

Talking Points for Leadership

County Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (CMAA)

What is CMAA?

County-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (CMAA) is a federally reimbursed program that supports counties in connecting Medi-Cal-eligible people to services and teach them how to use it.

- CMAA provides partial reimbursement counties for outreach, referral, and coordination activities that staff are already performing across departments like public health, social services, veterans' services, aging services, and behavioral health.
- These are not “new” activities but a structured way to draw down federal dollars to sustain local work.
- In small counties, where resources are limited, partial reimbursement from CMAA helps stabilize critical services.

Why CMAA Matters for Small Counties?

- Local Control: Each county chooses how to design its CMAA claiming plan to reflect unique needs. Whether strengthening child welfare, supporting veterans, or investing in aging services.
- Equity: Small counties can leverage CMAA to close gaps in service funding based on community need.

What are CMAA Benefits?

- Supports Core Services: CMAA revenue can help sustain programs in child welfare, adult services, public health, behavioral health, or veterans services.
- Builds Partnerships: Funds can flow to community-based organizations (CBOs), extending the county’s reach into underserved areas (e.g., senior centers, veteran organizations, family resource centers).
- Strengthens Workforce: Reimbursements can cover staff time for outreach, allow investment in training, and provide stability in small departments with limited staff capacity.
- Accountability & Compliance: CMAA operates under a federally approved claiming plan and requires training, documentation, and audits—ensuring transparency and trust in how funds are used.

What can leaders do to support the program?

- Champion Participation: Your visible support signals that CMAA is a countywide priority and encourages staff across departments to engage.
- Support Infrastructure: Dedicate resources for training, compliance, and audit preparation. These investments ensure sustainability and protect reimbursement revenue.
- Promote Innovation: Encourage departments to explore creative uses of CMAA funds to expand reach and fill gaps in needed services in your community.
- Communicate Impact: Share stories with boards and the public about how CMAA dollars have funded services, positions, or partnerships that directly benefit residents.

Key messages to share

- CMAA is about maximizing resources we already have.
- It ensures small counties don’t leave federal dollars on the table.
- Participation helps maintain and expand services in critical areas like child welfare, aging, veterans, and behavioral health.
- Leadership support is what turns CMAA from a compliance program into a strategic tool for community impact.