



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 16, 2021

Peter V. Lee to Leave as Executive Director of Covered California After 10 Years Leading the Nation's Largest State-Based Marketplace

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Covered California announced on Thursday that executive director Peter V. Lee has informed the board that he will leave the organization in early 2022. Lee has served as Covered California's first and only executive director, helping launch the exchange in 2012 and leading the organization that has provided millions of Californians with access to affordable, quality health coverage.

"I've been privileged to be part of the Covered California team and the broader effort in this state to do everything we can to use the Affordable Care Act to expand coverage and ensure those with coverage get the right care at the right time," Lee said. "I will be stepping down as Covered California's executive director after the upcoming open-enrollment period, with pride and confidence in the team at Covered California, who have taught me so much and who are poised to continue our important work."

Covered California's Board of Directors, chaired by California Health and Human Services secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly, will initiate a national search to find its next executive director.

"The progress we have made improving health care in California and across the nation would not have happened without Peter's dedication, vision and leadership," Ghaly said. "His efforts have improved the lives of millions of Californians, while creating a national model that has been consistently guided by our vision of assuring all Californian can get the right care when they need it. Today, Covered California is an indispensable part of our state's drive toward universal coverage and is in a great position to continue its mission of service and innovation as a state and national leader."

"My passion has always been for starting projects and having the opportunity to return home to California from Washington, D.C. to help launch Covered California and implement the Affordable Care Act has been a wonderful and remarkable experience," Lee said. "I am excited to think about new opportunities and venues I will have to

(more)

ensure that everyone has access to affordable coverage. I am empowered to do this because Covered California is in great shape with a strong and dedicated leadership team that can effectively deliver on its consumer-centered mission.”

Over Lee’s 10 years of service, Covered California has served millions of Californians, become the largest state-based marketplace in the nation, and established itself as a leader in both state and federal health care policies. Among Covered California’s accomplishments have been:

- Contributing to California’s drop in the uninsured rate, the largest of any state in the nation since the Affordable Care Act exchanges opened, from 17.2 percent in 2013 to [7.7 percent in 2019](#).
- [A record-high 1.6 million enrollees](#), due to extensive year-over-year investments in marketing and outreach and the recently expanded subsidies available through the State of California and now the American Rescue Plan.
- Holding health plans accountable in addressing quality, equity and delivery system transformation on behalf of the diverse communities served; the percentage of Covered California enrollees in Qualified Health Plans with 3 stars or higher (out of five) increased from 26 percent in 2016 to 88 percent in 2020.
- Developing patient-centered and standard benefits which ensure most outpatient services in Silver, Gold and Platinum plans are not subject to a deductible, including primary care visits, specialist visits, lab tests, X-rays and imaging.

Lee stated that he is not leaving for a particular position and looks forward to continuing his leadership role for the next six months. After his departure, he plans to take time off and consider new opportunities to continue his lifelong work of improving health care.

“There will be time to look for the next mountain to climb,” Lee said. “Right now, Covered California and I are wholly committed to doing our job of helping Californians during this pandemic and making sure that as many people as possible have access to the care they need and coverage they can count on.”

About Covered California

Covered California is the state’s health insurance marketplace, where Californians can find affordable, high-quality insurance from top insurance companies. Covered California is the only place where individuals who qualify can get financial assistance on a sliding scale to reduce premium costs. Consumers can then compare health insurance plans and choose the plan that works best for their health needs and budget. Depending on their income, some consumers may qualify for the low-cost or no-cost Medi-Cal program.

Covered California is an independent part of the state government whose job is to make the health insurance marketplace work for California's consumers. It is overseen by a five-member board appointed by the governor and the Legislature. For more information about Covered California, please visit www.CoveredCA.com.