



**COVERED  
CALIFORNIA**

## **Chief Executive Officer**

### Leadership Profile

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## The Opportunity

The Board of Covered California seeks a dynamic healthcare leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer following the planned retirement of its founding chief executive, Peter Lee, in February 2022. This is a highly impactful leadership role of the largest and best performing health purchasing exchange in the country. The new Chief Executive Officer will work to ensure Covered California continues to operate effectively and nimbly across its strategic pillars ensuring Californian's continue to have access to affordable, quality and equitable healthcare. This is the opportunity for the new Chief Executive Officer to build upon what has been established over the last decade and continue to innovate.

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 receive 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 public entity within state government, with a five-member board appointed by the Governor and Legislature. With approximately 1,400 employees, Covered California has offices in Rancho Cordova, Fresno, Oakland, Los Angeles and a headquarters located in Sacramento. Covered California's FY 2021-2022 operating budget of \$403.3 million is funded entirely from revenues generated from health plan premiums and is not state or federally funded.

Covered California is a state agency, but independent of the executive branch. In addition to providing health insurance directly to 1.6 million Californians and indirectly setting the standards under which an additional 600,000 get coverage in the "off-exchange" individual market, Covered California has a long track record of informing public policy at the state and, importantly, at the federal level. This tradition of national influence is one that is expected to continue and remain robust.

The ideal candidate is a seasoned, dynamic, mission-driven leader who possesses the energy, passion and experience to continue to grow the organization through innovation and increased efficiencies. Chief Executive Officer candidates will bring a track record of visionary strategic thinking that has enabled previous organizations under his/her leadership to thrive. The ability to direct a myriad of projects in an expedient and efficient manner, design effective collaborations, and clearly articulate Covered California's goals and objectives internally and publicly will be expected. The next leader must demonstrate integrity, compassion and vision in leading a diverse and highly skilled staff, with a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion both in terms of the internal functioning of the organization and in their approach addressing health care issues in California. They must be an excellent speaker, approachable, collaborative, active listener, have broad health care policy experience, and be a servant leader.

## Organization Overview

Covered California works to improve the health of all Californians by assuring their access to affordable, high-quality, equity focused care. Since opening the Exchange in October 2013, Covered California has helped over four million people obtain health care coverage.

In 2010, California became the first state in the nation to enact legislation to establish a state-based health insurance exchange under the auspices of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). Covered California was officially established in 2011 as an independent state entity governed by a Board of Directors, followed by the subsequent development of a vision statement that has guided Covered California since its inception: *To improve the health of all Californians by assuring their access to affordable, high-quality care.*

As the first state to establish a state-based marketplace — under a Republican governor — California has been focused on implementing the Affordable Care Act as effectively as possible for the benefit of the state’s consumers. State actions included expanding Medi-Cal, the state Medicaid program; building Covered California as the public entity responsible for creating a consumer-driven marketplace and holding health plans accountable; and most recently, enacting reforms to stabilize insurance markets and further improve affordability. Covered California’s commitment to improving access, affordability and accountability has had a significant impact on the health of Californians.



Covered California’s annual budget reflects on how the organization addresses five key strategic priorities. The budget is built on a comprehensive planning process, which is governed by the strategic priorities that help guide the organization’s allocation of resources. Covered California’s strategic priorities were designed by the agency’s management team and reviewed by the board to assist the organization while making decisions, setting priorities, determining initiatives and preparing annual budgets.



The strategic priorities and how those strategies are broadly addressed are:

**Affordable plans:** Consumers purchase and keep Covered California products based on their understanding of how their coverage is a good value for them. The Affordable Plans strategic priority is reflected in Covered California as such:

- Actively negotiating rates and benefits with health insurance companies to provide consumers with the best value.
- Investing in marketing and outreach to promote the value of coverage and to maintain a healthy risk mix.
- Offering patient-centered benefit designs to make care more affordable by increasing a consumer’s understanding of benefits that maximize access to appropriate care.

