

**County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)  
Medi-Cal Program Guide Special Notice**

**January 2020 Social Security Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)**

**Number**

**19-05**

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**Effective Date:**  
January 1, 2020

**Background:**

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/State Supplementary Payment (SSP) cash grant levels are adjusted annually and are used in determining eligibility for Medi-Cal and Pickle cases.

**Purpose:**

To provide the annual Social Security COLA.

**Policy:**

To adjust the Maintenance Needs (MN) Assistance Standards chart levels (MPG 11.1 A).

The affected tables are:

- Federal Benefit Rate
- Pickle Disregard
- Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)
- Medicare Premiums (A/B)
- SSI/SSP Payment Standards

**Procedure:**

Use the updated MN Assistance Standards chart when determining eligibility for the appropriate programs.

To avoid negatively impacting beneficiary eligibility, **do not** apply the COLA prematurely to the MAGI, FPL and MSP programs.

**Program Impact/s:**

**Non-MAGI**

The 2020 SSA COLA will be **disregarded** for the following groups until the 2020 FPL rates are published by DHCS (usually in April):

- Aged & Disabled FPL
- Blind FPL
- Medicare Savings Programs

CalWIN applied the SSA COLA on December 14, 2019 and the remaining Non-MAGI (Medically Needy) groups were updated with the new SSA amounts effective January 1, 2020

**MAGI**

MAGI Groups are **NOT** affected by the SSA COLA until the Federal Poverty Levels (FPLs) are updated in CalHEERS.

MAGI beneficiaries who are potentially affected by the FPL change will receive mailers from DHCS notifying them of the FPL increase and that they may request a redetermination back to January 1, 2020. If such a request is made, clearly case comment the request and take appropriate action.

**References:**

ACWDL 19-24

**Sunset Date:**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance on or by 01/31/2021

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Approval for Release:

*AW* 1-6-20

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