

Senate Bill No. 1469

CHAPTER 657

An act to add Section 14029.5 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal eligibility.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2006. Filed with
Secretary of State September 29, 2006.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1469, Cedillo. Medi-Cal: eligibility: juvenile offenders.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Services, and under which qualified low-income persons receive health care benefits. The Medi-Cal program is governed, in part, by federal Medicaid provisions.

Existing law places specified juvenile offenders in county juvenile detention facilities.

This bill, commencing January 1, 2008, would require a county juvenile detention facility to provide specified information relating to a ward of the county who is scheduled to be released to the appropriate county welfare department, and would require the county to initiate an application and determine the individual's eligibility for the Medi-Cal program, as specified. The bill would require the county, if the ward is a minor, to give a parent or guardian the opportunity to opt out of this eligibility determination. The bill would require a county welfare department to provide sufficient documentation to enable the ward to receive medical care upon his or her release from custody, as specified.

This bill would require the department, by June 1, 2007, in consultation with designated entities, to establish the protocols and procedures necessary to implement the bill. The bill would require the department to implement its provisions by means of all-county letters or similar instructions, and thereafter to adopt implementing regulations, as necessary. The bill would require the department to seek any federal waivers necessary for its implementation.

By increasing the duties of counties administering the Medi-Cal program and of county juvenile detention facilities, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 14029.5 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

14029.5. (a) (1) Commencing January 1, 2008, immediately following the issuance of an order of the juvenile court, pertaining to the disposition of a ward of the county, committing that ward to a juvenile hall, camp, or ranch for 30 days or longer, the county juvenile detention facility shall provide the appropriate county welfare department with the ward's name, his or her scheduled or actual release date, any known information regarding the ward's Medi-Cal status prior to disposition, and sufficient information, when available, for the county welfare department to begin the process of determining the ward's eligibility for benefits under this chapter, including, if the ward is a minor, contact information for the ward's parent or guardian, if available.

(2) If the ward is a minor, prior to providing information to the county welfare department pursuant to paragraph (1), the county juvenile detention facility shall notify the parent or guardian, in writing, of its intention to submit the information required by that paragraph to the county welfare department. The parent or guardian shall be given a reasonable time to opt out of the Medi-Cal eligibility determination provided for under this section, in which case the county juvenile detention facility shall not comply with paragraph (1).

(3) For purposes of this section, "ward" means a person in the custody of a county juvenile detention facility.

(b) (1) Upon receipt of the information described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), and pursuant to the protocols and procedures developed pursuant to subdivision (c) the county welfare department shall initiate an application and determine the individual's eligibility for benefits under the Medi-Cal program. If the ward is a minor, the county welfare department shall promptly contact the parent or guardian to arrange for completion of the application. The county shall expedite the application of a ward who, according to the information provided pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), is scheduled to be released in fewer than 45 days.

(2) If the county welfare department determines that the ward does not meet the eligibility requirements for the Medi-Cal program, the county welfare department, with the consent of the ward's parent or guardian, if the ward is a minor, shall forward the ward's information to the appropriate entity to determine eligibility for the Healthy Families Program, or other appropriate health coverage program, as determined by the department.

(3) If the county welfare department determines that a ward meets eligibility requirements for the Medi-Cal program, the county shall provide sufficient documentation to enable the ward to obtain necessary medical care upon his or her release from custody.

(c) By June 1, 2007, the department, in consultation with the Chief Probation Officers of California and the County Welfare Directors

Association, shall establish the protocols and procedures necessary to implement this section.

(d) Notwithstanding Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, the department shall implement this section by means of all-county letters or similar instructions, without taking any further regulatory action. Thereafter, the department shall adopt regulations, as necessary, to implement this section in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(e) The department shall seek any federal waivers necessary for the implementation of this section.

SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.