

family health



signs all the forms.

You will only have to fill out these forms this year as DHS moves you to the new Medi-Cal rules. In the future, DHS will try to determine your eligibility each year based on the information they have on file.

There are three ways you can give DHS this information:

By mail. Please use the postage-paid envelope DHS provides to return the forms to:

Human Services
PO Box 511
Bakersfield, CA 93302

By phone. You can give DHS this information by phone. Call their Customer Assistance Telecenter at **877-410-8812**. If you file taxes, have your most recent federal tax return on hand when you call.

***Having trouble filling out forms?
Just call 877-410-8812!***

In person. You can give DHS this information at any local office. Or you can visit the main DHS office in Bakersfield:

100 E. California Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93307

How to keep your Medi-Cal

Starting this year, the way Medi-Cal eligibility is determined is changing.

For most people, it will be determined using income tax rules and personal tax filing information. Medi-Cal will count the size of your household and your income based on your tax information. If you do not file taxes, you can still get Medi-Cal.

You have Medi-Cal now, so the Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) knows a lot about you. But they do not know your household tax information.

To give DHS your tax information, you must fill out the forms DHS mails to you and return them by the due date.

If you do not give DHS this information, you may lose your Medi-Cal benefits.

Are you the person who files taxes for your household? Then you will need to complete one form called "Request for Tax Household Information" for yourself and one for each person living with you or claimed on your tax return.

Only the person who files taxes for your household completes the form called "Request for Tax Household Information Supplemental." This person also

Si necesita esta información en español, llame al 800-391-2000.

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Ladies: Go Red for your heart

Wondering what to wear today?

Open up your closet and look for something red—a scarf, a hat, a dress. It's a way to remind yourself to take care of your heart.

It's also a way to take part in Go Red for Women, or Go Red for short. This is a national effort to help women of all ages stay safe from heart disease—their No. 1 killer.



Check it out. You can learn more about Go Red by visiting www.GoRedforWomen.org. There you can also:

- Take a heart checkup. If you don't already have heart disease, you can find out how likely you are to get it. You'll also get a personal plan to protect your heart.
- Sign up for a free Go Red pin. Wearing it shows you support the fight against heart disease.
- Get heart smart. You'll discover how to eat better, move more, stress less and protect your heart.

Share the love. Spread the word about Go Red to the women in your life. Invite them to join you in making small, heart-healthy changes. You can take walks together or serve veggies for party snacks instead of chips or cookies. Go Red means making healthy fun.

Source: American Heart Association

MAMMOGRAMS

Get the whole picture

Mammograms: They're what's best for your breasts.

The x-ray takes only a few minutes. You most likely won't need to do it again for a year or two.

And it is the best way to spot signs of breast cancer early—even a few years before a lump can be felt by hand.

When to start. Ask your provider how often you should have this test. In general, women 40 and older should have one every year.

But you may need to start earlier. Or you might need to be tested more often.

Has anyone in your family had breast cancer? If so, that's one reason you might have the test before age 40.

If you have concerns, ask your provider how often you should be tested.

A date to keep. There's a good reason to be tested regularly. Providers don't just look at your current x-ray. They look for changes from earlier images.

That's how to get the best picture of your breast health.

At your next checkup. Talk with your provider. He or she is your best guide. Be sure to tell him or her about your family's medical

» TAKE ACTION. Do you have questions about what women's services we cover? Call Member Services at 800-391-2000.

history. Also, talk about any breast changes you've noticed.

Sources: American Cancer Society; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Office on Women's Health

Spread the word

Any time is a good time to be aware of breast cancer.

Let the women in your life know this. You can do two things to beat breast cancer.

1. At age 40, talk with your health care provider about your risk for the disease.
2. From ages 50 to 74, have a mammogram every two years. This test can spot breast cancer in its early stages.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



PREGNANCY

Get help to quit smoking and drinking

If you are pregnant and still smoke or drink, now is the time to quit. Both alcohol and tobacco can hurt your health and harm your unborn baby too.

Smoking exposes you and your baby to dangerous chemicals.

