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

2025-01-07

2. Department

Covered California

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

Information Technology Division/ Consumer Experience, Data, Strategy, and Portfolio Management Branch

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Chief Information Officer

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

The Deputy Chief Information Officer (DCIO) leads the Information Technology (IT) Division's Consumer Experience, Data, Strategy, and Portfolio Management Branch. The DCIO is responsible for developing and delivering Covered California's information technology strategic plan, in addition to interpreting Federal and State technology policies, and rendering advice to executive leadership, and implementing technology policies throughout the organization.

Major responsibilities include but are not limited to: leading Covered California's Consumer Experience Center of Excellence including product strategy, development, maintenance, and operations for the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment, Retention System (CalHEERS), the Covered California for Small Business (CCSB) application, and the technology solutions supporting Covered California's Consumer Service Center (CSC); spearheading the deployment and ethical use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) solutions to enhance consumer interactions, streamline business work processes, and improve service delivery; integrating data management and analysis; oversight of the Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO); and leadership of the administrative functions of the branch – all of which play a critical role in delivering the mission and achieving the strategic goals of Covered California.

6. Reports to: (*Class Title/Level*)

Chief Information Officer/ Exempt

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*): Interprets Federal and State technology policies relative to the delivery of health and human services to millions of California residents in order to author, implement, and support Covered California technology policies, procedures, and capabilities. Advises executive management team on systems, data management, project and portfolio management policy and governance issues in a new, unique state organization.

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 DCIO serves as the policy maker and providing strategic leadership to the Information Technology Division's Consumer Experience, Data, Strategy, and Portfolio Management Branch. The DCIO is responsible for developing and delivering Covered California's IT strategic plan, in addition to rendering policy advice to executive leadership and implementing technology policy throughout the organization. Major responsibilities include but are not limited to:

Consumer Experience:
• Leads Covered California's Consumer Experience Center of Excellence, with primary responsibility for the product strategy, maintenance and operations of consumer-facing technology. This includes CalHEERS, the Covered California Service Center technology stack, the CiCi chatbot, the .com consumer portal, and CCSB solutions.
• Works across all Covered California programs and with their stakeholders to develop solution governance frameworks, identify business objectives, and develop solution roadmaps aligned with business priorities. Regularly reviews program and project costs, risks, and progress, and evaluates the realization of business outcomes.
• Leads the CalHEERS Product Council and provides oversight of the interagency agreement between Covered California and the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration (OTSI). Serves as the primary advocate for Covered California on contract-related issues and on the CalHEERS project governance committees in conjunction with OTSI, the California Department of Health Care Services, the Statewide Automated Welfare System Directors, and the CalHEERS system integrator.

Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO):
• Leads Covered California's EPMO.
• Establishes policies for program and project management across the Agency including policies and practices governing the achievement of the Enterprise Strategic Plan and ensuring cost-effective delivery of strategic initiatives, as well as the IT project and service delivery portfolio.
• Oversight includes responsibility for all projects within the EPMO, utilizing both waterfall and agile methodologies, and includes the regular publication and review of intuitive, action-inspiring dashboards that report on cost, progress, risks, issues, achievements, and benefit realization across the enterprise portfolio.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) & Data Management:
• Establishes policies, strategies, and procedures governing the adoption of responsible artificial intelligence technologies across Covered California's technology platforms, ensuring these initiatives support the agency's mission and adhere to ethical guidelines.
• Spearheads the development and implementation of GenAI applications, such as the Intelligent Document Processing (IDP) system and AI-driven chatbots (e.g., CiCi, MyCCSB portal, etc.), to optimize consumer interactions, automate service delivery processes, and improve the overall quality of consumer support.
• Oversees data management and analysis.
• Develops policies for the development and implementation of Open Data portals and secure data sharing, and a strategy supporting the transformation of data into actionable insights across Covered California's business divisions.

