



### New Public Charge Rule

Thu Quach, Ph.D., Chief Deputy of Administration



The Department of Homeland Security published the final **public charge** rule which was going to be effective on October 15, 2019. However, on October 11<sup>th</sup>, three Federal Courts have stopped it from going into effect after many sued the Federal Government. Therefore, it will NOT go into effect. We do not know if and when it will go into effect.

If you are worried or confused about this “public charge” law that was stopped by the Federal Court, we hope the answers below can address your concerns. This is intended as general information, not legal advice.

#### 1. What are the new programs that will be considered for public charge?

For decades, benefits listed under public charge have been limited to cash assistance – such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – and government-paid long-term care. Under the new rule, the following benefits will be considered:

- Medicaid (known as Medi-Cal in California), except:
  - *Emergency Medicaid*
  - *Benefits received by people under the age of 21*
  - *Benefits received by women during and 60 days after pregnancy*
  - *School-based services for recipients under secondary education age*
  - *Services funded by Medicaid but provided by the Disabilities Education Act*
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or Food Stamps; also known as CalFresh in California)
- Section 8 Housing Assistance – vouchers and rental assistance
- Public Housing

Non-cash programs that state and local government administers is NOT considered for public charge including **state-only funded Medicaid and SNAP**.

The new law establishes a threshold, where receiving 12-months of any one of these programs over a 36-month period would mean the person could be a public charge. For example, if you receive one month of five programs, then this would count as five months.

#### 2. Are there other factors that are considered for public charge?

Yes, immigrants seeking legal entry or legal permanent residency will be considered for factors such as income and assets; English proficiency; educational level; having health conditions; or for not having private health insurance paid for without ACA premium tax credits.

#### 3. I am a lawful permanent resident (LPR) (that is, I have a green card); can I still apply for citizenship after the new public charge law, even if I use public programs?

If you have a green card, you would NOT be subject to a public charge test, unless you have traveled outside the US for more than 6 consecutive months. The public charge rule does not apply to green card holders who are seeking citizenship.

#### 4. Does this law impact everyone?

No, some groups are not subject to public charge, including refugees, asylees, special immigrant juvenile status, lawful permanent residents (unless traveling outside the US for more than 6 months at a time), U nonimmigrant status, VAWA self-petitioners, T nonimmigrant status, DACA, and Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

This is a very complicated new rule, and you may have a lot of questions. We have established a Helpline to answer questions you have. It is available Monday-Friday 9 AM – 5 PM at (510)735-3222. We have staff to answer your questions in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog. Other languages may be available upon request.

### Message from Sherry Hirota, CEO

Dear Patients and Friends,



clinical care.

It is with great humility that I share with you this overwhelming feeling of joy and appreciation for the many successes, awards and accomplishments Asian Health Services has achieved. The Federal Health Resources and Services Administration recently ranked Asian Health Services in the top 1-2% for Quality Improvement in diabetes prevention. Furthermore, AHS was recognized as a National Quality Leader among this country’s top 30% of health centers for the best overall level of

I think I speak on behalf our Board members, doctors, dentists, psychiatrists, and all the wonderful staff when I say that we are all moved by a shared mission and vision. One that starts with the notion, “**I see you.**” We see and treat every individual as having their own story, their own voice, and their own agency and deserve quality health care regardless of language, ability to pay, or immigrant status. The dedicated staff have served this community with humility and respect for their immigrant and refugee pioneers that have sacrificed and built this country.

All of us are proud to be a part of this amazing organization, rooted in the community we serve. As we face numerous threats on our health care systems and attacks against immigrant communities, we will do as we have always done, rise up and stand with our community, united as one nation.

Thank you,

Sherry Hirota  
Chief Executive Officer



## Open Enrollment and Annual Renewal for 2020

Vanessa Fong Quach, Member Services Manager

California is reinstating the Affordable Care Act penalty for not having health insurance. On January 1, 2020 a new rule requires all Californians to have qualifying health insurance coverage throughout the year. If you, your spouse or domestic partner and dependents don't have coverage each month, you could face a penalty at tax time, unless you qualify for an exemption. The penalty will be \$695 or more for adults, and half the amount for children. It is better to have health insurance to avoid the costly penalty.

**Medi-Cal is a form of public insurance.** If you qualify, you can enroll throughout the year. However, in order to keep your Medi-Cal, you have to complete your Annual Review before it is due.

**Open Enrollment:** The annual Covered California Open Enrollment period for this year is **October 15, 2019 through January 15, 2020**. If you want your health insurance coverage to start January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, you need to enroll by December 15, 2019.

**Renewal:** Active renewals will be within **October 8, 2019 - December 15, 2019**. All insurance plans in Alameda County for 2019 will be available for 2020, so if you do not renew your insurance, Covered California will automatically re-enroll you into your current 2019 health plan.

For the first time ever, almost a million people could receive additional financial help from the State of California to lower the monthly cost of health insurance. This means you may now qualify for financial help even if you didn't in the past. Or you may receive even more help than you did before! The amount of financial help you may get depends on your income, where you live and your family size. This is also a good time to update your information with Covered California and shop for a better coverage, especially with the additional financial help. Like last year, our staff will assist you in using the Shop & Compare Tool to identify affordable options.

