



# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Covered California Says Farewell to Its Last Founding Board Member and Welcomes New Assembly Speaker Appointee to the Board**

- *Jarrett Tomás Barrios, a former lawmaker and longtime state and national health leader, is the newest member of Covered California's Board of Directors.*
- *Barrios was appointed by Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, and will replace Paul Fearer, the last of Covered California's founding board members.*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Jarrett Tomás Barrios, a longtime leader in health and advocacy from Los Angeles, has been appointed the newest member of the Covered California Board of Directors. Barrios replaces the departing Paul Fearer, the last of Covered California's founding board members.

“Jarrett is committed to what we do, and his expertise and background in public health will provide vital leadership to further our mission to bring affordable coverage and quality health care to millions of Californians,” said Peter V. Lee, executive director of Covered California. “He joins us at an especially exciting time as we prepare to implement new provisions contained in President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan, which will expand coverage to more people than ever before while lowering health care premiums for millions of Californians.”

“A year of COVID-19 has raised the importance of quality health care and put a spotlight on issues of cost, access and equity,” said Barrios. “I am honored to be joining an organization that's committed to help Californians, in every community and every corner of the state, enroll in quality health care coverage.”

(more)

Barrios will replace Paul Fearer, who was appointed in 2011 by then-Speaker of the Assembly John A. Pérez. Fearer is the last of the original five-member Covered California Board of Directors.

“We say farewell and thanks to Paul Fearer, who has been with us since Covered California’s inception in 2011,” Lee said. “Covered California would not be where it is today without the wisdom, guidance and foresight of Paul and our original board members. Paul’s passion for helping others, and his dedication to Covered California, have helped millions of people in our state. He has left an indelible mark on Covered California, and we thank him tremendously for his leadership and service.”

Barrios (pictured at right) currently serves as the senior vice president of Strategic Community and Programmatic Initiatives for the California Community Foundation. Among his prior roles, he has served as the CEO of the American Red Cross of Los Angeles and president of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. He is also a former state senator and representative of Massachusetts.



Barrios was appointed by California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood) to a four-year term, beginning March 19, 2021, and ending Jan. 1, 2025. There is no compensation, but Barrios may receive a per diem and reimbursement for travel and other necessary expenses.

### **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](http://www.CoveredCA.com).

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