**Staying healthy and getting needed care:** Consumers receive the right care at the right time.

- Working with all contracted qualified health plan issuers, in every corner of the state, to ensure consumers have ready access to doctors, hospitals and care.
- Holding health insurance companies accountable for improving the care delivered, addressing disparities of care, and moving to a patient-centered system that rewards quality and value, rather than being rewarded for quantity only.

**Effective outreach and education:** Consumers understand what we offer and have a positive attitude about Covered California.

- Making significant investments in marketing and outreach to motivate consumers to enroll and maintain their insurance coverage.
- Educating and supporting Covered California's 20,000 sales partners in order to promote enrollment and increase the number of insured Californians.

**Positive consumer experience:** Consumers have a positive experience from initial enrollment to keeping their coverage.

- Continuously surveying consumers and testing messages and materials to be sure complex health insurance and coverage issues are clearly communicated.
- Operating and staffing service centers and working with 20,000 Licensed Insurance Agents, certified enrollers and Navigators to assist consumers in a variety of languages.
- Establishing an Ombuds Office and support for consumers seeking resolution of problems to have issues addressed at the lowest possible level.

**Organizational excellence:** Covered California has the right tools, processes, and resources to support its team to deliver on its mission.

- Operating as a fiscally sound, nimble enterprise that responds quickly to the changing environment in health care.
- Supporting its staff with training, tools, automation and opportunities for growth and working across divisions.

Nationally, the number of issuers participating in exchanges has seen dramatic fluctuation over the past five years. While one-in-ten exchange enrollees were in markets with only one insurer in 2020 that represented a dramatic decrease from 2018, when 26 percent of enrollees had only one insurer.

California's individual marketplace has been marked by stability and broad choice of insurers. For the 2022 enrollment year, California has 12 insurers competing having had continuous participation from 10 insurers since 2014. With 87 percent of consumers having three or more companies to choose from — insurers know consumers can and do shop for the best value and lowest price. Covered California contracts with a mix of health insurance companies, including some that are nonprofit, for-profit and locally accountable public plans (Local Initiatives or County Organized Health Systems) serving specific geographic areas.

Covered California negotiates with insurers each year and requires they all offer the same patient-centered benefit designs meaning that for most consumers their deductible never applies to outpatient services — which all get first dollar coverage. Consistent benefit designs also means consumers can shop on an "apples-to-apples" basis when picking their plan.

Covered California shares a single registration portal with Medi-Cal so that Californians seeking coverage through Covered California and who are eligible for free care through Medi-Cal are guided to enroll in Medi-Cal. The relationship between California's health marketplace exchange and the Medicaid program is a key strategic relationship and one that can improve care for millions as it is fostered and built upon.

While Covered California has focused on effectively implementing the ACA, they have also been mindful of their responsibility to share data on what is and is not working to inform both their efforts and the work of policymakers in California and nationally.

## Vision, Mission and Values

### COVERED CALIFORNIA'S VISION

*The vision of Covered California is to improve the health of all Californians by assuring their access to affordable, high-quality care.*

### COVERED CALIFORNIA'S MISSION

*The mission of Covered California is to increase the number of insured Californians, improve health care quality, lower costs, and reduce health disparities through an innovative, competitive marketplace that empowers consumers to choose the health plan and providers that give them the best value.*

### COVERED CALIFORNIA IS GUIDED BY SIX PRIMARY VALUES:

- **Consumer-focused:** At the center of Covered California's efforts are the people it serves, including patients and their families, and small business owners and their employees. Covered California will offer a consumer-friendly experience that is accessible to all Californians, recognizing the diverse cultural, language, economic, educational and health status needs of those we serve. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as well as delivery system reform to benefit consumers are priorities for Covered California.
- **Affordability:** Covered California will provide affordable health insurance while assuring quality and access.
- **Catalyst:** Covered California will be a catalyst for change in California's health care system, using its market role to stimulate new strategies for providing high-quality, affordable health care, promoting prevention and wellness, and reducing health disparities.
- **Integrity:** Covered California will earn the public's trust through its commitment to accountability, responsiveness, transparency, speed, agility, reliability, and cooperation.
- **Partnership:** Covered California welcomes partnerships, and its efforts will be guided by working with consumers and their advocates, providers, health plans, employers and other purchasers, government partners, and other stakeholders.
- **Results:** The impact of Covered California will be measured by its contributions to expanding coverage and access, improving health care quality, promoting better health and health equity, and lowering costs for all Californians.