Covered California's IT Strategic Plan:
• Develops and implements Covered California IT's Strategic Plan, including engagement with customers and stakeholders to develop, deliver, and regularly report on the benefit realization of a portfolio of transformational technology and process improvement investments.
• Formulates policy and develops roadmaps for applied innovation that increases business efficiency, reduce business costs and risks, and integrate with statewide technology initiatives and best-of-breed solutions.
• Oversees and reviews recommendations for exceptions to existing IT policies and standards, carefully weighing the programmatic needs for alternative technologies against the efficiency gained through standardized processes.
• Ensures that Covered California effectively engages the California Department of Technology (CDT) and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight to ensure compliance with State and Federal statutes and policies.

Covered California's IT Solutions:
• Works with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to represent Covered California with advocate groups representing consumers, workers, and health plans in the development, design, and implementation of Covered California IT solutions.
• Ensures policies are interpreted and implemented correctly in the IT systems.
• Represents Covered California at a national level with other state-based exchanges and federal partners, including the CMS, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of Homeland Security.
• Collaborates with the CIO, Chief Technology Officer (CTO), and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) to establish policies supporting Covered California's efforts to build relationships with other state-based marketplaces and implement opportunities to leverage IT solutions across these entities nationwide.
• Appraises and advises the Executive Director, the CIO, CTO, and CISO on highly sensitive, political, and complex technology issues and potential problems.

Supervising & Administrative Responsibilities:
• Oversees the management, direction, and deliverables of technical staff, more than 900 contractors, and vendors, including direct supervision and indirect influence on program administrative responsibilities, including organization design.
• Develop and manage budgets.
• Refine and model organizational culture and work practices, including normative behaviors, skills, and performance expectations.
• Manage information technology service acquisition, delivery, and lifecycle, including procurement and contract management activities.

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: Covered California's mission is to increase the number of insured Californians, improve health care quality, lower costs, and reduce health disparities through an innovative, competitive marketplace that empowers consumers to choose the health plan and providers that give them the best value.

The Information Technology Division's Consumer Experience, Data, Strategy, and Portfolio Management Branch is fundamentally critical to advancing Covered California's mission through various strategic initiatives. By ensuring technology initiatives are closely aligned with the organization's broader objectives, the branch plays a vital role in optimizing resources, enhancing operational efficiencies, and fostering innovation, all of which support Covered California's goal to provide affordable, high-quality healthcare to Californians. The focus on improving the consumer experience through user-friendly technology solutions directly contributes to making healthcare enrollment and management more accessible and inclusive, thereby advancing the mission by removing barriers to healthcare access. Additionally, the branch's emphasis on data management and analytics enables informed decision-making and policy formulation, helping Covered California to tailor its programs effectively, assess initiative impacts, and maintain relevance to consumer needs. Effective portfolio management within the branch ensures that IT projects are strategically aligned, delivered efficiently, and contribute maximally to the mission of increasing insured Californians, improving healthcare quality, lowering costs, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services. Through these comprehensive efforts, the Consumer Experience, Data, Strategy, and Portfolio Management Branch is crucial in leveraging technology to fulfill Covered California's mission.

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.

The rapid pace of innovation in machine language (ML) and Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) technologies is reshaping decades of technology development, implementation, and support practices. To proactively leverage these advancements (GenAI and ML) and better serve the citizens of California, Covered California is taking strategic steps to realign and enhance our organizational structure and workflow. This involves a proactive approach to adopting GenAI and ML technologies, focusing on alignment, and streamlining the responsibilities of the DCIO and CTO to improve service delivery.

Key organizational changes include redirecting critical application development responsibilities from the DCIO to the CTO to achieve the benefits of a modern DevOPS approach to building and maintaining mission critical applications that support Covered California's mission. This move aims to enhance application development, delivery, and compliance with the expansion of CMS' Minimum Acceptable Risk Standards for Exchanges (MARS-E) and Zero Trust information security standards across the entirety of Covered California's enterprise technology landscape. Conversely, enterprise architecture responsibilities will shift from the CTO to the DCIO to consolidate capabilities and better integrate enterprise architecture with strategy and innovation.

