
All MCOs, DMOs, and MMPs: COVID-19 MCO Notices Extension Updates

Background:

In response to COVID-19, HHSC has been posting MCO Notices to TexConnect with guidance that contains dates for which the guidance applies. Many dates on posted guidance are set to expire on April 30, 2021.

Key Details:

HHSC is updating many MCO Notices with guidance dates that expire April 30, 2021 to extend through May 31, 2021.

The previously posted individual notices in TexConnect were updated to reflect the new extension dates.

The following flexibilities are now ending:

- Expand access to CANS 2.0 through telehealth for children ages 3-9 entering DFPS conservatorship.
 - This is now a permanent option effective April 1, 2021. An MCO notice communicated this on March 29.
- Extend nursing facility and skilled nursing facility MDS assessment authorizations for 90 days.
 - CMS is ending this federal waiver effective May 10, 2021.
- Cancel publication of Specialty Drug List (SDL) and keep current version in effect to avoid any disruptions during drug shortages.
 - The current SDL will remain in effect until June 30, 2021 or until rescinded. The July 2021 SDL publication will resume and a new notice with more information will be posted before the current SDL expires.

See attached for a list of all the MCO Notices. If you do not see one of these notices posted in TexConnect, then it is not relevant to your health plan. The three tables of updated notices are:

MCO Notices Updated with Extensions Through May 31, 2021:

- These Medicaid and CHIP flexibilities have been extended through May 31, 2021. If federal approval for these flexibilities ends sooner, HHSC will provide more information.

MCO Notices with Flexibilities That Have Ended

- This includes flexibilities that:
 - Are ending on May 10, 2021, and June 30, 2021.
 - Have ended on July 31, 2020; October 23, 2020; November 30, 2020; and December 31, 2020.

- These various notices were not updated as the guidance either remains in effect until rescinded or the extension details remain the same. View these notices in TexConnect for flexibility details.

Resources:

Extensions - COVID MCO Notices Tables (Attached)

MCO Notices Extension Updates

Updates made April 27, 2021

MCO Notices Updated with Extensions Through May 31, 2021*

The following Medicaid and CHIP flexibilities have been extended through May 31, 2021. If federal approval for these flexibilities ends sooner, HHSC will provide more information.

Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
Suspension of Unannounced Visit Requirement	Jan. 25, 2021
Texas Health Steps Recipient Reminder Letters for Telemedicine Medical Checkups	Jan. 21, 2021
Updated Guidance-Completing Initial Assessments & Reassessments for Expiring Individual Service Plan	Oct. 27, 2020
Completing Reassessments for Expiring Individual Service Plans <i>For updated guidance, see "Updated Guidance-Completing Initial Assessments & Reassessments for Expiring Individual Service Plan" notice published Oct. 27, 2020.</i>	Sept. 21, 2020
Guidance Regarding Third Party Resources for STAR Health Member	Aug. 24, 2020
Guidance for MCOs and MMPs Regarding New and Initial Prior Authorizations	June 29, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Temporarily Allow Verbal Consent from Members on Service Plans & Related Forms	June 17, 2020
Updated Guidance: CHIP Office Visit Co-Payments, Updated Reimbursement Process	June 8, 2020
CHIP Office Visit Co-Payments, Updated Reimbursement Process	May 18, 2020
New Guidance: THSteps Medical Checkups via Remote Delivery During Implementing COVID-19 Restrictions	May 11, 2020
No Signature Required for Prescription Drug Delivery	April 20, 2020
Provider Enrollment Requirement Waivers due to COVID-19	April 2, 2020
Add Rural Health Clinics as Telehealth and Telemedicine Sites	March 27, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Face to Face Visits and Service Coordination/Case Management	March 26, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Amend the GR Process for Services that Exceed the Program Cost Limit	March 26, 2020

COVID-19 Guidance: Appeal and Continuation of Benefit Request Extensions	March 26, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Oral Requests for an Appeal	March 26, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Fair Hearing Request Extensions	March 26, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: Fair Hearing Determination Extensions	March 26, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance for the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Option	March 24, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance for MCOs regarding Durable Medical Equipment	March 24, 2020
Waiver of CHIP Copayments	March 23, 2020
Claims for Telephone (Audio-Only) Behavioral Health Services	March 20, 2020
Claims for Telephone (Audio-Only) Medical Services	March 20, 2020

