## COVID-19 Policy Response: Medicaid

Last Updated: May 4, 2020 (new updates in orange) | Check for updates [here](#), and check out Voices for Georgia’s Children’s COVID-19 Response Resources [here](#).

### Potential Policy and Practice Changes

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<td><strong>ELIGIBILITY &amp; ENROLLMENT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Freeze Medicaid and CHIP disenrollment / Delay renewals for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries</strong></td>
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| E.g. Keep children in the child welfare system enrolled in Medicaid and ensure that these children continue receiving the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit, even as they “age out” of the system (children in foster care may remain in Medicaid until age 26) | FFCRA (3/18/20): States are automatically eligible for a temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase, but they must freeze Medicaid disenrollment to demonstrate a maintenance of effort (MOE) | CHIP: DCH submit a CHIP Disaster Relief SPA or 1115(a) waiver to CMS | • Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)  
• Under DCH’s submitted 1115(a) waiver, individuals, for the demonstration period (3/1/20 through 60 days past the end of the federally declared emergency), will continue to receive state plan, CHIP state plan, 1115 Georgia Planning for Health Babies (P4HB) waiver, HCBS, or coverage through this demonstration to address the COVID-19 public health emergency. (03/28/20)  
• Waiver application revised and resubmitted. (04/08/20)  
• DCH submitted a CHIP Disaster Relief SPA. (04/20/20) | |
| **Allow self-attestation for eligibility criteria when documentation is not available and individuals may be infected with COVID-19** | N/A | DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS  
(Disaster Relief SPA Example) | • Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)  
• DCH submitted an 1115(a) waiver seeking to allow for self-attestation or alternative verification of individuals’ eligibility (income/assets) and level of care to qualify for long-term care services and supports. (03/28/20) | |

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<td>Temporarily waive Medicaid eligibility verification for all eligibility criteria, excluding citizenship and immigration status</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS</td>
<td>• Waiver application <a href="#">revised and resubmitted</a> (04/08/20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain coverage for Medicaid beneficiaries temporarily residing outside of the state due to COVID-19</td>
<td>CMS 42 CFR §435.403(j) requires that states provide Medicaid to eligible residents of the state, including residents who are absent from the state</td>
<td>DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS</td>
<td>• Governor issued an <a href="#">EO</a> authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily allow <a href="#">lawfully residing children and pregnant women</a> to enroll in Medicaid or Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DCH submit Medicaid and CHIP Disaster Relief SPAs to CMS</td>
<td>• Unknown.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Temporarily adopt presumptive eligibility for community health centers (and/or other entities)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS (Disaster Relief SPA Example)</td>
<td>• Governor issued an <a href="#">EO</a> authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)</td>
<td>CMS recently approved <a href="#">New Mexico’s Medicaid state plan amendment</a>, which allows many child-serving agencies to presumptively determine family Medicaid eligibility during the COVID-19 emergency</td>
</tr>
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- Authorizes community health centers as a qualified entity to screen and enroll eligible populations
- Other entities can include: head start, agencies that determine eligibility for child care assistance, WIC, Child support enforcement agency, homeless shelters, and housing assistance agencies.
- Qualified entities can also help families gather documents needed to complete the full application process.

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| Temporarily expand hospital presumptive eligibility for non-Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI), COVID-19 vulnerable populations (e.g., elderly, disabled, in need of Long Term Care services). | FFCRA (3/18/20): Temporarily increases FMAP by 6.2% for Medicaid, which will help offset the cost of the increase in enrollment | DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS | • Governor issued an [EO](#) authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20) | • DCH submitted an 1115(a) waiver seeking to:  
  o expand hospital presumptive eligibility to include the over 65/aged & disabled population;  
  o allow case managers to determine presumptive eligibility for 1915(c) waivers;  
  o allow hospice agencies to determine presumptive eligibility for hospice services; and  
  o allow nursing facilities to determine presumptive eligibility for skilled nursing services.  
• Waiver application [revised and resubmitted](#). (04/08/20) |
| • Authorizes quick enrollment for Medicaid populations particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. | | DCH to submit a 1115(a) waiver to CMS | | |

