



Essential Plan Guidance for COVID-19 Testing and Immunization After the Conclusion of the Federal Public Health Emergency

Updated: May 10, 2023

On May 11, 2023, the Public Health Emergency (“PHE”) declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services expires. This update is provided to address coverage for COVID-19 testing and immunizations in Essential Plan following the expiration of the PHE.

Point-of-care Tests:

After May 11, 2023, Essential Plan issuers are required to continue to cover point-of-care COVID-19 testing, including laboratory tests, without limitation, with no cost-sharing, through September 30, 2024, consistent with the CMCS Informational Bulletin guidance issued on May 8, 2023.¹

Essential Plan Issuers are not required to provide coverage for COVID-19 laboratory tests and visits to diagnose COVID-19 when rendered by an out-of-network provider after May 11, 2023, unless the services are emergency services that are provided in a hospital.

At Home tests:

Essential Plan Issuers must continue to cover over the counter or “at-home” COVID tests without cost sharing through September 30, 2024 (up to 8 over-the-counter tests per month).

Immunizations:

Essential Plan Issuers must continue to cover immunizations with no cost-sharing when obtained from an in-network provider. The prohibition on cost-sharing for immunizations extends to any charge for administration of the immunization, any charge for the office visit when the primary purpose of the visit is the immunization or when the other services provided are preventive care services that are required to be covered under the Model Contract language.

Essential Plan Issuers are not required to cover COVID-19 immunizations when rendered by an out-of-network provider.

¹ <https://www.medicaid.gov/state-resource-center/downloads/cib050823.pdf>