FY 2020-21 was a tumultuous year for all, as the nation and world tackled the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. California was challenged by a public health emergency, a recession, and natural disasters throughout the state. Covered California stepped up and met the challenges with added investments in outreach and consumer assistance. As part of California's safety-net, Covered California added additional special enrollment periods focusing on natural disasters such as fires, changes in federal policy, and pandemic induced challenges. Finally, as an employer of more than 1,440 individuals, Covered California transitioned its entire workforce to a telework environment to keep employees safe during the pandemic emergency. Covered California continues its commitment

to its dedicated workforce through its Reimagine project, which focuses on the future work environment. While meeting these challenges and navigating through the uncertainty of FY 2020-21, Covered California has effectively managed its expenditures. FY 2020-21 actual operating expenditures were \$394.0 million, \$46.1 million less than the approved budget total of \$440.2 million.

As Covered California enters FY 2021-22, its financial resources are strong. Its budgetary financial statement balance sheet working capital stands at \$433.8 million, which will finance roughly 12 months of budgeted operations. Covered California's FY 2021-22 operating budget totals \$403.3 million. The decline in operating expenditures from the FY 2020-21 budget total of \$440.2 million was the result of eliminating one-time COVID-19 related expenditures. Operating revenues are projected to total \$399.6 million. Overall, Covered California projects its net position to decline by \$3.7 million for FY 2021-22 due to strategic investments.

For additional information on Covered California, please visit: <https://hbex.coveredca.com>



## Position Summary

### Reporting Relationships and Key Staff

The Chief Executive Officer reports to and serves at the pleasure of the Covered California Board of Directors and will work closely with the executive leadership team. Direct reports include:

- Chief Deputy Executive Director of Operations
- Chief Deputy Executive Director of Programs (Plans, Sales, Service)
- Chief Medical Officer - Equity & Quality Transformation
- General Counsel - Program Compliance & Accountability

In addition to the four direct reports, Covered California's senior team at the Director level include 13 staff. Of the 13 Director level staff, 11 are "exempt" employees that are subject to appointment by the board of directors and whose compensation is based on periodically conducted salary survey for those positions (rather than any specific civil service scale).

It is important to note the Chief Executive Officer also maintains key essential relationships across state and federal government.

### Key Responsibilities

This position requires a high level of independent judgment and decision making and has the authority to influence decisions that will impact Californians statewide and shape healthcare policy nationally.

The successful Chief Executive Officer candidate will:

#### Public Affairs/Government Relations

- Establish liaison and ongoing communication with stakeholders and the Executive and Legislative branches of state government with responsibilities related to the duties of the Board and other health coverage issues.
- Assure compliance with applicable state and federal legal and regulatory requirements, including public meeting laws, federal expenditure requirements and state personnel policies. The Chief Executive Officer role may include access to information systems containing protected enrollee information, including federal tax information, protected health information, and personally identifying information.

#### Strategic and Operational Leadership

- Manage the planning, development, implementation and ongoing administration and evaluation of Board approved programs. Provide the overall direction and supervision to the Executive staff in carrying out program goals and objectives. Manage the entire staff of Covered California, including eligibility and enrollment staff, purchasing and negotiation staff and administration and operations staff.
- Advise the Covered California Board on key policy and operational issues. Ensure the smooth operation of programs and operations under the Board's jurisdiction. Advance the mission of the

Covered California Board through legislation, program administration, research and other means, as appropriate.

### Advocacy

- Advance the mission of Covered California through legislation, program administration, research and other means, as appropriate.
- Represent Covered California and its mission and programs at national, state and local meetings and forums, in the media and at legislative hearings.
- Represent the Covered California Board and its mission and programs at national, state and local meetings and forums, in the media and at legislative hearings.
- Identifies and leverages existing relationships to enrich outreach strategy.