Additionally, we will centralize the consumer technology solution strategy—including architecture, design, development, delivery, support, and business continuity—under the DCIO. This encompasses the management of critical services and platforms, including CalHEERS, the Plan Choice Assister Portal (PCAP), CiCi – our AI-enabled consumer chatbot, the MyCCSB portal, and the technology platforms that support consumer call handling and recording (up to 30,000 calls per day during open enrollment), workforce management, and quality assurance within our CSC. This consolidation aims to streamline the full lifecycle management of consumer-facing applications and data repositories under one accountable senior leader, enhancing our ability to deliver value across Covered California's strategic pillars: Affordable Choices, Quality Care, Organizational Excellence, Reaching Californians, Catalyst for Change, and Exceptional Service.

Moreover, the CMS, Covered California's federal control agency, mandates that state-based healthcare exchanges adopt the Acceptable Risk Controls for ACA, Medicaid, and Partner Entities (ARC-AMPE), the new information security control framework within 365 days of its release (targeted for Fall 2024). This framework must be applied to all consumer-facing solutions and repositories containing consumer personally identifiable information and is crucial for maintaining our Authority to Connect (ATC) to the Federal data services hub and our Authority to Operate (ATO). Without these, determining subsidy eligibility for over 17 million residents and operating as a State-Based Exchange under the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 would be at risk.

The DCIO will be responsible for setting policies, strategies, and procedures for the adoption of GenAI across Covered California's technology portfolio. Meanwhile, the CTO will oversee the secure and safe adoption and implementation of these policies across our technology portfolio, as well as the expansion of Zero Trust and MARS-E information security compliance frameworks across our entire organizational environment, extending beyond their current application in CalHEERS and consumer-facing applications.

These strategic shifts are designed to better position Covered California at the forefront of technological innovation, enabling us to deliver superior services to California's citizens while meeting stringent security and compliance standards.

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.

Covered California is an independent State agency governed by a Board of Directors, and as such, the DCIO has a critical role in developing technology policies, processes, and procedures independent of CDT's oversight. The DCIO is the principal policy maker for:

1. Adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) for Consumer-Based Tools: The DCIO is responsible for setting policies, strategies, and procedures for the adoption of GenAI across Covered California's technology portfolio, focusing on applications and tools targeted at the consumer base. These responsibilities align with and support Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-12-23, which directs State Agencies to catalyze innovation and accelerate the delivery of benefits to our citizens via the responsible use of GenAI. Covered California is an independent State Agency, and as such the DCIO shoulders this responsibility without the oversight of the CDT. This responsibility includes guiding the ethical and effective use of GenAI to enhance consumer interactions, streamline processes, and improve service delivery, ensuring that these advancements align with Covered California's mission to provide accessible and affordable healthcare. For example, the DCIO recently designed a GenAI tool called Intelligent Document Processing (IDP). This GenAI-driven system is designed to optimize document processing, specifically automating the verification of documents related to healthcare program eligibility determination. By leveraging AI technologies, the IDP system aims to enhance efficiency in document management, increase accuracy, and accelerate the verification process for Covered California consumers. The DCIO is instrumental in leveraging technology to improve service delivery, streamline operations, and enhance the overall consumer experience within Covered California.

2. CalHEERS: The DCIO is instrumental in the strategic development and implementation of policies for CalHEERS. The DCIO is responsible for determining the scope, delivery methodology, and technology support essential for subsidy eligibility determination, which governs consumer pathways into Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program) and Covered California. This is critical in supporting access to affordable healthcare for more than 17 million Californians, encompassing both Medi-Cal and Covered California's platforms. Furthermore, the DCIO is responsible for overseeing the policies that facilitate plan shopping and selection processes for Covered California's more than 1.75 million consumers. This involves ensuring that CalHEERS remains a robust, secure, and user-friendly platform that complies with federal and state regulations, including HIPAA and the Affordable Care Act, building trust in the platform and enhancing consumer satisfaction and engagement. The DCIO is also responsible for promoting technological innovations within CalHEERS, enhancing system functionality, and improving the overall user experience, while also establishing effective data management, analytics, and reporting frameworks to enhance strategic decision-making and supporting the continuous improvement of the health insurance marketplace. The DCIO engages with a broad array of stakeholders, including health plans, state agencies, and consumer advocacy groups to ensure that CalHEERS effectively meets the diverse needs of Californians seeking health insurance leading to a stronger, more responsive health insurance marketplace.