Our office hours are Mondays - Fridays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please call us at (510) 986-6880 to make an appointment with our staff before the time runs out.

## Asian Health Services needs you to complete the Census 2020

Dong Suh, Chief Deputy of Administration

2020 will be an important year. Census 2020 will determine how much federal funding is available for the next decade for our schools, roads, housing and Asian Health Services (AHS). If more community members respond to the census, then more funding will come to our communities. AHS is working with Alameda County to ensure that we fully count our patients and our community. Nearly 26% of Alameda County residents face barriers to Census completion and are considered "Hard-to-Count." This includes many AHS patients.

Every ten years, since 1790, the Census Bureau counts everyone living in the country **and collects basic information** including age, sex, and race. It asks for this information for every adult, child and baby. **Census 2020 will not ask about citizenship status or for information like a social security number.** Starting in March of 2020, every household will be asked to complete the 2020 census online, by phone, or by mail. When responding to the census, include everyone who lives at your address, including roommates and extended family. Questionnaire Assistance Centers will be located throughout the community, including AHS, providing the public with access to computers and support in completing the Census. **Responses are confidential, and protected by law. Responses cannot be used against you in any way.**

The Census gives us **data** about our community, informs the distribution of billions of **dollars** in federal funding, and determines the number of **decision-makers** representing us. Alameda County gets billions of dollars from the federal government for essential services -- healthcare, school programs, housing, transportation, social services and more -- based solely on the census count. An undercount means fewer resources for everyone - for every person not counted, our community loses \$10,000 over the next 10 years.

## Health is Wealth

Dr. George Lee, Chief Medical Officer

We all want to live a full and healthy life, so let me ask you a few questions.

- Do you know what your blood pressure is?
- Do you know if you have Hepatitis B?
- Do you know if your parents have diabetes? If so, you have a greater chance of having diabetes too.
- Did you know there is a test for lung cancer for people who have smoked for a long time?

At Asian Health Services, we can answer all of these questions. By talking with you about your health history, we can recommend certain types of tests or vaccinations that will help keep you healthy!

For example, many Asians have a higher chance of being exposed to Hepatitis B. We can check to see if you have chronic Hepatitis B with a blood test. We can also check your blood pressure during your visit. If it is more than 130/80, then you may have high blood pressure. If you are a long time smoker between the ages of 55 and 80, even if you have quit in the past 15 years, you may benefit from lung cancer screening with a CT scan.

You can call us today to schedule an appointment at:

**Hu Medical Center: (510) 986-6800**

**Lowe Medical Center: (510) 318-5800**

**Kiang Medical Center: (510) 735-3888**

Lastly, the Flu Season is here, so protect yourself and your loved ones. Get your Flu vaccine! Flu vaccines are available at your doctor's visit and for adults at many local pharmacies. AHS will have our next drop-in Flu clinic on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> 9 AM- 1 PM at Hu Medical Center on the third floor (818 Webster Street, Oakland).



## Health Care for Expectant Mothers and Children

Dr. Sai-Woon Liang and Dr. Esther Li-Bland

Are you an expectant mother? Does your child need health care? We have excellent physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants who are available to provide the high quality prenatal care and pediatric services that you and your children need, in the language you are most comfortable with. We also recently opened up a Pediatric Clinic in San Leandro to expand our care to your children.

We provide a number of different prenatal and pediatric services, and we urge you to use them! These include:

- **Comprehensive prenatal services** for expectant mothers to help them stay healthy before, during and after pregnancy. Services include regular visits with our medical providers as well as one-on-one educational services provided by our Community Perinatal Health Workers on topics such as nutrition and safety in pregnancy, breastfeeding, and newborn care.
- **Group Well Child Checks** for infants and toddlers provide a relaxed forum for parents to learn and ask questions about childhood parenting allow parents in our community to connect, provide support, and learn from each other.
- **24-hour access, 7 days a week**, including after-hours phone coverage to address urgent health concerns at any time.
- **Same-day drop-in appointments** which allow you to get an appointment the same day you call.
- **Case management services** to connect you to the different community resources you may need, including food, housing, and legal assistance.
- **Behavioral health and nutrition services** – we have on-site nutritionists, licensed clinical social workers and counselors for you and your children, if you need them.

Our clinic locations are listed below. If you are interested in signing up as a new patient or if you are already a patient and need to make an appointment, please call the number to the preferred clinic site listed below:

**Hu Medical Center** (Pediatric and Prenatal Care)  
818 Webster, Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 986-6800

**Lowe Medical Center** (Pediatric and Prenatal Care)  
835 Webster Street, Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 318-5800

**Kiang Medical Center** (Pediatric and Prenatal Care)  
250 East 18<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 735-3888

**Pediatrics San Leandro** (Pediatric Care only)  
101 Callan Ave, Suite 105, San Leandro, CA 94577  
(510) 357-7077