## Goals and Objectives

The Chief Executive Officer will be expected to successfully execute in five major categories for the next five years:

- 1. Assure Covered California meets its mission with operational excellence across the core functions of the organization:** Covered California is directly responsible for the care provided to over 1.6 million Californians and must anchor its activities in being consumer/patient focused in both its operations and the policies it promotes. We must continue to be nimble, well-run and patient-centered. Doing what we do with "Operational Excellence" means doing our job well in each of the five areas identified in our adopted budget as "Strategic Priorities:"
  - Offering Affordable Plans
  - Assuring Consumers Get Needed Care
  - Conducting Effective Outreach and Education
  - Promoting a Positive Consumer Experience
  - Operating with Excellence
- 2. Promote delivery system reform in California and nationally:** Covered California is woven into the fabric of our communities and will remain a leading partner in California's efforts to ensure and secure more affordable, equitable, high quality health care for all – both for Californians and as an example for the nation. Central to our focus in the coming years is the recognition that COVID-19 has unmasked and exacerbated longstanding racial and ethnic disparities, and absent substantive and focused efforts, it is NOT likely there will be much change in the quality, equity or underlying cost of care delivered to our enrollees or Californians in the next five years. This reality requires Covered California to elevate and prioritize its quality, equity, and delivery system transformation agenda. Specifically, working with partner health plans and other stakeholders to advance plan design and system transformations that not only improve the health of beneficiaries but also set the standards for what all Californians can and should expect from their health coverage and care.
- 3. Serve as an effective proving ground – focusing on both modeling best-practices in the individual market and on addressing gaps in employer coverage:** Covered California's mission is anchored in creating an effective consumer-driven market for individuals to get affordable coverage and to ensure their health and health care is the best possible. Covered California is at the nexus of public and private health care – providing public financial support while contracting with health carriers that are both public and private, for-profit and non-profit; in many ways Covered California is providing a multi-plan "public option" for consumers. Covered California is also a critical component of the coverage continuum between employer-based health insurance and Medi-Cal. Covered California's experience and processes are directly relevant to the majority of Californians and Americans who get their coverage from their employer. The passage of Proposition 22, requiring subsidies for gig-workers from their contracting entities (e.g., Uber, Lyft and DoorDash) tied to the cost of Covered California bronze plans may provide an important opportunity to assess the efficacy of market-based solutions for lower-income workers. Covered California should evaluate the impact of benefit designs and subsidies on utilization and outcomes both to inform state and national policy for public programs while at the same time improve the quality and value of employer-based coverage.

- 4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** is a top priority for the organization. The new Chief Executive Officer should manifest an ongoing focus on diversity, equity and inclusion to create a rich and dynamic workplace and engagement platform for one of the most diverse states in the nation but also ensure products and services of Covered California address the needs and wants of Californians broadly.
- 5. Respond effectively to COVID-19:** Our role as a critical component of California’s continuum of coverage required an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and for as long as needed. Covered California must both ensure our enrollees get appropriate care and vaccinations and partner with other state entities to support the most effective mobilization of resources possible. Covered California needs to be mindful that these activities may impact our capacity in other areas, and ensure staff have the support they need to be effective under challenging circumstances.

## Candidate Qualifications

### Education/Certification

- Graduate degree in business administration, health care administration, management or related field. Familiarity with the California market is highly desired but not required.

