

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

August 2, 2019

2. Department

Covered California / California Health Benefit Exchange

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Policy, Eligibility and Research Division

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

Covered California requests to add policy-setting responsibilities and an increased scope of work to an existing CEA, level A concept and as a result, we also request to increase the CEA level of the position. The proposed Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will serve as the chief subject matter expert for program policy and eligibility, while also being responsible for developing, maintaining, modifying, evaluating, and implementing program policies consistent with the organizational emphasis of improving the consumer experience and increasing operational efficiency. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will direct, organize, and evaluate the day-to-day work of technical and analytical staff and will directly supervise subordinate managers within the Program Policy and Eligibility Branch. The incumbent will consult and work extensively with the executive management team, partner entities, and stakeholders to forge consensus on program policy and eligibility decisions.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

CEA, Level C

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain):

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility directs long-term and short-term strategic initiatives of the Program Policy Branch and provides recommendations to the Director of Policy, Eligibility & Research on emerging federal and state policy proposals. Serves as the chief subject matter expert for program policy and provides policy direction on issues that impact eligibility and enrollment for Covered California's 1.4 million members and the thousands of individuals who apply for coverage each month. Analyzes federal and state regulations, as well as policy proposals, for impacts to Covered California enrollees, partners, and enrollment entities. Leads policy implementation strategies on behalf of the organization. Evaluates the efficacy of existing program policies on a regular, pro-active basis to determine their consumer and/or operational impact and resolves any policy or operational issues that are identified. Drives organizational change efforts on program policy in support of Covered California's organizational goals.

The incumbent leads the Program Eligibility Branch and is responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of eligibility and enrollment policies, priorities and long-term initiatives in support of Covered California's mission, vision and strategic pillars. Leads cross-functional initiatives to assess and improve the eligibility and enrollment experience for consumers and other stakeholders. Develops strategies to improve transitions between Covered California, other public health care programs, and state subsidy programs. Provides strategic direction to eligibility subject matter experts on the development of business requirements for CalHEERS (California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System) and for the consumer noticing program.

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility provides strategic consultation to the Executive Director and executive staff, as well as works extensively with the executive management team to vet and forge consensus on policy and eligibility decisions. Through collaborative work with Covered California divisions including, but not limited to, Service Center, Plan Management, and Marketing, as well as with partners such as qualified health plans and certified enrollers, the Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility identifies opportunities for policy and eligibility changes that will benefit Covered California members and increase organizational efficiency. The incumbent works internally and with external impacted partners to present recommendations for policy and eligibility change through a consensus-driven process and leads initiatives to adopt or change policies, procedures and/or regulations.

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility provides management oversight for the Program Policy and Program Eligibility Branches. This includes directing, organizing, and evaluating the day-to-day work of subordinate managers, as well as the work of the technical, analytical, and administrative staff. The incumbent is responsible for the training and development of staff, project and budget management, performance measurements, contract management, and the analysis of proposed legislation and regulations. Additionally, the Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will manage staff who are responsible for the preparation of materials for board meetings, executive briefs, presentations, and other documents relating to program eligibility.

Represents Covered California and the Policy, Eligibility & Research division at meetings, conferences, etc., on a variety of issues, serving as a subject matter expert for Covered California program policy. May travel for off-site meetings, training, satellite offices, and partner department sites throughout California.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will lead the Program Policy and Program Eligibility Branches. The work of the Program Policy and the Program Eligibility Branches directly correlates to Covered California's primary mission which is that consumers purchase and keep Covered California products that provide them the best value, while ensuring that consumers have a positive experience with Covered California from their initial enrollment through the continuation of their coverage. In addition, the work of these branches supports Covered California's strategic emphasis on sharing our experience to inform policy in California and nationally.

The core functions of the Program Policy Branch include:

- Analyzing federal and state regulations and policy proposals for impacts to Covered California enrollees, partners and enrollment entities and recommending policy implementation strategies on behalf of the organization.
- Leading cross-functional policy initiatives with Covered California programs and partner entities including Covered California's qualified health plans; federal, state and/or county agencies; enrollment entities; and stakeholders.
- Providing policy direction on system change requests that impact eligibility and enrollment for Covered California's 1.4 million enrollees.
- Resolving policy and operational issues identified by Covered California programs, partners and enrollment entities that result in suboptimal consumer experience or operational inefficiencies.
- Coordinating policy development through Covered California's five member governing board.

The core functions of the Program Eligibility Branch include:

- Develops business requirements for CalHEERS (California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System) and for the consumer noticing program.
- Leads cross-functional initiatives to assess and improve the eligibility and enrollment experience for consumers and other stakeholders.
- Leads consumer testing program to seek input on eligibility notices and systems through focus groups, individual interviews, readability review, and community reviews of translations.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

Health Care reform has been a very complex and controversial issue at the national and state level for many years. To address this matter, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed into law on March 23, 2010. In the Fall of 2010, California enacted the first state law in the nation establishing the California Health Benefit Exchange (Covered California) pursuant to the federal Act. This law, the California Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (CA-ACA), charged Covered California with the responsibility to reduce the number of uninsured Californians by creating an organized, transparent marketplace for Californians to purchase affordable, quality health care coverage for individuals and for small businesses, to claim available federal tax credits and cost sharing subsidies, and, in the process, to strengthen California's health care delivery system.

The enabling legislation established Covered California as an independent public entity governed by a five-member board. Covered California is the health insurance purchasing pool for individuals and small businesses in California. The enabling statute imposes requirements on participating and non-participating health plans and insurers. It also requires an integrated enrollment system that provides seamless coverage to impacted program participants of other state administered health coverage programs under Medi-Cal. Covered California represents an important component of health care reform. The legislative, regulatory, policy and program development work needed to establish Covered California and to continue its successful operation demand intensive, high level, policy and program development.

