

2020 legislation regarding coverage of health care services delivered by telephone

Health insurance coverage of health care services delivered by telephone

2020 Acts and Resolves No. 91, Sec. 8, as amended by 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 140, Sec. 13 and 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 159, Sec. 10:

Sec. 8. ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES; DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL REGULATION; EMERGENCY RULEMAKING

It is the intent of the General Assembly to increase Vermonters' access to medically necessary health care services during and after a declared state of emergency in Vermont as a result of COVID-19. **Until July 1, 2021, and notwithstanding any provision of 3 V.S.A. § 844 to the contrary, the Department of Financial Regulation shall consider adopting, and shall have the authority to adopt, emergency rules to address the following through June 30, 2021:**

(1) expanding health insurance coverage for, and waiving or limiting cost-sharing requirements directly related to, COVID-19 the diagnosis of COVID-19, including tests for influenza, pneumonia, and other respiratory viruses performed in connection with making a COVID-19 diagnosis; the treatment, of COVID-19 when it is the primary or a secondary diagnosis; and the prevention of COVID-19;

(2) modifying or suspending health insurance plan deductible requirements for all prescription drugs, except to the extent that such an action would disqualify a high-deductible health plan from eligibility for a health savings account pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 223; and

(3) **expanding patients' access to and providers' reimbursement for health care services, including preventive services, consultation services, and services to new patients, delivered remotely through telehealth, audio-only telephone, and brief telecommunication services.**

Working group on coverage for health care services delivered by telephone

2020 Acts and Resolves No. 140, Sec. 16:

Sec. 16. COVERAGE FOR HEALTH CARE SERVICES DELIVERED BY TELEPHONE; WORKING GROUP

(a) The Department of Financial Regulation shall convene a working group to develop recommendations for health insurance and Medicaid coverage of health care services delivered by telephone after the COVID-19 state of emergency ends. The working group shall include representatives of the Department of Vermont Health Access, health insurers, the Vermont Medical Society, Bi-State Primary Care Association, the VNAs of Vermont, the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Systems, the Office of the Health Care Advocate, and other interested stakeholders.

(b) On or before December 1, 2020, the Department of Financial Regulation shall provide to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate Committees on Health and Welfare and on Finance the working group's recommendations for ongoing coverage of health care services delivered by telephone.