



ASIAN AMERICANS  
**ADVANCING  
JUSTICE**  
LOS ANGELES

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**

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**ADVANCING JUSTICE-LA STRONGLY URGES THE COMMUNITY TO SIGN UP FOR  
HEALTH COVERAGE**

*Sign Up Period for Covered California is October 15, 2018 to January 15, 2019*

**LOS ANGELES, CA** -- Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) held a briefing today to highlight the opening of the sign-up period for Covered California, California's marketplace for health coverage, and to encourage members in the community to sign up before the January 15, 2019 deadline.

"We want to encourage our community members to enroll in and renew their health coverage early during the 2018-2019 Covered California sign up period." said Leslie Toy, Health Access Program Manager at Advancing Justice-LA. "In addition to Covered California, we want to encourage community members to enroll for Medi-Cal, local county health programs like My Health LA, and other public benefits, which you can sign up for at any time because they do not have limited sign-up periods, unlike Covered California."

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA, also known as "Obamacare") has been under attack particularly in the last two years. Recent federal actions, including the repeal of the enforcement of the ACA's tax penalty, the passage of a rule to allow the selling of largely unregulated short-term health plans, and most recently, proposed changes to the public charge regulations, may discourage consumers from finding, enrolling in, or retaining a Covered California plan.

"We know there is a lot of confusion about recent proposed changes to the public charge test, and we want to assure everyone that getting health coverage under Covered California does not put you at risk of being found to be a public charge," said Doreena Wong, Health Access Project Director at Advancing Justice-LA. "If you enroll before January 15, 2019, you and your family are guaranteed health coverage for all of 2019 no matter what."

Since the signing of the ACA into law in 2010, more than a million Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in California have gained health coverage. The ACA has also addressed significant health disparities in other marginalized and immigrant communities. While great strides have been made to cover the remaining uninsured population, studies show that by 2019 there will be more than 2.7 million Californians expected to remain uninsured, with about half not eligible for the ACA because of their immigration status and limited-English proficiency (LEP).

“Everyone benefits from health coverage,” said Mike Eng, former California State Assemblymember. “I urge all community members to learn more about their health care options to keep their families healthy and thriving.”

Life can change in an instant, which is why health coverage is important. Advancing Justice-LA is part of a Navigator collaborative network of over 100 trained certified enrollment counselors. These Navigators provide in-language local help for limited-English proficient clients. In addition to Covered California, there may be other health programs that individuals are eligible for such as Medi-Cal, which provides free or low-cost health coverage for low-income community members.

“I am so thankful that I have health coverage through Covered California through the help from Advancing Justice-LA and got the care that I needed in a timely manner,” said Junrui Hu, Advancing Justice-LA client. “Fortunately, because I had coverage through one of Covered California’s health plans, I was able to receive excellent care without worrying about the financial consequences. The decision to buy health coverage not only relieved me from a lifetime of debt but more importantly, saved my life!”

“In 2016, my mother had a severe kidney infection with dangerously low blood pressure, and had to undergo amputation to remove both her feet and some of her fingers,” said Jerry Raburn, Certified Enrollment Counselor with Thai Community Development Center. “Medi-Cal not only saved my mother’s life, but also saved my family from financial ruin. Because she had health coverage, she was provided with the necessary medical treatment she needed. I truly believe that access to quality health care is important... it’s more important than anything else and saves lives.”

Advancing Justice-LA encourages community members to visit the Covered California website ([www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com)) or speak to a Certified Enrollment Counselor to learn more, sign up for, or renew a plan before the window closes on January 15, 2019. For more information, please call Advancing Justice-LA at (213) 241-0262.

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**Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA)** is the nation's largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI). Through direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, leadership development, and capacity building, Advancing Justice-LA focuses on the most vulnerable members of Asian American and NHPI communities while also building a strong voice for civil rights and social justice.