### PREMIUMS & COST-SHARING

Remove premiums and cost-sharing for CHIP beneficiaries, including for COVID-19 vaccine, if one becomes available

| Removes premium cost-sharing for CHIP beneficiaries, including for COVID-19 vaccine, if one becomes available | Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (3/18/20): Ensures that everyone receives free testing regardless of insurance provider (public or private) | Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) submit a CHIP Disaster Relief SPA or 1115(a) waiver to CMS | • Governor issued an [Executive Order (EO)](#) authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20) | • DCH submitted an 1115(a), waiver seeking to suspend premiums, waive premium balances |
| • Keep CHIP population enrolled despite inability to | | | | |

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<td>pay premiums or co-pays; minimizes decreased access to care due to cost.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and remove copayments for CHIP beneficiaries. (03/28/20).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Waiver application revised and resubmitted. (04/08/20)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• DCH submitted a CHIP Disaster Relief SPA to waive premiums and premium balances for CHIP beneficiaries. (04/20/20)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• DCH issued a statement suspending the collection of all Medicaid copayments for dates of services on or after 05/01/20 through the duration of the Public Health Emergency. (04/27/20)</td>
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**ADMINISTRATION OF BENEFITS**

**Temporarily suspend Medicaid fee-for-service (FFS) prior authorization and administrative requirements**

- Removes prior authorization requirements that may inhibit testing and/or treatment; reduces administrative burden on providers, allowing them to focus on provision of services minimizes decreased access to care.

| | | DCH submit a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS | • Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to suspend rules and regulations that present as administrative burdens. (03/20/20) |
| | | DCH submit 1135 waiver to CMS | • DCH submitted an 1135 waiver seeking to: |
| | | | o suspend Medicaid fee-for-service prior authorization requirements. |
| | | | o extend pre-existing authorizations through which a beneficiary has previously received prior authorization through the termination of the emergency declaration. (03/28/20) |
| | | | • CMS approved the 1135 waiver. (04/01/20) |
| | | | • DCH updated provisions to specify that fee-for-service prior authorization requirements are |
| | | | | • At least 40 states (e.g. FL and WA) have temporarily suspended Medicaid FFS prior authorization and administrative requirements |
| | | | • At least 35 states (e.g. AZ and CO) have temporarily required FFS providers to |

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<tr>
<td><strong>Temporarily suspend prior authorization and administrative requirements for managed care</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DCH to issue a directive to managed care entities</td>
<td>suspended for non-elective inpatient hospitalizations only. (04/14/20)</td>
<td>extend pre-existing prior authorizations</td>
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<td>• Removes prior authorization requirements that may inhibit testing and/or treatment; reduces administrative burden on providers, allowing them to focus on provision of services; minimizes decreased access to care.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consider suspending managed care prior authorization requirements for behavioral health (BH) services</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>DCH issue a directive to managed care entities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Removes prior authorization requirements that may hinder access to needed BH</td>
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<td>- services and overly burden already stretched BH providers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>DCH <a href="#">submit</a> a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS</td>
<td>• Unknown.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Since the declaration of a public health emergency, BH providers have reported an increase in the need for BH services</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Provide safe, reliable access to free COVID-19 tests and treatment, including any test prescribed to rule out COVID-19, at every point of medical access</td>
<td>FFCRA (03/18/20): Gives states the option of using Medicaid to provide free coronavirus testing, with no cost-sharing, regardless of health coverage</td>
<td>DCH <a href="#">submit</a> a Medicaid Disaster Relief SPA to CMS</td>
<td>• Unknown.</td>
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| regardless of income or health coverage | Those utilizing Medicaid, PeachCare, and private insurance are entitled to free temporary coverage for coronavirus testing | DCH submit 1135 waiver to CMS | - Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)  
- DCH submitted an 1135 waiver seeking to extend deadlines for fair hearing and appeal requests. (03/28/20)  
- CMS approved the 1135 waiver. (04/01/20) | - At least 42 states (e.g. FL and WA) have modified fair hearings and appeals timeline |

HEARINGS & APPEALS

Modify fair hearings and appeals timelines

- Extends deadlines for fair hearing and appeals requests.