### Experience and Personal Characteristics

- Extensive executive level experience (CEO or other senior leadership role) in a nationally recognized health care organization with exemplary quality, growth and sustained financial strength. Familiarity with California market highly desired.
- Demonstrated record of success working collaboratively with boards and senior leadership teams to develop and implement strategic initiatives.
- Excellent financial and analytical skills and strong business acumen; experience carrying out growth strategies while maintaining the highest levels of quality and customer service.
- A track record that demonstrates organizational leadership and ability to foster a good working environment, including an active commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Experience with and knowledge of government relations strategies and tactics. Fluency in healthcare issues, policies and politics is highly preferred.
- Knowledge of key principles of successful comprehensive advocacy campaigns, including message construction, audience delineation, perception shaping strategies and the necessary tactical resources (lobbying, media relations, social media).
- Understanding of the importance of creating an organized, transparent marketplace for Californians to purchase affordable, quality health care coverage, to claim available federal tax credits and cost-sharing subsidies, and to meet the personal responsibility requirements imposed under the federal act.
- Ability to foster collaboration and followership; a consensus-builder with the ability to build strong relationships; a demonstrated history of having unified various groups toward the achievement of a common goal while maintaining the integrity and ultimate mission of a given organization.
- Experience in the design, implementation, negotiation or operations of benefit programs including those serving low income and special needs individuals.
- Experience with establishment and operational management of large-scale programs.
- Experience with health care service plans and health insurers, and an understanding of how coverage in the individual and small employer markets should compete on the basis of price, quality, and service, and not on risk selection.
- Experience with a state legislative and budget processes and fiduciary responsibility for public funds.

## The Community



Covered California's headquarters is located in the capital city of Sacramento, the sixth-largest city in California. Sacramento is the capital of the State of California and the county seat of Sacramento County. Located in California's expansive Central Valley, Sacramento is the core cultural and economic engine of a four-county metropolitan area exceeding 2.5 million residents (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties).

Greater Sacramento has been cited as one of the five most livable regions in America. Affectionately known as the 'River City', two major rivers intersect in the City of

Sacramento, the American and the Sacramento. Both rivers are international attractions for rafters, kayakers and boaters. Running along a 32-mile stretch of the American River is the tree-lined American River Parkway where joggers, walkers and cyclists can enjoy one of the region's many natural attractions. The Sacramento River provides a deep-water port connected to the San Francisco Bay via a 43-mile channel allowing both international shipping and casual day trips to the Bay Area.

Sacramento is one of the Golden State's fastest growing and most desirable places to live, work and raise a family. The region has a thousand miles of Delta waterways for water sports and the American River Parkway bike trail. In addition, Sacramento is close to recreational attractions, such as Lake Tahoe, ski resorts, the Mother Lode and Napa Valley. The area is home to the Sacramento Kings NBA team.

The economy of the region is a blend of agriculture and commerce. The city's economy is broadly based although government is by far the largest employer with 25 percent of California's 471,000 government employees. Transportation is a large sector along with information technology, leisure and hospitality, professional and business services, higher education, health services and research, and construction. High-tech companies have taken note of the area's amenities, and now the high-tech output of the region places Sacramento 21<sup>st</sup> out of 100 other metro areas.

Several of the local school districts are recognized throughout California and the nation as a leader in progressive education. Housing prices are affordable with many fine homes available in the \$500,000 range and above.

Additional information about Sacramento can be obtained at:

<http://cityofsacramento.org/> and <http://www.co.sacramento.ca.us/default.htm>.

## Timeline

Potential interview dates for this position have been outlined as follows:

- Paper presentation of qualified candidates to Board/Search Committee: Mid December 2021
- Round One interview dates: Early January 2022
- Round Two interview dates: Mid to Late January 2022

Selected candidates should plan to hold the above dates in the event they are invited by the Board to participate in the interview process.

## Procedure for Candidacy

The search process is currently underway and will continue until the position is filled. Nominations, expressions of interest, and résumés should be submitted electronically to the WittKieffer executive search consultants supporting this search via email, or inquire via the WittKieffer [Candidate Portal](#). The WittKieffer consultants supporting this search include:

Mark Andrew	Elaina Spitaels Genser	Tiffany Johnson
Phone: 949.797.3528	Phone: 510.740.1826	Phone: 916.536.6888
Email: <a href="mailto:MarkA@wittkieffer.com">MarkA@wittkieffer.com</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:elainag@wittkieffer.com">elainag@wittkieffer.com</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:tjohnson@wittkieffer.com">tjohnson@wittkieffer.com</a>

***Covered California is committed to a firm policy of equal employment opportunity for all employees, applicants, interns and volunteers. The organization fosters a work environment that values quality, respect, diversity, integrity, openness, communication and accountability.***

