

To: Medi-Cal network participants

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Subject: COVID-19 All Plan Letters – Revisions for the end of the public health emergency

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) issued several All Plan Letters (APLs) to Medi-Cal managed care plans (MCPs) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In preparation for the official end of the public health emergency (PHE), several APLs have been revised. We are sharing a summary of these APL revisions with you to ensure you are aware of the information.

Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan (Blue Shield Promise) also publishes other [COVID-19 information](#), some of which pertains to network Medi-Cal service providers.

[APL 20-004](#)

Emergency Guidance for Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plans in Response to Covid-19

The latest revisions rescind temporary waivers and flexibilities that were extended during the PHE:

- **State Fair Hearings** – Effective May 12, 2023, the timeframes and requirements for state fair hearings will revert back to those contained in [APL 21-011](#).
- **Provider Enrollment** – Effective March 29, 2023, DHCS ended temporary and provisional provider enrollments. Providers have until June 28, 2023 to submit an application for Medi-Cal enrollment.
- **Provision of Care** – Provision of care in alternative settings, hospital capacity and blanket waivers are rescinded effective May 12, 2023.
- **Pharmacy** – Temporary flexibilities related to off-label and/or investigational drugs used to treat COVID-19 expired on April 20, 2021.
- **Member Eligibility** – Medi-Cal redetermination processes resumed on April 1, 2023.
- **Encounter Data Validation** activities that were suspended during the PHE resumed with state fiscal year 2021-2022.

Some revisions explain how certain requirements for responding to COVID-19 will remain in practice:

- **COVID-19 Testing and Treatment** – The APL advises MCPs to continue covering COVID-19 diagnostic, screening, and post-exposure or response testing and health care services approved or granted Emergency Use Authorization by the Food and Drug Administration, regardless of whether the services are provided in-network or out of network, and without prior authorization or other utilization management required. MCPs should continue to follow guidance provided in [APL 22-009](#).
- **Telehealth** – DHCS is continuing many of the PHE telehealth policies, including payment parity.

- **Well-Child Visits** – DHCS released a [Medi-Cal for Kids & Teens Outreach & Education Toolkit](#). The American Academy of Pediatrics also published guidance on its [website](#).
- **Transportation** – MCPS are advised to continue to approve transportation requests in a timely manner for members who may be infected with COVID-19 and need to see a provider or access pharmacy services.
- **Addition of Provider Types at FQHCs and RHCs** – DHCS is seeking federal approval to allow services provided Associate Clinical Social Workers and Associate Marriage and Family Therapists to be treated as billable visits.

[APL 20-021](#)

Acute Hospital Care at Home

The Acute Hospital Care at Home program has been extended to December 31, 2024.

[APL 22-004](#)

Strategic Approaches for Use by Managed Health Care Plans to Maximize Continuity of Coverage as Normal Eligibility and Enrollment Operations Resume

Revisions note that continuous coverage requirements ended on March 31, 2023 and Medi-Cal redetermination processes resumed on April 1, 2023. The edits also provide additional guidance and examples for MCPs to follow during the 12-month continuous coverage unwinding period.

These summaries are only meant to serve as brief descriptions of the APL guidelines. Please see the entire APLs for their complete requirements. The full text of all DHCS managed care APLs may be found at this URL: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Pages/AllPlanLetters.aspx>. Links to the DHCS.ca.gov website will take you off of the Blue Shield Promise website.

If you have questions about applying a benefit to Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan members, please contact Blue Shield Provider Services via Live Chat after logging in at www.blueshieldca.com/provider or call (800) 468-9935 from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.