And when you drink, the same amount of alcohol that is in your blood goes into your baby's blood. But a baby's body can't break down alcohol like yours can.

As a result, your baby could:

- Be born too early.

- Be born with birth defects.
- Have lifelong learning problems.

No shame in asking for help.

If you are having trouble quitting, ask for help. Your provider can:

- Help you make a plan for quitting.
- Give you quit aids to help you deal with cigarette cravings.

- Help you find a support group.

Focus on your reason for quitting: that tiny baby that will soon be born. Now is the perfect time to start fresh.

Focus on your reason for quitting.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; March of Dimes

KFHC mailing address: 9700 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311

Help stop fraud!

Health care fraud costs a lot of money. Government figures say that 10 cents of each dollar spent on health care is based on fraud. You can help stop this.

WHAT IS FRAUD? It's fraud if you or someone else:

- Shares his or her Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) member ID card with someone else.
- Gives wrong information on forms.
- Visits more than one doctor and pharmacy for the same drug.
- Tries to get benefits that he or she is not entitled to get.

Do you know someone doing these things? Please do the right thing.

Call KFHC's Member Services Department at **661-632-1590** or toll-free at **800-391-2000**. Ask for the Compliance Department.

E-cigarettes: Know the danger

E-cigarettes look and feel like real cigarettes. They're often sold as a way to quit smoking. They're also sold as a way to "smoke" in places where it's not allowed.

But they may be bad for your health like real cigarettes.

That's because e-cigarettes:

- Contain nicotine.
- Have chemicals in them that may cause cancer.
- Are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to help you quit smoking.

Want to quit smoking? Your provider can help find a safe method that will work for you.

No, I won't eat it!

5 WAYS TO MAKE FRUITS AND VEGGIES MORE APPEALING TO KIDS

Is your child picky about eating fruits and veggies? Here are some ways to turn that around.



1. Plant seeds for change. Picky eaters may like to try food they've grown. Start them off with tomatoes or green peppers in pots. They can grow herbs in a window garden too.

2. Visit a farmers market. The farmers can help kids choose the best melon. Or pick the most tender butter lettuce.

Next stop: an ethnic grocery store. Have kids name the shapes and colors of the exotic fruits and veggies.

3. Raise the bar. Kids are more likely to eat something they made. So set up a family meal bar. Try bowls of sautéed or fresh veggies. Then add all the fixings for healthy burritos, stuffed potatoes, salads or sandwiches.

4. Hide in plain view. Slip kale into smoothies. Puree peaches to make

a sauce for baked chicken. Layer spinach into lasagna.

5. Name that food. Make your menu more tempting with a new name. Anyone up for snowballs (cauliflower)? Jack's giant raisins (prunes)?

Whip up a new veggie dish with your child's help. Name it after your young chef. You may get frequent requests for Josh's Posh Squash, Avery's Savory Yams or Eileen's Silly Beans.

The more involved kids are, the more likely they are to try new foods. So let them help choose recipes, shop, peel veggies and stir pots. When you cook together, you might help create habits for a lifetime of healthy eating.

Sources: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; American Academy of Pediatrics; U.S. Department of Agriculture

BULLYING

How to help your child cope

Some kids use their fists to bully other children. Others tease, make threats or spread rumors online.

Bullying takes many forms—and it's always wrong. A child who is bullied may:

- Be afraid to go to school.
- Lose confidence.
- Become depressed.

This is why you'll want to take steps to protect your child from bullying. Here are four steps you can take:

1. Talk with your child about bullying. Even if you don't think your child is a target, ask about it. You might start by asking, "How are things going at school?" or, "What do you think of the other kids in your class?"

It's good to ask questions like this. Kids sometimes don't want to admit that they're being picked on.

2. Teach your child how to respond. Your child should look a bully in the eye and stay calm. Your

child might say, in a firm voice, "I don't like what you're doing. Stop it now." Then your child should walk away.

3. Urge your child to get help. Tell your child to ask for help from an adult if he or she is bullied. Your child should also speak up if he or she sees another child being attacked.