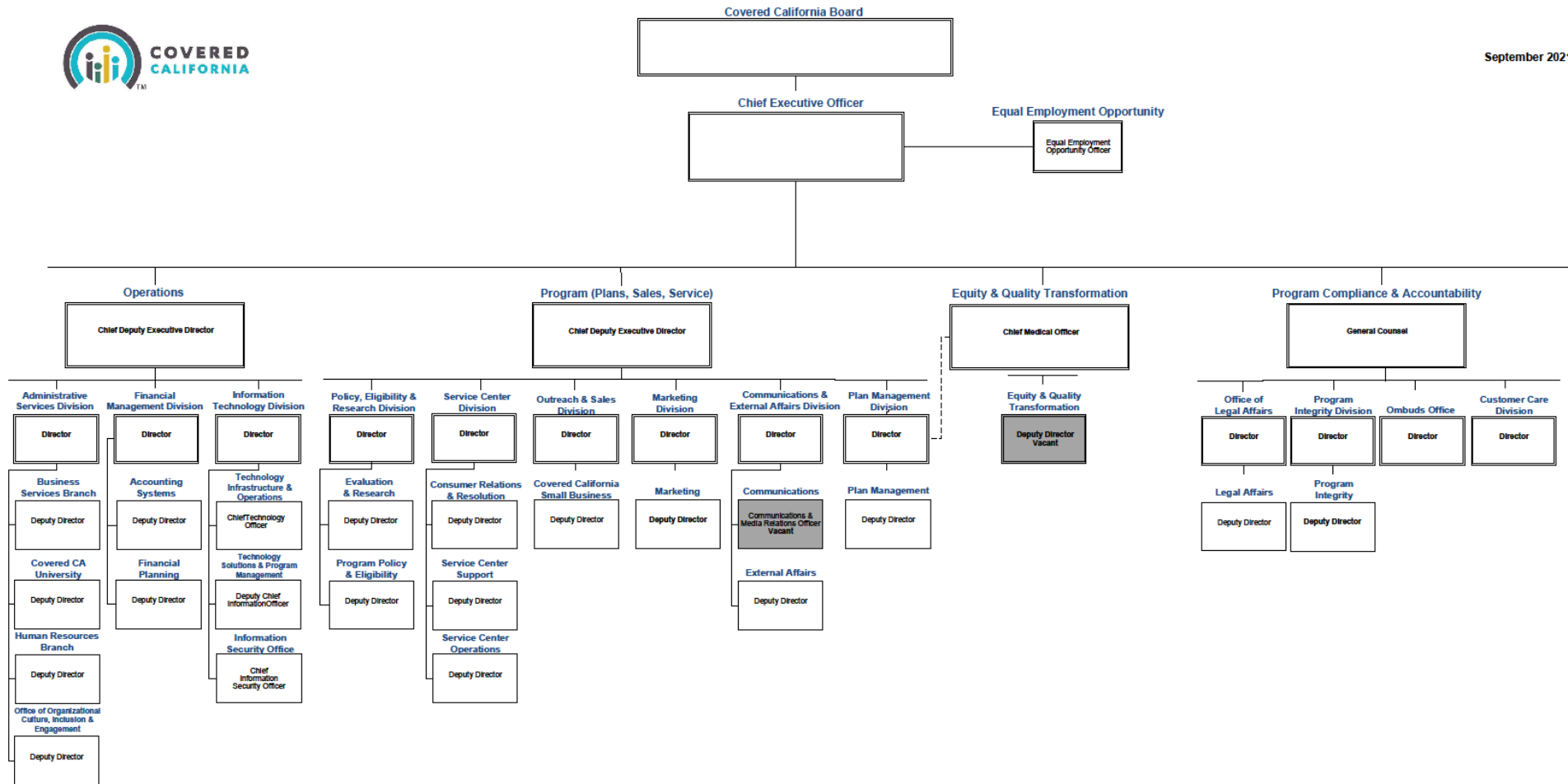
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# Organization Chart



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