

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 505

Introduced by Assembly Member Nazarian

February 20, 2013

An act to add Section 14029.91 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 505, as introduced, Nazarian. Medi-Cal: managed care: language assistance services.

Existing law provides for the Medi-Cal program, which is administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, under which qualified low-income individuals receive health care services. The Medi-Cal program is, in part, governed and funded by federal Medicaid Program provisions. Under existing law, one of the methods by which Medi-Cal services are provided is pursuant to contracts with various types of managed care plans.

This bill would require the department to require all Medi-Cal managed care plans contracting with the department to provide language assistance services, which includes interpretation and translation services, to limited-English-proficient enrollees, as defined.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

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

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 14029.91 is added to the Welfare and
- 2 Institutions Code, to read:

1 14029.91. (a) The department shall require all Medi-Cal
2 managed care plans contracting with the department to provide
3 language assistance services to limited-English-proficient (LEP)
4 enrollees in the following manner:
5 (1) Interpretation services shall be provided in any language on
6 a 24-hour basis at all points of service.
7 (2) Translation services shall be provided to the language groups
8 identified by the department.
9 (b) The department shall determine when an LEP population
10 meets the requirement for translation services using one of the
11 following numeric thresholds:
12 (1) Three thousand persons eligible for Medi-Cal reside in the
13 plan’s service area, or 1,000 LEP persons eligible for Medi-Cal
14 reside in a single zip code.
15 (2) One thousand five hundred persons eligible for Medi-Cal
16 in two contiguous zip codes reside within a health plan’s service
17 area.
18 (c) The department shall make this determination annually and
19 instruct plans, by means of incorporating the requirement into plan
20 contracts, all plan letters, or similar instructions, the language
21 groups that meet the numeric thresholds.
22 (d) For purposes of this section, a person is “limited English
23 proficient” if he or she speaks English less than very well.