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| N/A | DCH submit 1135 waiver to CMS | - Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)  
- DCH submitted an 1135 waiver seeking to extend deadlines for fair hearing and appeal requests. (03/28/20)  
- CMS approved the 1135 waiver. (04/01/20) | - At least 42 states (e.g. FL and WA) have modified fair hearings and appeals timeline |

PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

Temporarily waive certain screening requirements to enroll providers

Waived screening requirements could include:
- payment of application fee

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| N/A | DCH submit 1135 waiver to CMS | - Governor issued an EO authorizing DCH to implement waivers of rules and regulations that prohibit the prevention, hindrance, or delay of necessary action to address COVID-19. (03/20/20)  
- DCH submitted an 1135 to temporarily adjust provider enrollment requirements in the following manner:  
  - waive payment of application fee. | - At least 46 states (e.g. FL and WA) have waived screening requirements to temporarily enroll providers |

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<td>• site visits</td>
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<td>o waive criminal background checks.</td>
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<td>• in-state licensure requirement</td>
<td></td>
<td>o waive site visits.</td>
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<td>• criminal background checks</td>
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<td>o permit providers located out-of-state/territory to provide care to an emergency State’s Medicaid enrollee and be reimbursed for that service.</td>
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<td>o streamline provider enrollment requirements when enrolling providers.</td>
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<td>o postpone deadlines for validation of providers who are located in the state or otherwise directly impacted by the emergency.</td>
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<td>o waive conditions of participation or conditions for coverage for existing providers for facilities for providing services in alternative settings, including using an unlicensed facility, if the provider’s licensed facility has been evacuated.</td>
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<td>o waive the managed care requirements to complete credentialing of providers required under 42 C.F.R. § 438.214. Newly enrolled providers will not be required to credential during the emergency; enrolled providers who are due for re-credentialing will be allotted 60 additional days and will not be terminated for failure to respond during the emergency.</td>
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| Allow interim and/or retainer payments to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other providers during the public health emergency | N/A | DCH submit 1115(a) waiver to CMS | ○ waive the requirement for fingerprint background checks for Narcotic Treatment Programs. (03/28/20)  
• CMS approved the 1135 waiver. (04/01/20) | |
| PROVIDER PAYMENTS | | | | |
| • Ensures that providers can remain open during the public health emergency despite decreased revenue streams | | | | |

| Add family caregivers to the Georgia Pediatric Program (GAPP) | N/A | DCH submit 1115(a) waiver to CMS | • DCH submitted an 1115(a) seeking to temporarily allow interim and/or retainer payments to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and other providers. (03/28/20)  
• Waiver application revised and resubmitted. (04/08/20) | |
| • Ensures that children continue to receive needed care if Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) are unavailable | | | | |

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| Temporarily expedite approval for supplemental payments to providers | N/A                       | DCH submit 1115(a) waiver or Medicaid Disaster Relief State Plan Amendment (SPA) to CMS | • DCH submitted an 1115(a) seeking both retroactive approval of supplemental payments to providers and expedited approval of proposed changes to supplemental payments. (03/28/20)  
• Waiver application revised and resubmitted. (04/08/20) | N/A                                                                          |
| REPORTING & OVERSIGHT                                  |                           |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                               |
| Ensure that rural health clinics are utilizing nurse practitioners to the fullest extent possible | Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a blanket waiver modifying the requirement that physicians must provide medical direction for the clinic’s or center’s health care activities and consultation for, and medical supervision of nurse practitioners (04/09/20) | CMS blanket waiver                                                                                                                             | • No action required.                                              | N/A                                                                          |
| Waive utilization review requirements for hospitals    | CMS released a blanket waiver removing the utilization review requirement for participating hospitals (04/09/20) | CMS blanket waiver                                                                                                                             | • No action required.                                              | N/A                                                                          |

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