MCO Notices with Flexibilities That Have Ended

Flexibility Ending June 30, 2021*

Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
Specialty Drug List from Quarter Four (December 2019) Remains in Effect <i>*The current SDL will remain in effect until June 30, 2021 or until rescinded. The July 2021 SDL publication will resume and a new notice with more information on this will be posted before the current SDL expires.</i>	May 22, 2020

Flexibility Ending May 10, 2021

Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
End of COVID-19 MDS Authorization Extensions for Nursing Facility Providers	April 27, 2021
COVID-19 Guidance: Nursing Facility MDS Authorization Extensions <i>For updated guidance, see "End of COVID-19 MDS Authorization Extensions for Nursing Facility Providers" notice posted on April 27, 2021.</i>	April 9, 2020

Flexibilities Ended December 31, 2020

Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
Temporary EVV Policies for COVID-19 to end Dec. 31, 2020	Nov. 24, 2020
90-Day Prior Authorization Extensions to End Dec. 31. 2020	Nov. 24, 2020

<p>Post EVV Communications by Oct. 26</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "Temporary EVV Policies for COVID-19 to end Dec. 31, 2020" notice published on Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	Oct. 12, 2020
<p>Post Temporary EVV Policies for COVID-19 by Aug. 20</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "Temporary EVV Policies for COVID-19 to end Dec. 31, 2020" notice published on Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	Aug. 6, 2020
<p>Clarification to Guidance for MCOs and MMPs Regarding Extensions for Existing Prior Authorizations</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "90-Day Prior Authorization Extensions to End Dec. 31, 2020" notice published Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	April 14, 2020
<p>Clarification: Guidance for MCOs and MMPs regarding Extensions for Existing Prior Authorizations</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "90-Day Prior Authorization Extensions to End Dec. 31, 2020" notice published Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	April 3, 2020
<p>Updated: Guidance for MCOs and MMPs regarding Extensions for Existing Prior Authorizations</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "90-Day Prior Authorization Extensions to End Dec. 31, 2020" notice published Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	March 31, 2020
<p>Post Temporary EVV Policies by April 6</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "Temporary EVV Policies for COVID-19 to end Dec. 31, 2020" notice published on Nov. 24, 2020.</i></p>	March 23, 2020
<p>Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Provider Re-credentialing – COVID-19: Revised Due Date Extensions</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the flexibility ended Dec. 31, 2020.</i></p>	July 16, 2020
<p>Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Provider Re-credentialing – COVID-19</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see "Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Provider Re-credentialing – COVID-19: Revised Due Date Extensions" notice published July 16.</i></p>	June 18, 2020
Flexibilities Ended November 30, 2020	
Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
<p>FQHC Reimbursement for Telemedicine (Physician Deliv.) & Telehealth (Non-Physician-Deliv.) Services</p> <p><i>Effective Dec. 1, 2020, FQHCs may be reimbursed as telemedicine and telehealth distant site provider as permanent policy change per S.B. 670, Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2019.</i></p>	March 19, 2020
Flexibilities Ended October 23, 2020	
Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
THSteps Medical and Dental Checkups during COVID-19	April 17, 2020

<i>This notice was not updated as the flexibility ended Oct. 23, 2020. For guidance on the flexibility ending, see the notice titled, "THSteps Outreach and Education to Farmworker Children Waiver Ended" published Nov. 12.</i>	
Flexibilities Ended July 31, 2020	
Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
COVID-19: MCO Appeal Determination Extension Reporting <i>This notice was not updated as the flexibility ended July 31, 2020.</i>	May 5, 2020
COVID-19 Guidance: MCO Appeal Determinations <i>This notice was not updated as the flexibility ended July 31, 2020.</i>	March 26, 2020