The policy and program landscape has evolved in recent years as Covered California has moved out of its start-up phase. Recent federal and state policy debates about the future of the ACA and the CA-ACA have resulted in increased policy development workload at the leadership and professional staff levels. Various policy proposals at the state and federal level would either increase or decrease financial support and eligibility for Covered California's programs. These conflicting policy proposals have increased both the volume and complexity of work for the Program Policy and Program Eligibility Branches. As a key example, in June 2019, the legislature passed, and the governor signed, legislation that will require all Californians to have health insurance, referred to as the individual mandate, and will provide new premium subsidies to consumers who buy health insurance through Covered California. Covered California will be required to run the subsidy program and will also have a role in the administration of the individual mandate. The subsidy program is projected to benefit over 900,000 Californians buying coverage through Covered California. At the same time that Covered California must implement this new program, we must also respond to recent federal regulations that are likely to make coverage less affordable and less consumer friendly.

Finally, for the last three fiscal years Covered California's cross-functional initiatives have included major policy and eligibility initiatives, along with various executive priorities (e.g., special enrollment verification, exploration of a state level coverage mandate, a waiver initiative to expand coverage, and autoenrollment policies) that require leadership beyond the current capacity of the policy and eligibility teams. Finally, the Program Policy and Eligibility Branches do not currently have the leadership capacity needed to lead initiatives designed to identify and resolve systemic policy barriers that cause operational inefficiencies and consumer confusion and/or frustration. Furthermore, leadership does not have the bandwidth to evaluate the efficacy of existing program policies and their consumer/operational impact. As a result, this position is required to achieve enhanced capacity for developing, maintaining, monitoring, evaluating and modifying program policies and eligibilities processes in support of Covered California's organizational goals.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

State Policy Changes

In June of 2019, the legislature passed, and the governor signed, legislation that will require all Californians to have health insurance - referred to as the individual mandate - and will provide new premium subsidies to consumers who buy health insurance through Covered California. Covered California will be required to run the subsidy program and will also have a role in the administration of the individual mandate. The subsidy program is projected to benefit over 900,000 Californians buying coverage through Covered California. The Deputy Director will have lead responsibility for setting program policy and developing eligibility processes for the state subsidy program. This will be an annual responsibility because the program design could change each year based on available state funding and changing legislative requirements. The Deputy Director will also have lead responsibility for setting program policy and developing eligibility processes for granting certain exemptions from the individual mandate for consumers who are experiencing a hardship or cannot afford to purchase coverage.

Federal Regulatory Changes

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services annually published the Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters (Payment Notice) for the upcoming calendar year. Each year, the notice contains new policy options and changes to existing policies that govern state-based marketplaces like Covered California. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will be the principle policy maker in deciding whether and how Covered California's program policies will be changed in response to the Payment Notice. Those changes have the potential to impact eligibility rules and procedures for all of Covered California's members and applicants. Policy changes will be effectuated through changes to Covered California's program regulations, operating procedures, and program applications and notices. In the process of developing Covered California's policy response to the Payment Notice, the Associate Director, Program Policy will collaborate closely with Covered California program areas to ensure policy changes are understood and do not cause unanticipated negative consequences. The Associate Director, Program Policy will also draw on partnerships with other state-based marketplaces to share policy concepts, vet new policy ideas, and learn from the experiences of other marketplaces.

Program Policy Monitoring and Evaluation

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will oversee changes to Covered California's eligibility operating procedures through a regular process of implementation monitoring and evaluation. Through this process, the Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will ensure that policies remain current and prevent, to the greatest extent possible, operational inefficiencies and practices or procedures that cause unnecessary consumer confusion. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will lead a team that monitors and evaluates consumer and partner feedback via consumer advocate forums, qualified health plan forums, site visits to Covered California's service center, consumer appeals, and attends enrollment entity forums and Covered California's social media sites. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will initiate system modifications, procedural changes, and regulatory changes to address systemic problems identified through regular monitoring and evaluation. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will present policy updates to Covered California programs through regular forums and with a special emphasis around the annual renewal and open enrollment time period.

Eligibility System Enhancements and Changes

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will be the primary policy advisor for enhancements and changes initiated by Covered California to its online eligibility and enrollment system for individual market health coverage. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will ensure that proposed changes are consistent with new federal and state regulatory requirements. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will lead a team of staff that participate in developing business requirements for system changes in order to communicate program policy requirements and advise on their implementation. The Deputy Director will lead a process to regularly review the functionality of the on-line enrollment system to identify and mitigate outdated or ineffective requirements.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility position requires a high level of independent judgment and decision making, as the incumbent will lead the development of program policy for the entire organization. The incumbent will plan, organize, manage, and evaluate the work of the Program Policy Branch which includes 30 professional staff and managers. As sensitive policy issues, proposals, and/or special projects arise through federal and/or state regulations or proposed legislation, the Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will be responsible for assessing them, determining the impact on other program areas, collaborating with the Directors of all impacted Covered California program areas and external stakeholders, to ensure their needs are addressed, and then presenting recommendations for action. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will lead intra- and inter-agency work efforts and strategically partners with health policy experts, government agencies and other external stakeholders.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

This position will be developing and implementing new policy, as well as interpreting, modifying, and re-implementing existing policy.

The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will lead the implementation of new program policies and eligibility processes for Covered California in response to changing federal and/or state statutes and regulations. The Deputy Director, Program Policy & Eligibility will also be responsible for the ongoing and regular monitoring and evaluation of existing program policies to identify and address outdated and/or ineffective policies that negatively impact consumer experience, lead to operational inefficiency, and/or are no longer compliant with relevant federal or state laws and regulations.