

Expansions of Healthcare Services conducted by Providers during the COVID-19 Response

The Illinois Government has issued executive orders to expand access to healthcare services in order to meet the needs of residents and provide flexibility to providers during the COVID-19 public health emergency. See below for a brief description of each:

EO 2020-09: Executive Order to Expand Telehealth Services and Protect Health Care Providers in Response to COVID-19

This executive order expands access to telehealth so that people who are self-isolating can continue medical services from their home, as well as free up space in hospitals and other health care facilities. It expands what health insurance can cover through telehealth services, and removes barriers such as cost-sharing for any telehealth services and prior authorization for services related to COVID-19. Under this executive order, telehealth services should be delivered by an in-network provider authorized to practice in the State of Illinois, and acting within their scope of practice. This executive order expands the number of platforms that can be used for telehealth to any non-public facing remote communication method, including telephone calls, Skype, Apple FaceTime, Google Hangouts, Facebook messenger video chat, etc.

The telehealth coverage requirements apply to most types of private health insurance policies—for a full list, please reference the State FAQ sheet.

Medicaid Virtual Healthcare Expansion Emergency Rules

These emergency rules expand the access to telehealth services for Medicaid members by expanding the modes of communication and allowed locations of telehealth services. Under the emergency rules, Medicaid members can receive services in a wider range of locations, including place of residence or other temporary locations within or outside the state. Under the new rules, the enrolled practitioner providing telehealth services will not have any geographic or facility restrictions for delivering telehealth, as long as they are providing services within the scope of their license. This executive order expands the number of platforms that can be used for telehealth to any non-public facing remote communication method, including telephone calls, Skype, Apple FaceTime, Google Hangouts, Facebook messenger video chat, etc.

The executive order also states that medically necessary and clinically appropriate telehealth services and virtual care will be reimbursed (at the same rate as in person methods) from March 9, 2020 until the public health emergency no longer exists. For a full list of providers that are covered under this executive order and documentation procedures that may be required, please visit:

<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalProviders/notices/Pages/prn200320b.aspx>.