



Low Medi-Cal Reimbursement Rates Harm Infants

Mothers Need Access to Quality Breast Pumps to Support Healthy Breastfeeding Goals

The California WIC Association and California Breast Feeding Coalition support a budget proposal requesting a much-needed increase in Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for personal breast pumps and kits. Here's why:

- The reimbursement rates for Medi-Cal breast pumps and kits have not increased since 1998 – that's more than 21 years.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index, prices in 2019 are 54.42% higher than average prices throughout 1998.
- The technology for breast pumps has advanced in the more than 20 years since Medi-Cal began providing them, but the reimbursement rates have not advanced to meet that technology and allow access to quality breast pumps.
- For a relatively small investment of \$7 million annually, Medi-Cal can provide high quality breast pumps to low-income mothers – increasing their ability to be successful in breastfeeding and improving the health of their children.
- Medi-Cal can save anywhere from nearly half a million to one million dollars (\$405,000 to \$940,000) per 100,000 women by providing improved breastfeeding services and support, including high quality breast pumps.
- Access to high quality breast pumps can help lead to optimal breastfeeding rates that could reduce medical costs related to infant illnesses by \$1.6 million per 100,000 mothers.
- The current Medi-Cal reimbursement rate of \$93.15 for personal breast pumps is well below adequate reimbursement rates: Texas (\$173.47), New York (\$173.47), Georgia (\$189.00), Maine (\$192.45) and Ohio (\$202.50).

The following indicates the current reimbursement rates for breast pumps and kits, the requested reimbursement rate, and the maximum budget impact.

	HCPCS E0603 Personal breast pump	HCPCS E0602 Breast pump kit	HCPCS E0602 Manual breast pump
Current reimbursement rate:	\$93.15	\$23.62	\$23.62
Requested reimbursement rate:	\$186.18	\$40.32	\$40.00
Maximum budget impact:	\$5,826,473	\$551,380	\$245,440

Calculation Details and Assumptions

Suggested rates are reflective of other states' Medicaid rates and MSRP.

Use based on number of well-baby births in Medi-Cal of 214,687 (2013); exclusive breastfeeding at 3 months of 56.1%; a pump acquisition rate of 50%; and an increased acquisition rate of 1% given new rates.

Rates reflect highest estimate of need, assuming mothers do not access any breast pumps from WIC. WIC would continue to provide breastfeeding support and breast pumps, so above estimates are quite high, as 58.6% of all infants born in California in 2013 were certified in WIC.