



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Health

DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
Director's Office

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TERMINATION OF ALASKA MEDICAID-SPECIFIC 1135 AND BLANKET WAIVER COVID-19 FLEXIBILITIES EFFECTIVE MAY 11, 2023

March 13, 2023

Dear Alaska Medicaid Provider,

The purpose of this letter is to notify Alaska Medicaid-enrolled providers of the **termination of all remaining COVID-19 public health emergency flexibilities, effective May 11, 2023.**

The attached document identifies all flexibilities that are being terminated and the anticipated impact of each.

Background

On April 2, 2020, in response to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Alaska, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) notified the Department of Health and Social Services, now Department of Health, of the approval of more than 100 section 1135 and blanket waiver flexibilities. The Department of Health subsequently relaxed or suspended multiple Alaska Medicaid program requirements to ensure the availability and sufficiency of health care services in Alaska. On February 11, 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced that the COVID-19 public health emergency and all related flexibilities would expire on May 11, 2023.

If you have questions, please contact Susan Miller Dunkin at susan.dunkin@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee Gayhart".

Renee Gayhart
Director

**TERMINATION OF ALASKA MEDICAID-SPECIFIC
COVID-19 1135 and BLANKET WAIVER FLEXIBILITIES
EFFECTIVE MAY 11, 2023**

FLEXIBILITY	ANTICIPATED IMPACT
Extend timelines for requesting and adjudicating Medicaid fair hearings	No impact; flexibility was utilized on a limited basis; return to pre-COVID-19 requirements
Allow Medicaid fair hearings to be conducted via remote technology (e.g., telephone, video conference)	No impact; flexibility was not implemented, as approved use of remote technology predates COVID-19
Pharmacy - Expanded existing scope of practice for pharmacists	No impact; Medicaid preventive service regulations , effective 03/03/2023, make the expanded scope permanent
Medicaid Services - Waived hands-on 1st Aid and CPR training for providers in SP including 1915(k)	Return to pre-COVID-19 requirements
Medicaid Services & HCBS - Allowed establishment of, and provision of services in alternate settings - with conditions.	Return to pre-COVID-19 service setting requirements
Streamlined provisional Medicaid provider enrollment for providers not enrolled with Medicare or other state Medicaid program	No impact; flexibility was utilized on a limited basis and is not currently utilized
Streamlined Medicaid provider enrollment/postponed fingerprint requirement for a provider enrolled with Medicare or another state Medicaid program	No impact; flexibility was utilized on a limited basis
Waive Medicaid provider enrollment application fee	Return to pre-COVID-19 provider enrollment application fee requirements
Waive state site visit during Medicaid provider enrollment process	Return to pre-COVID-19 site visit requirements; no action required of enrolled providers
Allowed DHSS to temporarily cease revalidation of Medicaid enrolled providers directly impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE)	Reinstatement of pre-COVID-19 revalidation requirements; no action required of provider until notified of revalidation deadline

Medicaid Financial - Suspended deductibles and copays for COVID-19 related vaccine products, administration of vaccines, testing, and treatment, to include pharmacy.	Reinstatement of all pre-COVID-19 deductibles and copayments except those related to COVID-19 vaccine products, administration of vaccines, testing, and treatment, which will continue to be suspended until September 30, 2024
Medicaid Financial - Suspend premiums for qualified working disabled under 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XIII)	No impact; flexibility was not implemented
Suspend prior authorization requirements in the Medicaid program	No impact; flexibility was not utilized
Pharmacy: raised quantity limits	No impact; flexibility was not implemented
Flexibility allowing exceptions to the preferred drug list (PDL)	No impact; no supply shortages were experienced; flexibility was not utilized
Pharmacy: requirement that LTCs return unused medications.	Return to pre-COVID-19 requirements
Pharmacy - reimbursement for COVID-19 therapeutics/testing	No impact; flexibility was utilized on a limited basis; Medicaid preventive service regulations , effective 03/03/2023, make the expanded scope permanent
Allow ordering of radiology, laboratory, and home health services by other licensed practitioners	No impact; ordering of home health services by APRNs/PAs was made permanent eff. 05/14/2021 ; ordering of radiology and laboratory services by APRNs/PAs was already allowed under their respective scopes of practice
Medicaid, (Behavioral Health), HCBS - Allow reimbursement for telehealth via additional modalities	Regulations have been proposed to make permanent selected telehealth flexibilities
Allow the state and clinic to designate a Medicaid-enrolled practitioner's location as part of the clinic to provide services via telehealth.	Regulations have been proposed to make permanent selected telehealth flexibilities

Pharmacy - Increased pharmacy dispensing fee	The Department of Health is seeking and anticipates approval for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an additional extension of the increased pharmacy dispensing fees October 1, 2023 through May 10, 2024, or until the effective date of regulatory changes to pharmacy dispensing fees, whichever is earlier. returning to the pre-PHE reimbursement of dispensing fee of every 14 days to no more than every 22 days per pharmacy per covered outpatient drug
Pharmacy - Guarantee provider reimbursement for medication shipping	No impact; reimbursement for shipping is established under 7 AAC 145.400(b)
Pharmacy - increases number of allowable days in the dispensing of medications to 68-days unless the medication is on the 90-day list	No impact; flexibility was based on initial surge and is being utilized on a limited basis; regulatory changes are under development to allow for ease of update of the 90-day list
Allow pharmacist to petition for payment under different methodology	No impact; flexibility was not utilized
Pharmacy - Expanded reimbursement for pharmacists (expanded scope of practice)	No impact; Medicaid preventive service regulations , effective 03/03/2023, make the expanded scope permanent
Flexibility to allow for ambulance treat in place services	No impact; flexibility was not implemented
Waiver of durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies provider/practitioner location requirements	Return to pre-COVID-19 requirements
Flexibility concerning provider enrollment requirements for durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies providers	No impact on enrolled providers; return to pre-COVID-19 DMEPOS enrollment requirements