



## COVID-19: Florida Medicaid Frequently Asked Questions

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide responses to questions that we are frequently receiving from Medicaid providers and other stakeholders about delivery of services during the COVID-19 state of emergency. As additional questions are received related to COVID-19, and as additional guidance is provided, we will be updating this document. **The questions below were selected because they are related to iBudget Provider and recipient issues or concerns. Please refer to the link at the end of the document for the complete list.**

### Telemedicine

1. Will AHCA allow telemedicine for delivery of medical and behavioral health services to my existing patients?

Yes. The Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) covers telemedicine for medical and behavioral health services, including evaluation, diagnostic, and treatment services. In addition, the Agency is expanding coverage to include telephone communications for physicians and physician extenders. The Agency recently issued guidance on the provision of medical and behavioral health services through telemedicine during the state of emergency. A copy of the guidance published on March 18th may be found [here](#).

2. Will AHCA allow telemedicine for therapy services?

Yes. The Agency covers telemedicine for therapy services (occupational, speech, and physical therapy), including evaluation, diagnostic, and treatment services as long as services can be delivered in a manner that is consistent with the standard of care. The Agency recently issued guidance on the provision of therapy services through telemedicine during the state of emergency. A copy of the guidance published on March 20th may be found [here](#).

3. Will AHCA allow telemedicine for behavior analysis services?

Yes. The Agency recently issued guidance on the provision of behavior analysis services through telemedicine for the purpose of providing caregiver training during the state of emergency when providers are not able to deliver services because the center is closed (when care is delivered in a center and home-based care is not an option) or when services cannot be delivered in the home because the provider or recipient met one or more of the self-screening criteria developed by the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health. A copy of the guidance published on March 18th may be found [here](#).

4. I was told that the federal government has waived HIPAA compliance when providing services via telemedicine. Is that correct?

No. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued guidance advising that they will relax enforcement of some HIPAA requirements in certain instances. However, within the same guidance, the OCR outlines the minimum requirements for compliance by health care providers. The guidance provided by the OCR on March 17, 2020 may be found [here](#).

5. Can I get paid the same for a session using telemedicine as I would get paid if the service was face-to-face?

Yes. In the fee-for-service delivery system, Florida Medicaid reimburses at the same rate that is listed on the EIS

fee schedule for sessions. During this state of emergency, the Agency is requiring Medicaid health plans to also pay the same rate for services that are provided via telemedicine as those that are provided through a face-to-face encounter.

6. Is "Live, two-way communication" to be interpreted as audio (telephone) only is acceptable when providing services?

No. Live two-way communication means requires that the patient and practitioner(s) (originating and distant site) have access to audio and video communication during the telemedicine visit.

#### Service Delivery

7. Does Florida Medicaid cover testing for COVID-19?

Yes. The Agency published an updated provider alert on April 27th that provides information on the reimbursement rates for the COVID-19 lab test.  
I am an in-home provider of services.

8. Can I continue to provide services in the home?

Yes. It is imperative that Medicaid recipients continue to receive prescribed services. Providers of in-home services should continue to deliver services in the home setting. Providers must take appropriate precautions as specified by the [CDC](#) and Florida [Department of Health](#) when interacting with patients and their families.

9. Will there be any changes to how Florida Medicaid's non-emergency transportation services are delivered?

Yes. The Agency has directed our contracted transportation brokers and the Medicaid health plans to avoid transporting multiple unrelated recipients in the same vehicle to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In addition, we have reinforced the sanitation standards that have been developed by the CDC to ensure drivers are taking all necessary precautions to reduce the spread of the virus.

10. I am a provider of services in the home and need access to personal protective equipment (PPE). Where can I find it?

The entire country is struggling with an extreme shortage of PPE, including masks. Please use your existing supply chain to order any needed masks and other PPE. The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a resource to obtain necessary supplies in an emergency. Although counties do not have excess at this time, if you have not submitted a request already, you can submit a request to the County EOC which will help to inform statewide prioritization of supplies as they arrive in Florida.

11. Should durable medical equipment providers honor the existing, expired prescription and continue to provide the medical equipment and supplies, or is there some other guidance?

Whenever possible, new authorizations should be obtained from the physician using telemedicine or other flexibilities granted during this time such as a telephone-based encounter between the physician and the patient. If the recipient cannot obtain a new physician's order, the provider may honor the existing order in order to continue the provision of services.

12. Is Florida Medicaid waiving copayments for all COVID-19 related services (testing and treatment) or is Florida Medicaid waiving copayments for any and all other medical services unrelated to COVID-19?

Florida Medicaid has waived copayments for all services for all recipients, regardless of diagnosis.

13. How is Florida handling payment for COVID-19 testing for uninsured individuals?

For individuals with health insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, there are no copayments or cost-sharing for COVID-19 testing.

For individuals who are uninsured:

Florida has not instituted the optional federal coverage of COVID testing for individuals who do not have health insurance, however, they may receive testing from their county health department or a federally qualified health center for free. In addition, many communities provide testing for free for individuals who do not have insurance. Please go to: <https://floridadisaster.org/covid19/testing-sites/> to find a test site in your area. Uninsured individuals should ask before the test whether testing is free of charge.

Other

14. Has AHCA waived all prior authorization for services during this time?

The Agency has lifted prior authorization for certain critical services for all Medicaid recipients and has lifted prior authorization for all services if the recipient is diagnosed with COVID-19.

## Fee-for-Service Delivery System

15. Do the provider alerts apply to the health plans?

Yes. Florida Medicaid's provider alerts apply to health plans participating in the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program, unless otherwise stated. We make every effort to denote in our alerts related to the COVID-19 state of emergency when a provision only applies to the fee-for-service delivery system.

16. Can the face-to-face assessment that is required for home health services be done via telemedicine?

Yes. A licensed advanced practice registered nurse, registered nurse, or physician can conduct the face-to-face assessment through the use of telemedicine when it is deemed to be medically appropriate.

17. Can a home health agency that is not Medicare/Medicaid certified enroll in Medicaid to provide services?

To ensure that all Florida Medicaid recipients get the care they need during this time, the Agency is temporarily allowing non-Medicare certified home health providers to be [provisionally enrolled](#) in the Medicaid program for the state of emergency. As a prerequisite, non-certified home health agencies must still be licensed in accordance with Chapter 400, Florida Statutes.

For more information on the Agency's response to COVID-19, please visit Medicaid FAQs: [http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19\\_alerts.shtml](http://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19_alerts.shtml).

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