implemented a waitlist starting on July 17, 2009 and impacts all new applicants and "Add-a-Child" applications. A child placed on the waitlist may be on the waitlist at least through June 2010 or until the Healthy Families Program has additional state funds to cover more children. Placement on the waitlist is based on the date the application was received.

Who is exempted from the waitlist?

- **Current members on the program are not affected.** Members will continue to maintain coverage as long as they remain eligible for the program at their next Annual Eligibility Renewal.
- Babies born to mothers in the Access for Infants and Mothers (AIM) program can still enroll in the Healthy Families Program and will not be placed on the waitlist. Children of families with successful appeals will also be enrolled in the program and will not be placed on the waitlist.

How can Certified Application Assistants (CAA) assist families with retaining their healthcare coverage and get on the waitlist?

- **Encourage families to turn in all paperwork as soon as possible** (e.g., premium payments, complete Annual Eligibility Review packets with required documents or citizenship and immigration papers, etc.). If paperwork is not submitted on time, children's health coverage will come to an end and families will have to re-apply and will be placed on the waitlist based on the date the application was received.
- **Continue assisting families who may be eligible for the Healthy Families Program by using the Joint Medi-Cal/Healthy Families application** (Health-e-App and One-App if applicable) **for the Healthy Families Program.** It is critical that CAAs continue to assist families with applying for the program to ensure children get on the waitlist. Applications must be complete to ensure the Healthy Families Program has enough information to place a child on the waitlist. *See page 2 for alternative healthcare options including assisting families with applying for Medi-Cal Share of Cost.*

- Encourage families to submit their application **as soon as possible** and get on the waitlist. This will increase the chance of enrollment when the program is open to new enrollment.
- Only families will receive notification from the Healthy Families Program that their child was placed on the waitlist. Enrollment Entities and CAAs will not have access to this information. CAAs are encouraged to remind families to keep track of all correspondences from the Healthy Families Program and encourage families to notify the program of any changes to their contact information (e.g., mailing address, phone numbers, etc.).
- To date, there are no changes to the application process for One-e-App. CAAs should continue to submit completed applications to the Healthy Families Program using the Health-e-App interface in One-e-App.

How can CAAs assist families with accessing alternative healthcare options for their children?

- Encourage families to re-apply for full-scope Medi-Cal if their income drops while their children are on the waitlist.
- **Children that are put on the Healthy Families Program’s waitlist may be eligible for Share of Cost (SOC) Medi-Cal and families can apply by submitting an application to the County.**
- Children may also be eligible for sliding scale programs at County Health Department clinics and community clinics and should be encouraged to visit or contact their local county health departments for more information.
- **SEE the Healthcare Program Options matrix** for additional healthcare options for children and families.

How can families engage in local and statewide advocacy efforts to protect and ensure all eligible children have access to healthcare coverage?

- CAAs can encourage families to share their stories on the benefits of having healthcare coverage. This includes the impact of the Healthy Families program freeze/waitlist and possible disenrollments. Help families fill out the attached story collection form and media release or submit an existing story.
- CAAs should also encourage families to provide testimonials and attend important public hearings regarding healthcare coverage. To learn more about these opportunities, contact Michelle Wood, Policy Analyst with Community Health Councils (CHC) at 323.295.9372 or michelle@chc-inc.org.
- Outreach and enrollment organizations and CAAs should also share their stories regarding family, organizational, and county impacts of the Healthy Families Program freeze. Please submit all stories to michelle@chc-inc.org.

Other Resources

- For more updates to the Healthy Families Program’s enrollment freeze and waitlist, please visit their website at www.healthyfamilies.ca.gov.
- If you have any additional questions regarding the waitlist, call MRMIB at 1-888-439-4741, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. or Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Please contact Michelle Wood, Policy Analyst with CHC at 323.295.9372 or michelle@chc-inc.org for more information about the status of the Healthy Families Program freeze/waitlist.