

April 29, 2025

**RE: Southern California Fires and Flexibilities to Impacted Providers**

Dear Participating Physician Group,

Attn: Compliance Officer

L.A. Care Health Plan (L.A. Care) is writing to inform you of important updates and actions taken in response to Governor Gavin Newsom's January 7, 2025, Declaration of a State of Emergency due to the wildfires in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. In alignment with this declaration, the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) issued All Plan Letter [APL 25-005](#), which outlines emergency flexibilities and additional safeguards to ensure uninterrupted care for all commercial and Medi-Cal members affected by the fires.

Building on the actions, L.A. Care has implemented additional measures. As a delegate serving our members, please ensure full compliance with the following requirements. These measures will remain in effect until the State of Emergency is officially lifted or further guidance is issued.

- **Prior Authorizations:** The duration of existing prior authorizations is extended by **180 calendar days** from the **effective date of the APL release**. This allows providers to focus on delivering care without administrative delays.
- **Claims Submission:** The timeframes for both contracted and non-contracted providers to submit claims has been **extended** to at least **365 days from the date of service**.
- **Overpayment Disputes:** The period for providers to dispute overpayments has been extended from **30 working days to 180 calendar days**, allowing additional time for time resolution of payment discrepancies.
- **Alternative Settings:** Providers whose facilities have been displaced due to the wildfires are authorized to deliver care from appropriate alternative settings, such as **mobile clinics or temporary locations**, maintain continuity of care for affected members.
- **Discharge Update:** Medical necessity review and approval for Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs), Acute Rehabilitation, and Long-Term Acute Care (LTAC) Hospitals has been reinstated to preserve the limited availability of beds for members discharging from acute care settings. To avoid delays in medically appropriate transfers, these requests are reviewed and processed on the same day.



All previously implemented emergency flexibilities, including prescription refills and access to out-of-network care for displaced members, remain in place. For more information about L.A. Care's wildfire response policies and activities, please visit the [L.A. Care Website Wildfires Member Updates](#) page.

L.A. Care remains steadfast in its commitment to providing uninterrupted care for our members during this challenging time. If you know of a member who needs additional support, they may contact L.A. Care at our toll-free number (888) 839-9909 (TTY 711) or check out our website at [www.lacare.org](http://www.lacare.org).

As part of our ongoing commitment, we will continue to closely monitor the situation and are preparing to submit the **Wildfire Crisis Impact Survey**. Please stay alert for the survey, as your feedback is crucial in helping us identify necessary support and maintain quality care for our members.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this request, please contact your assigned Account Manager. Your cooperation and continued dedication to supporting our members during this time are greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

L.A. Care Health Plan



Gavin Newsom, Governor  
State of California  
Health and Human Services Agency  
**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGED HEALTH CARE**  
980 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
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[www.HealthHelp.ca.gov](http://www.HealthHelp.ca.gov)

## ALL PLAN LETTER

**DATE:** March 19, 2025

**TO:** All Full-Service and Specialized Health Plans<sup>1</sup>

**FROM:** Sarah Ream  
Chief Counsel

**SUBJECT:** APL 25-005: Southern California Fires and Flexibilities to Impacted Providers

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On January 7, 2025, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties due to wildfires. The fires destroyed homes and businesses and displaced enrollees and health care providers.

After the Governor declares a state of emergency, Health and Safety Code section 1368.7 allows the DMHC to take actions to help mitigate the impact to enrollees and providers.

Per this authority, the DMHC **directs** all health plans with providers in Los Angeles and/or Ventura Counties who were displaced by the fires to do the following:

1. Extend the duration of existing prior authorizations by 180 calendar days so providers can focus on providing care to enrollees rather than having to re-request prior authorization for previously authorized services.
2. Extend the minimum timeframes for contracted and non-contracted providers to submit claims under California Code of Regulations, title 28, section 1300.71(b). Plans shall extend these time frames for both contracted and noncontracted providers to at least 365 days from the date of services.
3. If a plan believes it overpaid a provider, extend the minimum time for the provider to dispute the overpayment from 30 working days to 180 calendar days.

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<sup>1</sup> This APL applies to all commercial and Medi-Cal plans, including specialized plans and restricted/limited plans. This APL does not apply to Medicare Advantage plans that do not have any commercial or Medi-Cal lines of business.

4. For a period of at least 6 months from the date of this APL, allow displaced providers to deliver care from appropriate alternative settings, such as mobile clinics or temporary locations.
5. Create a public-facing wildfire resource web page for providers to easily access information without needing to first log into the health plan's provider portal.

By April 21, 2025, a health plan to which this APL applies must submit an Exhibit E-1 entitled " Response to APL 25-005: Southern California Fires and Flexibilities to Impacted Providers" confirming the plan is complying with this APL.

If you have questions regarding this APL, please contact your health plan's assigned reviewer in the DMHC's Office of Plan Licensing.