

## **All MCOs: COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Information**

### **Background:**

Beginning December 28, 2020, Medicaid and CHIP will offer COVID-19 vaccines as a pharmacy benefit. Coverage of the vaccine administration is mandatory, and MCOs must not advertise it to pharmacies as an "opt-in" or "optional" benefit. There is no cost-sharing or copays for CHIP as this is a preventative service.

### **Key Details:**

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine National Drug Code (NDC) 59267-1000-1 will appear on the formulary file with an effective date of December 11, 2020. VDP will add the NDCs of Federal Drug Administration (FDA)-approved vaccines to the formulary file and notify the MCOs.

HHSC will cover the administration of the COVID vaccine as non-risk. HHSC set the fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursement rates in alignment with Medicare. For vaccines requiring two doses, the FFS administration reimbursement rate is \$16.94 for the initial dose and \$28.39 for the final dose.

### Pharmacy Claim Details:

1. Per National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) guidance, the National Provider Identifier (NPI) of the pharmacist administering the vaccine or supervising pharmacist must be listed in the prescriber field.
2. The supervising pharmacist must be used if the pharmacy staff administering the vaccine does not have a NPI (e.g., interns).
3. Ensure your pharmacy claim adjudication system does not validate pharmacist NPI against the master provider file since pharmacists administering a COVID vaccine do not have to enroll with Medicaid. To bypass edits validating Medicaid enrollment, FFS requires pharmacies to submit claims with the value of "05" in the "Prescription Origin Code" field (419-DJ). MCOs may choose to use this method or find another way to bypass Medicaid enrollment validation edits. (Note: The billing pharmacy submitting the claim must be enrolled in Texas Medicaid.)
4. Pharmacies submitting claims for the initial dose of a COVID vaccine must use the value "02" (Other Override) in the "Submission Clarification Code" field (420-DK) to indicate the first dose of a multi-dose vaccine. Pharmacies must submit the final dose with a value of "06" (Starter Dose) in field 420-DK.

### Provider Education:

MCOs must inform providers and pharmacies the COVID-19 vaccine administration requires registration with the DSHS Immunization Program Portal. Enrollment is

required to receive and administer any approved COVID-19 vaccine. For further COVID-19 enrollment information, direct providers to visit the DSHS website at, <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/provider-information.aspx>.

To register with the Texas Department of State Health Services, register here: <https://enrolltexasiz.dshs.texas.gov>. For questions about registration, instruct providers to call the DSHS COVID-19 Vaccine Provider hotline at (877) 835-7750, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday or email [COVID19VacEnroll@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:COVID19VacEnroll@dshs.texas.gov).

**Action:**

To ensure uniform benefit roll-out, we need input from the MCO. Please provide the following information to VDP Operations at [VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us](mailto:VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us) by close of business on December 22, 2020:

1. Confirmation your MCO will be ready to implement by December 28, 2020, and an overview of your communication plan to providers.
2. If your MCO will not be ready by December 28, 2020, provide the implementation date and an overview of your communication plan to providers. Please respond with this information to VDP Operations at [VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us](mailto:VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us).

**Contact:**

[VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us](mailto:VDP-Operations@hpsc.state.tx.us)