

COVID-19 information from Healthy Blue (June 2021 update)

Updated to include vaccine information

Healthy Blue is closely monitoring COVID-19 developments and how they will impact our customers and our healthcare provider partners. Our clinical team is actively monitoring external queries and reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and MO HealthNet Division (MHD) to help us determine what action is necessary on our part.

Summary

COVID-19 testing and visits associated with COVID-19 testing

Healthy Blue will cover reasonable member healthcare costs related to COVID-19. Tests samples may be obtained in many settings including a doctor's office, urgent care, ER or even drive-through testing once available. While a test sample cannot be obtained through a telehealth visit, the telehealth provider can connect members with testing.

Telehealth

Healthy Blue is following the communication on telehealth visits per MHD. MHD telehealth communications can be located on the provider website [here](#).

Frequently asked questions

Action taken by Healthy Blue

What is Healthy Blue doing to prepare?

Healthy Blue is committed to help provide increased access to care to help alleviate the added stress on individuals, families and the nation's healthcare system.

These actions are intended to support the protective measures taken across the country to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and are central to our commitment to remove barriers and support communities through this unprecedented time.

Healthy Blue is committed to help our members gain timely access to care and services in a way that places the least burden on the healthcare system. Our actions should reduce barriers to seeing a doctor, getting tested and maintaining adherence to medications for long-term health issues.

How is Healthy Blue monitoring COVID-19?

Healthy Blue is monitoring COVID-19 developments and what they mean for our associates and those we serve. We are fielding questions about the outbreak from our customers, members, providers and associates. Additionally, our clinical team is actively monitoring external queries and reports from the CDC to help us determine what, if any, action is necessary on our part to further support our stakeholders.

<https://provider.healthybluemo.com>

Healthy Blue is a Medicaid product offered by Missouri Care, Inc., a MO HealthNet Managed Care health plan contracting with the Missouri Department of Social Services. Healthy Blue is administered statewide by Missouri Care, Inc. and administered in the Kansas City service region by Missouri Care, Inc. in cooperation with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City. Missouri Care, Inc. and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City are both independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Healthy Blue has a business continuity plan for serious communicable disease outbreaks, inclusive of pandemics, and will be ready to deploy the plan if necessary.

Our enterprise-wide business continuity program includes recovery strategies for critical processes and supporting resources, automated 24/7 situational awareness monitoring for our footprint and critical support points, and the Virtual Command Center for Emergency Management command, control and communication.

In addition, Healthy Blue has established a team of experts to monitor, assess and help facilitate timely mitigation and response where it has influence as appropriate for the evolving novel coronavirus threat.

In case of mass epidemic, how can you ensure that your contracted providers can still provide services?

Healthy Blue is committed to working with and supporting its contracted providers. Our benefits already state that if members do not have appropriate access to network doctors we will authorize coverage for out-of-network doctors as medically necessary.

COVID-19 testing

When member cost sharing has been waived as outlined in this FAQ for COVID-19 testing and visits associated with COVID-19 testing, telehealth (video + audio) services, and in-network telephonic-only services, how does that impact provider reimbursement?

Healthy Blue will process the claim, as it does, for example, with preventive health services.

How is Healthy Blue reimbursing participating hospitals that perform COVID-19 diagnostic testing in an emergency room or inpatient setting?

Reimbursement for COVID-19 testing performed in a participating hospital emergency room or inpatient setting is based on existing contractual rates.

What codes would be appropriate for COVID-19 lab testing?

Healthy Blue is encouraging providers to bill with codes U0001, U0002, U0003, U0004, 86328, 86769, or 87635 based on the test provided.

How is Healthy Blue reimbursing participating hospitals which are performing COVID-19 diagnostic testing in a drive-through testing setting?

Based on standard American Medical Association (AMA) and HCPCS coding guidelines, for participating hospitals with a lab fee schedule, Healthy Blue will recognize the codes 87635 and U0002, and will reimburse drive thru COVID-19 tests according to the lab fee schedule. Participating hospitals without lab fee schedules will follow the same lab testing reimbursement as defined in their facility agreement with Healthy Blue .

Does Healthy Blue require a prior authorization on the focused test used to diagnose COVID-19?

No, prior authorization is not required for diagnostic services related to COVID-19 testing.

Virtual, telehealth and telephonic care

What services are appropriate to provide via telehealth?

- Healthy Blue covers telehealth services for providers who have access to those platforms/capabilities.
- Healthy Blue is following the communication on telehealth visits per MHD. MHD telehealth communications and bulletins can be located on the MHD provider website at the following URL: <https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm>.

Will Healthy Blue cover telephone-only services in addition to telehealth via video + audio?

Yes. Healthy Blue is following the communication on telehealth visits per MHD. MHD telehealth communications can be located on the provider website at the following URL:

<https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm>.

What codes would be appropriate to consider for a telehealth visit with a patient who wants to receive health guidance related to COVID-19?

Healthy Blue is following the communication on telehealth visits per MHD. MHD telehealth communications can be located on the provider website at the following URL:

<https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm#032421>.

How can members get in touch with Healthy Blue if they have health questions?

Healthy Blue members also can call the 24/7 Nurse HelpLine at the number listed on their Healthy Blue ID card to speak with a registered nurse about health questions.

COVID-19 vaccine

How is Healthy Blue reimbursing FDA-Approved COVID-19 vaccines?

The cost of COVID-19 FDA-approved vaccines will initially be paid for by the government.

Healthy Blue will cover the administration of COVID-19 vaccines with no cost share for in- and out-of-network providers, during the national public health emergency, and providers are not permitted under the federal mandate to balance-bill members.

Coding, billing and claims

What diagnosis codes would be appropriate to consider for a patient with known or suspected COVID-19?

MHD has provided coding guidelines related to COVID-19:

<https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm#032421>

What diagnosis codes would be appropriate to consider for a patient with known or suspected COVID-19 for services where a member's cost shares are waived?

MHD has provided coding guidelines related to COVID-19:

<https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm#032421>

Does Healthy Blue expect any slowdown with claim adjudication because of COVID-19?

We are not seeing any impacts to claims payment processing at this time.

What CPT®/HCPCS codes would be appropriate to consider for the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine?

MHD has provided coding guidelines related to COVID-19 vaccines:

<https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers/pages/provtips.htm#032421>

Other

Are you aware of any limitations in coverage for treatment of an illness/virus/disease that is part of an epidemic?

Our standard health plan contracts do not have exclusions or limitations on coverage for services for the treatment of illnesses that result from an epidemic.

Should providers who are establishing temporary locations to provide healthcare services during the COVID-19 emergency notify Healthy Blue of the new temporary address?

Providers should use the provider's location when determining the appropriate POS code to bill.

Permitted places of service from where to deliver services via telehealth include school (03), office (11), inpatient hospital (21), outpatient hospital (22), emergency room (23), nursing facility (32), independent clinic (49), Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) (50), community mental health center (53), nonresidential substance abuse treatment facility (57), end-stage renal disease treatment facility (65), and public health clinic (71).

Healthy Blue does not accept or use POS code 02 for telehealth. Providers working from a home office to provide services via telehealth should use POS 11 for office and not POS 12 for home.