



Immigrants' Health Fact Sheet

Is It Safe to Use Medi-Cal?

Do I have to give my immigration status to Medi-Cal?

- **Yes, if you apply for yourself and you want to use FULL Medi-Cal benefits. This means you want to use Medi-Cal for regular doctor visits, not just the emergency room.** You must also provide a Social Security Number, tax ID number (ITIN), or say that you do not have a Social Security Number.
- **No, you do not need to give your immigration status if:**
 - You apply only for your children
 - You are pregnant
 - You use Medi-Cal only for emergency rooms at the hospital

Will Medi-Cal share my information?

Yes. Medi-Cal does share your information with the U.S. Health & Human Services agency. This is so the U.S. government can pay California for the cost of your Medi-Cal services.

If you are an immigrant that qualifies for full Medi-Cal benefits, Medi-Cal will check your status with the U.S. immigration services. However:

- Medi-Cal will not check your status if you are pregnant or need emergency services.
- Medi-Cal does not check the status of children who apply through the program for undocumented children.
- If you applied for someone else, your own information *is not checked or shared at all.*

Will canceling my Medi-Cal remove my information from California's systems?

No. The state and counties must keep all canceled Medi-Cal cases but the information is used only for getting Medi-Cal. You will only lose your healthcare coverage.

Will my doctor share my immigration information?

No, your doctor is not allowed to share any of your private information. In addition, Medi-Cal does not give your immigration information to your doctor and you do not need to give your immigration status to doctors, pharmacies, or hospitals to get medical care.

Does using Medi-Cal make me a “public charge”?

No, you should still be able to get a green card or come into the country on a new visa even if you use Medi-Cal. (For more information, request a Public Charge Fact Sheet.)

Will I hurt my sponsor if I use Medi-Cal?

No, using Medi-Cal will not hurt your sponsor. Under Federal law, Medi-Cal can ask sponsors to repay the cost of healthcare services but Medi-Cal does not do this. Medi-Cal will have to tell people if it changes its mind.

More questions? Contact your health consumer center for free and confidential information about using Medi-Cal. For the HCA program in your area, call HCA's statewide toll-free number: **1-888-805-3536**.