



What You Should Know About:

## Medicaid Telehealth Services During the Coronavirus Emergency

### What if I do not have the phone or internet service needed for telehealth?

During the COVID-19 State of Emergency, many cell phone companies and internet providers are including some of their services at no cost for eligible consumers. These include:

- **Free Wi-fi/internet:**
  - Households with K-12 and college students, and those who qualify as low-income, may receive free Wi-Fi/internet.
  - Call your service provider to see if you qualify.
- **Unlimited data and cell phone minutes:**
  - Many cell and internet companies are offering unlimited data plans for no additional charge.
  - Call your service provider for more information.
- **SafeLink Wireless:**
  - Subscribers get up to 350 minutes and 3GB of data
  - Call 1-800-SafeLink (723-3546) for enrollment and plan changes support.

**Telehealth is the use of communication technologies, by phone or online, that allows providers to deliver health care to patients at a distance.**

### Does Medicaid cover telehealth services?

- In response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), coverage for both Medicaid fee-for-service and Medicaid managed care plans have expanded to cover telehealth by all Medicaid-qualified doctors and service providers whenever possible, to avoid the spread of the virus.

### What telehealth services does Medicaid cover?

- Medicaid-covered telehealth services include any Medicaid-covered health or mental health service that can be provided remotely, and can include telephonic (over the phone), telemedicine (internet-based audio/visual), telehealth equipment and devices, and remote patient monitoring.

### Where can I receive telehealth services?

- During the COVID-19 State of Emergency, telehealth services can be received anywhere you are located in New York State at the time health care services are delivered.



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## Who can provide telehealth services?

- During the COVID-19 State of Emergency, all Medicaid providers can use telehealth to provide services they would normally provide in the office, as long as the services are appropriate for telehealth.
- Telehealth can be used for health care visits that would otherwise take place in a medical office, clinic or other locations (e.g., health centers, day programs).
- Depending on the service, providers can include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, midwives, dentists, registered nurses, as well as other practitioners (e.g., psychologists, social workers, dieticians).

## How is my privacy protected when I receive telehealth services?

- Federal and state privacy protections (like the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act [HIPAA]) still apply to protect your confidentiality and privacy, with some helpful changes in place during the COVID-19 State of Emergency, like letting you authorize certain aspects of your care verbally, using online programs like Facetime or Skype.
- Telehealth services shall not be recorded without your permission.

## How do I receive telehealth services?

- Call your doctor's office or health care provider. They will help you access telehealth services as appropriate.

## Do I need special equipment to receive telehealth services?

- Generally, no. Telehealth equipment varies depending on the type of care being provided, and can include:
  - Telephonic service and use of a telephone for audio-only communications with your provider.
  - Internet access via a personal computer, tablet, smartphone, or other similar device for video conferencing, image/data transfer, and remote monitoring equipment used by your provider.
- Your provider may also work with you to use technology and other instruments to monitor your blood pressure or oxygen levels while you stay at home.