Information on Other COVID-19 MCO Notices	
Title of MCO Notice:	Issued On:
Updated COVID-19 Lab Procedure Codes Eligible for Reimbursement to Pharmacists & Pharmacy Providers <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	April 26, 2021
COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Procedure Codes for FQHCs and RHCs <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	April 19, 2021
COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Rate Change Effective April 1 <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	April 1, 2021
STAR Health CANS 2.0 Assessment Available Via Telehealth <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same. As the notice states, the flexibility became a permanent policy effective April 1, 2021.</i>	March 29, 2021
Monoclonal Antibody Therapy Procedure Codes Q0245 and M0245 Approved for COVID-19 Treatment <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	March 18, 2021
COVID-19 Test & Diagnostic Reimbursement Strategy Update <i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	March 15, 2021

<p>Medicaid Adds Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine to Formulary</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>March 9, 2021</p>
<p>COVID-19 Vaccine and Vaccine Administration Procedure Codes</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>March 4, 2021</p>
<p>Action Needed: Compliance with New CMS COVID-19 Guidance: Eligibility, Enrollment, & EPSDT Benefits</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Feb. 12, 2021</p>
<p>Suspension of Out-of-Network Limits for COVID-19 Vaccine</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Feb. 11, 2021</p>
<p>Compliance with New CMS COVID-19 Guidance - Age Out Transitions and Waiver Terminations</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 29, 2021</p>
<p>Emergency Extensions for Optometry Provider License Renewals</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 14, 2021</p>
<p>Approved COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Materials for Providers and Members</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 11, 2021</p>
<p>COVID-19 Test & Diagnostic Reimbursement Strategy – Update</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded. For additional information, see the notice titled "COVID-19 Test & Diagnostic Reimbursement Strategy Update" published on March 15, 2021."</i></p>	<p>Jan. 11, 2021</p>
<p>COVID-19 Vaccine NDC Formulary Update</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 7, 2021</p>
<p>Additional Monoclonal Antibody Therapy Procedure Codes Approved for COVID-19 Treatment</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 4, 2021</p>
<p>COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage Includes Moderna</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>Dec. 23, 2020</p>

Coverage of Casirivimab and Imdevimab under Emergency Use Authorization <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 23, 2020
COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Information <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 21, 2020
COVID-19 Vaccine and Vaccine Administration Procedure Codes <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 21, 2020
Preparing Pharmacy Claim Systems for COVID Vaccines <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 14, 2020
COVID-19 Vaccine and Vaccine Administration Procedure Codes <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 14, 2020
Addition of Bamlanivimab as Texas Medicaid Benefit <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 14, 2020
Available Resources to Provide Personal Protective Equipment for the CDS Option <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 14, 2020
COVID-19 Vaccine and Vaccine Administration Codes <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Dec. 10, 2020
STAR+PLUS HCBS Upgrade Process for Members Who Exited a NF Due to COVID-19 Without Services in Place <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Nov. 24, 2020
Emergency Rate Increases for NFs Effective April 1, Extended through End of Federally-approved PHE <i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	Nov. 19, 2020
New Coronavirus (COVID-19) Procedure Codes for the Introduction of Infusion of Therapeutics <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Nov. 10, 2020
Update: STAR Kids MDCP and STAR+PLUS HCBS Interest List Releases <i>STAR+PLUS HCBS interest list releases resumes in Feb. 2021. For the most current information, view the MCO Notice posted on Jan. 21, 2021 titled "February 2021 STAR+PLUS HCBS Interest List Release Counts by Service Area". MDCP interest list release remain suspended.</i>	Nov. 10, 2020
Electronic Data Verification Scoring Results	Nov. 5, 2020

