The Department of Human Services (DHS) understands there are concerns about the 2019-novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and has developed these FAQs to address questions regarding PA CHIP coverage of testing and related treatment for COVID-19.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has a dedicated page for COVID-19 that provides daily updates. Click here for the most up to date information regarding COVID-19.

What is coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people and others circulating among animals, including camels, cats and bats.

The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person.

Will PA CHIP pay for COVID-19 vaccines, tests, and treatment?

Yes. PA CHIP will pay for COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatment including over-the-counter tests. There are no copayments for testing, screenings, or office visits for COVID-19. This includes laboratory testing. Prior authorization is also not required for these services.

Providers should follow DOH guidance for evaluation, testing and reporting related to an enrollee suspected of having COVID-19 available here.

What other services will PA CHIP cover?

The PA CHIP program covers medical services to help relieve illnesses and maintain wellness for enrolled children. Some of the services available include:

- Physician services.
- Urgent care services.
- X-rays and diagnostic testing with an order from your Primary Care Physician, specialist, or facility provider.
- Hospital care (Inpatient and Outpatient).
- Emergency ambulance transportation
- Home health and home and community-based health care services.
- Nursing care services.
- Immunizations.
- Prescription drugs.
  - Over-the-counter medications for fever relief, cough preparations as well as medications related to the treatment of virus symptoms when prescribed by your physician and part of the CHIP Managed Care Organization's (MCO)'s formulary. Co-pays may apply.

Will medical care related to COVID-19 have to be prior authorized?

Some PA CHIP covered services have to be prior authorized. CT Scans related to COVID-19 testing, or treatment do not require prior authorization. For those services that do require a prior authorization, the MCO will expedite reviews for services related to COVID-19 when possible. Services may be approved for longer periods of time when necessary to ensure uninterrupted services.

What if a provider cannot see a patient?

CHIP MCOs are making sure their provider networks can handle an increase in health care services related to COVID-19. If a CHIP MCO does not have enough health care providers in its network with the appropriate training and experience to meet the particular health care needs of its members, CHIP MCOs must cover services by providers who are out-of-network. CHIP enrollees should call their MCO Member Services line if they are having difficulty obtaining services.

Will the PA CHIP Program pay for doctor visits provided using telehealth?

Yes. A CHIP MCO is authorized to utilize telehealth the same as a physician office visit for examination, diagnosis and treatment of any illness.

Will I be charged copayments for medical care related to COVID-19?

PA CHIP enrollees are not to be charged their standard copayments for testing, screening, vaccines or office visits related to COVID-19.

Can my child's CHIP coverage be terminated if we're not able to pay premiums right now?

As long as a public health emergency related to COVID-19 is in effect, the CHIP MCOs are instructed to actively work with their enrolled families who are experiencing financial hardship and having difficulty paying their CHIP premiums. The CHIP MCOs will work with families to determine if their change in financial status makes them eligible for a lower cost premium tier of CHIP or eligible for Medical Assistance. Families that do not qualify for a lower cost premium or Medical Assistance will still be financially responsible for paying their premiums. The MCOs will work with these families to develop a payment plan. **CHIP MCOs will not disenroll any family for failure to pay a premium** as long as a valid emergency disaster declaration related to COVID-19 issued by the governor is in effect.

An applicant cannot access the documents needed to verify information on an application for CHIP coverage. Can the MCO still enroll them?

To ensure children get enrolled as quickly as possible into CHIP, CHIP is now accepting self-attestation of information on applications. Beginning immediately, and retroactive to March 1, 2020, CHIP will accept information as presented on a signed application as verified if the information cannot be obtained by the MCO in a readily available electronic source such as the Social Security Administration Database, TALX, and Equifax. **The application must be signed for self-attestation to be acceptable.** If the MCO cannot find information in electronic databases, they will still enroll the applicant in the appropriate category based on the applicant's income. Applicants who are 19 years old or older, cannot demonstrate citizenship or legal resident status, or already have private insurance will remain ineligible for CHIP and may be denied for those reasons.

Is there a number I can call if I have questions or need assistance?

CHIP enrollees and providers who participate in the CHIP program should contact their CHIP MCO. If the CHIP MCO cannot be reached, call 1-800-986-5437.

Aetna Better Health:
Member Services Center: 1-800-882-2447
Provider Services Center: 1-800-638-1232

Highmark:
Member Services Center: 1-800-543-7105
Provider Services Center: 1-866-731-8080

Capital Blue Cross:
Provider Services Center: 1-866-688-2242
Member Services Center: 1-800-543-7101

Independence Blue Cross:
Member Services Center: 1-800-464-5437
Provider Services Center: 1-800-275-2583

Geisinger Health Plan:
Member Services Center: 1-866-621-5235
Provider Services Center: 1-866-621-5235

United Healthcare:
Member Services Center: 1-800-414-9025
Provider Services Center: 1-800-600-9007

Health Partners Plans:
Member Services Center: 1-888-888-1211
Provider Services Center: 1-888-991-9023

UPMC For Kids:
Member Services Center: 1-800-650-8762
Provider Services Center: 1-800-650-8762

Where can I find more information about COVID-19?

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has a dedicated page for COVID-19 that provides updates. Click here for the most up to date information regarding COVID-19.

The Pennsylvania Insurance Department has issued a Frequently Asked Questions document related to commercial insurance coverage for COVID-19.

Additional information is also available on the CDC website and through CMS.