

April 2023

Medicare Advantage Plans Return to Standard Benefits with End of COVID-19 Federal Public Health Emergency May 11

With the end of the COVID-19 federal public health emergency slated for May 11, Florida Blue Medicare will return to our pre-pandemic processes. Standard benefits will be applied starting May 12. Here is what you need to know.

Member Cost Share May Change

The federal government allowed health plans like Florida Blue Medicare to lower, or eliminate, the cost share for certain services during the pandemic. Now that the public health emergency is ending, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced that following the end of the COVID-19 federal public health emergency, it is no longer a mandatory benefit to provide such services with reduced cost share. Starting May 12, Florida Blue will begin applying normal cost shares for certain services.

Virtual Visits Now a Standard Benefit

Virtual visit benefits are now standard on our Florida Blue Medicare plans. After May 11, members will pay their normal cost share for these services:

- Virtual primary care
- Virtual specialists
- Virtual behavioral health
- Teladoc for general medicine
- Audio-only virtual health
- Virtual home health care
- Virtual physical/occupational/speech therapy
- Virtual urgent care
- Virtual emergency care

Note: Virtual visits for skilled nursing facilities will end May 11.

Out-of-Network Coverage Ends for Florida Blue Medicare HMO Members

During the pandemic, Florida Blue Medicare HMO members were able to see providers not in the HMO network. After May 11, our HMO members will need to see providers in their Florida Blue Medicare HMO network for their care to be covered. To make this easier for our members, we are providing a 30-day transition period for them to choose providers who are in the Florida Blue Medicare HMO network. This includes doctors, specialists, hospitals, labs, imaging sites (X-rays, MRIs, etc.).

Florida Blue Medicare PPO members can continue seeing providers not in the PPO network, but after June 11, they will pay the higher out-of-network cost share.

Members Receiving Letters from Florida Blue Medicare

All Florida Blue Medicare members received a letter the week of April 11 with general information on how the end of the federal public health emergency may impact them. In May, we will be mailing letters to members who are seeing out-of-network providers. Your Florida Blue Medicare patients may ask you for help finding in-network providers. Please encourage them to call the number on their member ID card for assistance.

Florida Blue Medicare is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.