4. Help your child make friends. Encourage your child to get to know other kids. Children who aren't social are more likely to be bullied than those with friends.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



Changes to your mental health benefits

There was a change in Medi-Cal coverage that expands substance use disorder and mental health benefits. As of January 1 of this year, Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) covers some of the mental health services that you could get in regular Medi-Cal and also covers some substance use disorder services.

What are the substance use disorder benefits? You will receive the following substance use disorder benefits through KFHC:

- Alcohol misuse screening and counseling for people 18 and up.

We do not cover treatment for major alcohol problems, but if you need services for major alcohol problems, you may be referred to the County Alcohol and Drug Program.

What are the mental health benefits? If you qualify, you will receive the following mental health

services through KFHC:

- Individual and group mental health testing and treatment (psychotherapy).
- Psychological testing to evaluate a mental health condition.
- Outpatient services that include lab work, drugs and supplies.
- Outpatient services to monitor drug therapy.
- Psychiatric consultation.

Specialty mental health services currently provided by County Mental Health and community-based organizations will continue to be available.

Where can I find out more information on the expanded benefits? The KFHC Member Services Department is available to help you learn more about your new benefits Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call **661-632-1590** (Bakersfield) or **800-391-2000** (outside of Bakersfield).

KFHC mailing address: 9700 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311

Beat those wintertime blues

Does winter make your spirits sink? If so, you are not alone.

About 20 percent of Americans find winter to be more challenging than fun. For some, the holidays create stress and sadness. For others, it's seasonal affective disorder (SAD)—which may be caused by low levels of sunlight—that brings on the blues and makes it hard to handle stress.

Either way, trying to cope can lead to unhealthy choices, like eating too much or drinking alcohol.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Here are two small changes that can help you start to feel better.

1. Change your mind. Try to swap a stormy outlook for upbeat thoughts. To begin, list three things you like about winter. Maybe that's ice skating, knitting and making a hearty stew. Now, ask a friend to do one of those things with you. Being with others can help winter stress melt away. So can writing down what makes you feel happy—and grateful.

2. Change the light. Many people feel better when they get more sunlight. So take a daily walk. Not only will you get a dose of natural light, but you'll also enjoy another reliable mood booster: exercise. Spending time by a window during the day can also help.

If winter sadness persists, talk to your health care provider.

Sources: American Psychological Association; Mental Health America; National Institutes of Health

Behavioral health treatment for autism spectrum disorder

Kern Family Health Care (KFHC) now covers behavioral health treatment (BHT) for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). BHT for ASD needs prior authorization of coverage from KFHC and must be prescribed and provided by a participating provider.

This treatment includes applied behavior analysis and other evidence-based services. This means the services have been reviewed and have been shown to work. The services should develop or restore, as much as possible, the daily functioning of a member with ASD.

BHT services must be:

- Medically necessary.
- Prescribed by a licensed doctor or a licensed psychologist.
- Approved by the plan.



■ Given in a way that follows the member's plan-approved treatment plan.

You may qualify for BHT services if:

- You are under 21 years of age.
- You have a diagnosis of ASD.
- You have behaviors that interfere with home or community life. Some examples include anger; violence; self-injury; running away; or difficulty with living skills, playing skills or communication skills.

You do not qualify for BHT services if:

- You are not medically stable.
- You need 24-hour medical or nursing services.
- You have an intellectual disability (ICF/ID) and need procedures done in a hospital or an intermediate care facility.

Cost to member:

- There is no cost to the member for these services.

If you are currently receiving BHT services through Kern Regional Center, the Kern Regional Center will continue to provide these services until a plan for transition is developed. More information will be available at that time. You can call KFHC at **800-391-2000** if you have any questions—or ask your primary care provider for screening, diagnosis and treatment of ASD.



It's flu season: Get immunized!

The flu season has begun. That means it's time to get the flu vaccine.

The flu feels awful. And it can be serious for:

- People ages 65 and older.
- Children younger than 5 years old.
- Pregnant women.
- People with health problems like heart, lung or kidney disease and those with weakened immune systems.

If you wait until later in the year, the vaccine can still help protect you. But if you get it early, you'll be protected all flu season long.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Information in FAMILY HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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