
To: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Providers

Date: March 20, 2023

Subject: [Informational Bulletin 20-6](#): COVID-19 – Telemedicine/Telehealth Facilitation by Licensed Mental Health Practitioners
Revised March 16, 2023

Informational Bulletins that summarize policies and/or procedures are intended for quick reference and are accurate on the date they are issued.

COVID-19 – Telemedicine/Telehealth Facilitation by Licensed Mental Health Practitioners

The Biden Administration announced the public health emergency is set to expire on **May 11, 2023**. Beginning **May 12, 2023**, the requirements in the Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual will resume.

The Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual can be found at the following link:
https://www.lamedicaid.com/provweb1/providermanuals/BHS_main.htm.

Effective **May 12, 2023** - Assessments and evaluations conducted by an LMHP through telehealth should include synchronous, interactive, real-time electronic communication comprising both audio and visual elements, unless clinically appropriate and based on documented member consent.

Provider responsibilities when providing services delivered through telehealth include:

- The provider shall deliver telehealth services in accordance with all state and federal laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and any HIPAA related directives from the Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Health and Human Services.
- The provider shall deliver telehealth services in accordance with rules set forth by their respective professional licensing board and accepted standards of clinical practice.
- The provider shall maintain documentation for the services delivered through the use of

telehealth and document the specific telehealth modality used.

- The provider shall use the appropriate procedure code, modifiers, and place of service codes.

Effective **May 12, 2023** - Psychological testing and group therapy provided by an LMHP shall be delivered through an In-person service delivery method, unless otherwise allowed per the Manual or subsequent LDH-issued notice.

General Considerations

Fully licensed mental health practitioners include:

- Psychiatrists;
- Medical Psychologists;
- Licensed Psychologists;
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW);
- Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC);
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT);
- Licensed Addiction Counselors (LAC); and
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) with a psychiatric specialization.

Telehealth/telemedicine may be used to facilitate certain services, when clinically appropriate.

When using telemedicine/telehealth, please review the new guideline:

- Recipients may refuse services delivered through telehealth or request that services be delivered in-person. In these cases, the provider must provide an in-person service or refer to an equally qualified licensed practitioner.

Communication Requirements

Effective **May 12, 2023**, services provided using telehealth must include a secure telecommunication system which is compliant with HIPAA requirements. Facebook Live, Twitch, TikTok, and similar video communication applications are public facing and **must not** be used for telemedicine/telehealth services. Audio-only delivery is allowed only in situations where an audio/video system is not available or not feasible, and when provided in a manner that is consistent with the applicable requirements of HIPAA.

Psychological Testing

Effective **May 12, 2023**, psychological testing and group therapy provided by an LMHP shall be delivered through an in-person service delivery, unless otherwise allowed per the Manual or subsequent LDH-issued notice.

Group Therapy

Effective **May 12, 2023**, group psychotherapy shall be provided via an in-person delivery method.

In-Person Encounters

It is strongly recommended that all behavioral healthcare practitioners be vaccinated, unless there is a medical contra-indication.

For full details, please see [IB 20-6 revised 3/16/2023](#).

Questions regarding this message should be directed to AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Provider Services at 1-888-922-0007. The Provider Services Department can be reached between 7:00 am – 7:00 pm daily.

Missed an Informational Bulletin?

You can find a complete listing of Informational Bulletins on the [Provider Newsletters and Updates](#) page of our website under the header [Louisiana Department of Health Information Bulletins](#).

Need to update your provider information? Send full details to: network@amerihealthcaritasla.com.