<i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	
STAR Kids MDCP Only: Process for Off-Cycle Reassessments <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Oct. 27, 2020
STAR+PLUS HCBS Only: Process for Off-Cycle Reassessments <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Oct. 27, 2020
Certain COVID-19 Procedure Codes Implemented Retroactively – Clarification <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Oct. 8, 2020
Aug. 4 MCO Notice Retracted: Updated Information on COVID-19 Medicaid Renewals <i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	Oct. 6, 2020
New Value Point of Origin for Admission of Visit Code "G," In Use Beginning July 1, 2020 <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Oct. 1, 2020
Updated Information: Spell of Illness Limitation and COVID-19 <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Sept. 17, 2020
Updated Information: COVID-19 – Spell of Illness Limitation in STAR Health <i>This notice was not updated as the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Sept. 17, 2020
Certain COVID-19 Procedure Codes Implemented Retroactively <i>For updated guidance, see "Certain COVID-19 Procedure Codes Implemented Retroactively - Clarification" posted on Oct. 8. There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i>	Sept. 10, 2020
Emergency Rate Increases for NFs Effective April 1 Extended Through End of Federally-Approved PHE <i>For updated guidance, see "Emergency Rate Increases for Nursing Facilities Effective April 1, 2020, Extended through End of Federally-approved PHE" notice published Nov. 19. This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	Sept. 2, 2020
Guidance: STAR Health Member's Changing Primary Care Provider During the Public Health Emergency <i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	Aug. 24, 2020
COVID-19 and Applicability of EPSDT for Some Adults <i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i>	Aug. 17, 2020

<p>State Fiscal Year 2020 Texas Health Steps Timely Checkup Reports – Calculations During COVID-19</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated. As it states, timely checkup standards for SFY 2021 are reinstated starting November 1, 2020.</i></p>	Aug. 13, 2020
<p>Clarification to “Procedure Code Addition and Update for Coronavirus (COVID-19)”</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	Aug. 10, 2020
<p>Procedure Code Addition and Update for COVID-19</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see “Clarification to “Procedure Code Addition and Update for Coronavirus (COVID-19)” notice published on Aug. 10. There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	July 13, 2020
<p>Reprocessing Guidance for COVID-19 Related Claims</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	July 6, 2020
<p>Emergency Rate Increases for the Nursing Facilities Effective Retroactive to April 1, 2020</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see “Emergency Rate Increases for Nursing Facilities Effective April 1, 2020, Extended through End of Federally-approved PHE” notice published Nov. 19. This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	July 2, 2020
<p>Leveraging Long-Term Care Hospitals (LTCHs) During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency</p> <p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	June 27, 2020
<p>COVID-19 – Spell of Illness Limitation in STAR Health</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see “Updated Information: COVID-19 – Spell of Illness Limitation in STAR Health” notice published on Sept. 17.</i></p>	June 4, 2020
<p>Spell of Illness Limitation and COVID-19</p> <p><i>For updated guidance, see “Updated Information: Spell of Illness Limitation and COVID-19” notice published on Sept. 17.</i></p>	June 4, 2020
<p>COVID-19 and Applicability of EPSDT for Some Adults in STAR and STAR Health</p> <p><i>This notice was not updated as the extension details remain the same and the guidance is in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	June 2, 2020
<p>Two MCO Notices Retracted: April 3, 2020 MDCP and STAR+PLUS HCBS Interest List Releases</p> <p><i>STAR+PLUS HCBS interest list releases resumes in Feb. 2021. For the most current information, view the MCO Notice posted on Jan. 21, 2021 titled “February 2021 STAR+PLUS HCBS Interest List Release Counts by Service Area”. MDCP interest list release remain suspended.</i></p>	May 28, 2020
<p>Service Planning for Pregnant Women During COVID-19</p>	May 22, 2020

<p><i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	
<p>COVID-19: Service-Level Changes Resulting from Telehealth and Telephonic Visits <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>May 7, 2020</p>
<p>Money Follows the Person Process for Nursing Facility Residents <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>May 5, 2020</p>
<p>COVID-19 Guidance: STAR Kids Age-Outs that Transitioned on April 1, 2020 <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i> <i>For updated guidance, see the notice titled "Action Needed: Compliance with New CMS COVID-19 Guidance: Eligibility, Enrollment, & EPSDT Benefits" posted on Feb. 12, 2021, and the notice titled "Compliance with New CMS COVID-19 Guidance - Age Out Transitions and Waiver Terminations" posted on Jan. 29, 2021.</i></p>	<p>April 23, 2020</p>
<p>MCO COVID-19 Guidance: Telehealth for Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy <i>There is not an end date on this notice and the guidance remains in effect until rescinded.</i></p>	<p>April 10, 2020</p>