



## Western Center's 2024 Legislative Agenda February 28, 2024

Following is a list of bills to help secure housing, healthcare, and a strong safety net for low-income Californians that will be sponsored or co-sponsored by Western Center on Law & Poverty during the 2024 legislative session.

### **Healthcare**

#### [AB 2297 \(Friedman\): Medical Debt Protection](#)

This bill would modernize the Hospital Fair Pricing Act by prohibiting the use of home liens to collect unpaid medical bills from financially eligible patients, clarifying hospitals must review financial assistance eligibility at any time, clarifying Medi-Cal and Medicare cost sharing amounts can be deducted under financial assistance policies, defining charity care as free care, and other changes.

*(Co-sponsored with Bet Tzedek)*

[AB 2297 Fact Sheet](#)

#### [AB 2319 \(Wilson, Weber\): Reducing Black Maternal Mortality through Implicit Bias Training](#)

This bill would reduce the disproportionate maternal mortality rate of Black women and other pregnant persons of color by ensuring successful implementation of the California Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act of 2019 (SB 464 (Mitchell)) by clarifying which facilities are mandated to administer anti-bias trainings, confers enforcement powers to CDPH and the Attorney General, establishes administrative penalties for noncompliant facilities and requires compliance data to be posted online.

*(Co-Sponsored with Attorney General Rob Bonta, Black Women for Wellness Action Project, Reproductive Freedom for All California, California Nurse-Midwives Association and the California Black Women's Collective)*

[AB 2319 Fact Sheet](#)

#### [AB 2753 \(Ortega\): Rehabilitative and Habilitative Services: Durable Medical Equipment and Services](#)

This bill would clarify that durable medical equipment is a covered essential health benefit in California-regulated health plans and policies when prescribed by a doctor for rehabilitative or habilitative purposes. The bill would also remove limitations such as annual caps on durable medical equipment coverage.

*(Co-sponsored with National Health Law Program)*

[AB 2753 Fact Sheet](#)



### [AB 2956 \(Boerner\): Protecting Medi-Cal Coverage for Californians](#)

This bill would allow people to keep their Medi-Cal coverage for a full 12 months, regardless of changes in their income and would direct California to seek federal approval, when necessary, to make permanent the federal Medi-Cal flexibilities to reduce and remedy procedural terminations, simplify income verification requirements, increase automatic Medi-Cal renewals, and improve program outreach and customer service.  
*(Co-sponsored with The Children's Partnership and Latino Coalition for a Healthy California)*

[AB 2956 Fact Sheet](#)

### [AB 3170 \(Ortega\): Drug Testing of Pregnant People](#)

This bill will be amended to indicate that any drug or alcohol test or screen performed by the staff or contractor of a health care institution on a pregnant or perinatal person or newborn, or any information on drug or alcohol use in the pregnant or perinatal person or newborn's medical records, shall not be admitted in any criminal or civil proceeding, including juvenile dependency proceedings, over the objection of the person who was tested.

### [SB 1289 \(Roth\): County Call Center Oversight and Reporting](#)

This bill would remedy the barriers at county call centers by directing the promulgation of regulations that set basic standards for things like wait times and requiring DHCS to publish online call center data from all 58 counties.

*(Co-sponsored with Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations)*

## **Housing**

### [AB 653 \(Reyes\): Increasing Voucher Utilization](#)

This bill would create a competitive grant program for public housing authorities (PHAs) to fund housing navigation services, landlord incentives, and deposit resources to increase lease-up success rates for tenants with Housing Choice Vouchers. This bill would require PHAs to annually report their success rate and require those with a success rate below 60% to adopt certain policies to increase housing choice and work with HCD to analyze and improve their policies.

*(Co-sponsored with Housing California, Corporation for Supportive Housing, United Ways of California, and the National Housing Law Project).*

### [AB 846 \(Bonta\): Low-income Housing Tax Credit](#)

This bill would establish anti-price gouging protections for rent in properties funded by the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) program.

*(Co-sponsored with the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation and Public Advocates).*



### [AB 2304 \(Lee\): Masking Limited Civil Unlawful Detainer Cases](#)

This bill will close the gaps in the state eviction masking laws and ensure that all tenants are protected as originally intended.

*(Cosponsored with the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation).*

### [AB 2347 \(Kalra\): Protecting Tenant Due Process Rights](#)

This bill would preserve the due process rights of tenants by preventing evictions when a tenant has not been properly served.

*(Cosponsored with the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation).*

### [ACA 10 \(Haney\): Housing is a Human Right](#)

ACA 10 will recognize that every Californian has the fundamental human right to adequate housing on an equitable and non-discriminatory basis. Should the measure pass in the legislature, California voters will have the opportunity to vote to add this right to the state's constitution, creating an obligation on the part of state and local governments to take meaningful action to fully realize the right.

*(Co-sponsored with Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE) Action, End Poverty in California (EPIC), Housing Now, ACLU California Action, Abundant Housing LA, National Homelessness Law Center, and PowerCA Action)*

## **Public Benefits and Access to Justice**

### [AB 274 \(Bryan\): CalWORKs: CalFresh: Eligibility: Income Exclusions](#)

This bill would exempt any grant, award, scholarship, loan, or fellowship benefit provided to any assistance unit member for educational purposes from consideration as income or resources for purposes of determining CalWORKs eligibility or grant amounts. The bill would also require the State Department of Social Services to exercise a federal option to exclude, for purposes of calculating a household's income under CalFresh, any type of income that the department excludes when determining eligibility or benefits for CalWORKs.

### [AB 1815 \(Weber\): Discrimination: Hairstyles: Amateur Sports Organizations](#)

This bill expands upon the CROWN act by prohibiting an amateur sports club or organization from discriminating against any person based on race, inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles in the operation, conduct, or administration of a youth or amateur sports competition, training, camp, or club.

[AB 1815 Fact Sheet](#)



[AB 3170 \(Ortega\): Drug Testing of Pregnant People](#)

This bill will be amended to indicate that any drug or alcohol test or screen performed by the staff or contractor of a health care institution on a pregnant or perinatal person or newborn, or any information on drug or alcohol use in the pregnant or perinatal person or newborn's medical records, shall not be admitted in any criminal or civil proceeding, including juvenile dependency proceedings, over the objection of the person who was tested.

[SB 1107 \(Durazo\): Public Social Services: County Departments: Mail Programs](#)

This bill would require a county human services agency that administers public benefits to develop and implement a program to ensure that, at a minimum, homeless residents of a county can pick up and receive government-related mail addressed to the resident at a place designated by the agency.

**Contact our Sacramento Advocates:** For more information about Western Center on Law & Poverty and our advocacy priorities, go to [www.wclp.org](http://www.wclp.org).

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