

COVID-19 update for members covered by Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Health Advantage (fully insured health plans)

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Health Advantage are committed to the safety and well-being of our members. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 public health emergency, we have been working closely with the state and federal government during the coronavirus outbreak to help our fully insured members get access to the care they need during the coronavirus outbreak.

Status of COVID-19 expanded benefits

At the outset of the COVID-19 public health emergency, Arkansas Blue Cross and Health Advantage temporarily extended a number of voluntary, expanded COVID-19-related benefits and suspended some of our normal practices.

Of course, those measures covered under federal mandates will remain in force until federal officials advise that they may be discontinued. Officials have announced the federal mandate will continue **through April 15, 2022**.

Please note: Decisions about coverage changes for members of self-funded health plans served by BlueAdvantage Administrators of Arkansas or Health Advantage are made by the employers or plan sponsors who fund those self-funded programs. If you have questions about coverage, please call the number on the back of the health plan member ID card.

Here is an updated rundown of the status of COVID-19-related benefits and measures:

- **Coverage (at no cost to our members) of COVID-19 diagnostic tests ordered by healthcare providers.**

This applies to diagnostic testing services that meet primary coverage criteria for COVID-19 as defined by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and are ordered by a healthcare provider.

- **Waiver of cost-sharing for medical services for our fully insured members whose primary diagnosis is COVID-19.**

This includes COVID-19-specific visits to an in-network medical clinic, urgent care center and/or emergency room and inpatient treatment for which COVID-19 is the primary diagnosis.

- **Suspension of prior authorization for inpatient hospital admissions and outpatient procedures at hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers.**
Prior authorizations for inpatient hospital admissions and outpatient procedures at hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers have been temporarily suspended.

*These measures will **remain in force** until the public health emergency declaration is terminated by the federal government.*

For COVID-19-related measures that will remain in force until the public health emergency is declaration is terminated by the federal government, when the termination date is known, we will **notify** healthcare providers **90 days** in advance of the measures being discontinued.

If you have questions about the status of COVID-19-related benefits and related member cost-sharing, please contact your Arkansas Blue Cross representative.

Thanks for your continued commitment to serve our members with excellent healthcare and effective utilization of their health benefits.