

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Public Health	(2) MEETING DATE 9/23/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Penny Borenstein / 781-5519	
(4) SUBJECT Request to approve an agreement with the California Health Benefit Exchange (Covered California) for the Health Agency to become a Certified Enrollment Entity, to support low-income residents in obtaining health care coverage, as mandated by the Affordable Care Act. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board: 1) Approve and direct the Chairperson to sign an agreement with Covered California for the Health Agency to become a Certified Enrollment Entity (CEE); and 2) Authorize the Health Agency Director to sign any amendments or renewals to the CEE agreement that do not increase the required level of General Fund support.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ___) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ___)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: _____	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Reviewed by Leslie Brown			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director
Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH, Health Officer

DATE: September 23, 2014

SUBJECT: Request to approve an agreement with the California Health Benefit Exchange (Covered California) for the Health Agency to become a Certified Enrollment Entity, to support low-income residents in obtaining health care coverage, as mandated by the Affordable Care Act. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

- 1) Approve and direct the Chairperson to sign an agreement with Covered California for the Health Agency to become a Certified Enrollment Entity (CEE); and
- 2) Authorize the Health Agency Director to sign any amendments or renewals to the CEE agreement that do not increase the required level of General Fund support.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), the state of California is implementing a two-prong approach to expanding health insurance coverage to its residents. First, in 2010, California created a Health Benefit Exchange, known as Covered California. Covered California is an online marketplace where legal residents can purchase health coverage and access insurance subsidies if their income falls between 138% and 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Next, in June 2013, the State approved an expansion of Medi-Cal to include uninsured, medically-indigent adults with incomes below 138% of FPL. Enrollment for these coverage opportunities began October 1, 2013, with coverage becoming effective January 1, 2014. Open enrollment for the Covered California Marketplace closed March 31, 2014 and will re-open this year starting November 15th. Medi-Cal enrollment is not confined to an open enrollment period. Medi-Cal enrollment is year-round for those eligible.

According to statewide estimates, approximately 3.3 million individuals enrolled in Medi-Cal or an insurance plan through Covered California during the period October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014. Currently, it is estimated that 8-10% of legal residents remain uninsured (3-4 million in California; 22,000-27,000 in the County). Many of these residents may still qualify for Medi-Cal or premium subsidies through Covered California, but face barriers to applying including a lack of information on how to apply, language barriers, behavioral health challenges, lack of computer access, etc. A portion of this population already engages with the Health Agency - through the Medically-Indigent Services Program (MISP) or through Behavioral Health clinics. Providing enrollment assistance to these groups, through existing programs, will help the County financially by reducing the number of clients without a payer source. The use of the Covered California web portal by a small group of trained Certified Enrollment Counselors (CEC) will provide the opportunity for on-site assistance for those who have likely been most challenged in completing health coverage enrollment.

Approval of and authorization to execute this agreement will enable Health Agency staff to become CECs and thereby gain password-protected computer access to Covered California's income and eligibility information on behalf of clients, in their presence and with their permission. This tool will help Health Agency CECs assess each individual's needs and appropriateness for Medi-Cal, MISP, subsidized premiums through Covered California, or exemptions from the ACA coverage mandate. CECs will use laptops and scanners to enter information directly from the client into the Covered

California web portal during one session. This process will expedite validation of Medi-Cal eligibility and allow DSS to expeditiously confirm Medi-Cal eligibility through transactions received directly from Covered California. The CEE/CEC driven process, implemented in locations naturally visited by the target populations, will provide a “one-stop shop” for certain county residents.

To become a CEE, the State of California requires a standard agreement be authorized and signed by the governing body.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

County Counsel has approved the agreement as to form and legal effect. This item has been coordinated with the Department of Social Services.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no fiscal impact anticipated from the Health Agency becoming a CEE. Existing Health Agency staff working in the County’s MISP program and through a previously Board-approved grant from the California Department of Health Care Services to provide Medi-Cal Outreach and Education will become CECs, in order to access the Covered California enrollment website.

RESULTS

The expected results from signing this agreement with the State of California include:

- The “at risk,” hard to target population who have been unable to access health care on their own accord thus far will now have assistance.
- It is estimated that an additional 1,000 county residents will be assisted by Health Agency staff/CECs with enrollment processes through the Covered California web-based enrollment portal.

Decreasing the proportion of the county population who lack health insurance will contribute to the County’s vision of a Healthy Community, “to ensure all people in our community enjoy healthy, successful and productive lives, and have access to the basic necessities.”

ATTACHMENTS

1. Agreement with Covered California