3. Covered California for Small Business (CCSB) Solutions: CCSB is a health insurance marketplace providing health plan coverage to more than 75,000 California employees of small businesses (generally employing less than 50 employees). The DCIO is responsible for developing policy and determining the scope, delivery methodology, and technology supporting the operation of Covered California's Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) ensuring a smooth and efficient marketplace for small business health insurance. The DCIO is also responsible for overseeing system integrations, managing data analytics and reporting to monitor program performance, and guiding the adoption of technological innovations to enhance the SHOP's functionality and user experience. Furthermore, the DCIO formulates strategies for stakeholder engagement to ensure the SHOP platform aligns with the needs of small businesses, health insurance plan providers, and aligns with Covered California's broader objectives. Through these responsibilities, the DCIO ensures that SHOP remains a reliable, effective resource for small businesses seeking health insurance options for their employees.

4. Consumer Service Center (CSC): The DCIO is responsible for developing policy and determining the scope, delivery methodology, and technology support required to operate our CSC. The CSC handles approximately 30,000 customer inquiries daily, ranging from health plan subsidy eligibility to plan benefits and costs. The DCIO drives digital transformation initiatives aimed at enhancing service delivery, incorporating advanced technologies like AI-driven chatbots (e.g., the CiCi chatbot) and self-service portals (e.g., the .com consumer portal) to enhance the consumer experience. Additionally, the DCIO establishes service quality and accessibility standards, ensuring that all services are inclusive and accessible to all Californians, including those with disabilities and non-English speakers. The DCIO's guidance ensures that the CSC operates efficiently, remains cost-effective, and continually enhances the quality of service offered to Californians seeking health insurance.

The technology policy, strategy, maintenance, and operational support of these critical Covered California services are core to our mission and are developed and maintained independently of the CDT's support. Any issues with any of these systems pose barriers to accessing affordable, high-quality healthcare for more than 17 million California residents.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

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

Covered California is statutorily exempt from the oversight of the CDT. As a result, the DCIO exercises a high-level of independent judgement and decision-making authority. The DCIO is tasked with a wide range of responsibilities, including the development and implementation of the IT strategic plan, policy formulation, and ensuring organizational compliance with these policies, leading the Consumer Experience Center of Excellence, and overseeing the EPMO and data management and analysis. Additionally, the DCIO plays a crucial role in strategic planning, advocating for Covered California's IT solutions on a national level, and managing technical staff and resources. The decisions made by the DCIO are critical, with far-reaching consequences that can affect the organization's mission, potentially leading to media scrutiny, litigation, and audits if poorly made. This highlights the DCIO's pivotal role in steering Covered California towards achieving its goals while maintaining operational excellence and compliance.

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

The DCIO develops and implements new policies, as well as interprets Federal and State policies that govern the operation of the largest state-based healthcare exchange in the nation. This responsibility includes ensuring that Covered California's operations and technological advancements comply with existing regulations and standards, maintaining the integrity and efficacy of the exchange. As an independent State agency, governed by a Board of Directors, Covered California is charged with developing its own technology policies, processes, and procedures, operating independently from the oversight of CDT.

A key area of responsibility for the DCIO is the development and oversight of policies for all direct-to-consumer solutions and data repositories. For example, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-12-23 to adopt safe and responsible innovation to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, and equity of government operations. The DCIO is crucial for developing policy, stakeholder engagement, and technology delivery options for the adoption/application of GenAI. Key responsibilities include:

• Improving the quality of 30,000 daily interactions between our service center representatives and consumers, ensuring these interactions are as effective and efficient as possible.
• Ensuring the alignment of outcomes from thousands of daily chatbot interactions with consumers with the expected outcomes of traditional phones interactions, providing consistency and reliability in consumer support.
• Automating thousands of consumer requests, including password resets, to optimize resource use and reduce the reliance on costly call center resources.

The DCIO is instrumental in leveraging technology to improve service delivery, streamline operations, and enhance the overall consumer experience within Covered California.