

PROVIDER MEMO

To: SCFHP Enhanced Case Management and Community Supports Providers
From: Lori Andersen, Director, Long Term Services and Supports
Date: February 7, 2022
Subject: COVID-19 Safety – Temporary Substitution for Face-to-Face Services

Dear Enhanced Case Management (ECM) and Community Supports Providers,

On November 1, 2021, Governor Newsom signed the **Executive Order N-21-21** extending the Public Health Emergency (PHE) through March 31, 2022. In alignment with the guidance in the Executive Order to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 and in light of the current surge in COVID-19 cases in California, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is allowing flexibility for Enhanced Case Management (ECM) and Community Supports services to be conducted in a manner that prioritizes the safety of both our providers and members. Therefore in order to minimize the risk of serious illness due to COVID-19, contracted ECM and Community Supports providers may temporarily implement telephonic and video calls as a substitute for face-to-face services. For ECM, the expectation is that the requirements for the frequency of services be maintained while utilizing an alternative telephonic and video call approach to ECM services. Additionally, SCFHP would like to note that the following is reflected in DHCS's ECM Policy Guide: When in-person communication is unavailable or does not meet the needs of the member, the ECM provider is permitted to use alternative methods (including innovative use of telehealth) to provide culturally-appropriate and accessible communication in accordance with member choice.

In light of the extension of the PHE, and the guidance provided in DHCS's ECM Policy Guide, DHCS is allowing ECM providers to temporarily suspend in-person visit requirements through March 2022.

As a reminder, please use the GQ modifier in your billing to reflect your entity's use of telehealth services.

Executive Order N-21-21 is attached for your reference.

Questions related to ECM or to Community Supports may be relayed via email to ECM@scfhp.com or CommunitySupports@scfhp.com respectively.

**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-21-21

WHEREAS on March 4, 2020, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and increased spread of the Delta variant, on August 16, 2021, I issued Executive Order N-12-21 to ensure the State's health care facilities continue to have the staffing and resources needed to prevent potential strain on the State's health care delivery system; and

WHEREAS on October 4, 2021, I issued Executive Order N-17-21 to extend flexibilities allowing the State to increase health care capacity to support ongoing testing and vaccination efforts and minimize the threat of COVID-19 to Californians; and

WHEREAS California has stopped recording week-over-week declines in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, which demonstrates a plateau and the potential beginning of a new surge in COVID-19 cases; and

WHEREAS as flu season approaches, it is critical that California's health care facilities, already short-staffed and backlogged from the Delta variant and with high-levels of non-COVID-19 admissions, have the flexibilities that they need for additional capacity and to prevent staffing shortages; and

WHEREAS California continues to prioritize efforts to vaccinate all eligible individuals against COVID-19, including ensuring access to boosters and vaccines for newly eligible populations; and

WHEREAS supporting robust COVID-19 testing capacity remains critical in the efforts to protect public health and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS continued flexibility in non-hospital settings remains necessary to support these ongoing testing and vaccination efforts and to minimize the threat of COVID-19 to vulnerable Californians; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes, regulations, and certain local ordinances specified or referenced herein would prevent, hinder, or delay appropriate actions to prevent and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes of the State of California, and in particular, Government Code sections 8567, 8571, and 8627, do hereby issue the following Order to become effective immediately:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The timeframes set forth in Executive Order N-12-21, paragraphs 1 through 6, are hereby extended through March 31, 2022.
2. The timeframe set forth in Executive Order N-17-21, Paragraph 1, is hereby extended through March 31, 2022.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 10th day of November 2021.



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY WEBER, PH.D.
Secretary of State