



Corrected Letter: On December 2, 2020, you received a communication with updates to the temporary provisions put in place for COVID-19. The letter included an incorrect diagnosis code, Z20.282. We apologize for this error. The letter below was updated to include the correct diagnosis code of **Z20.822**.

December 2, 2020

COVID-19 Treatment Cost Shares, Authorization Waivers, Antiviral & Vaccine Coverage

Dear Provider:

This year has been a challenge for so many with the constant fight against COVID-19. The long weeks and months that have passed since early 2020 prove that COVID-19 will be with us for the long haul. We now consider COVID-19 not a temporary, but a long-term health problem that we can expect to face for an indefinite time.

New advancements in treatment and prevention have brought the need to communicate the current laws for coverage. They also play a part in Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana’s shift to discontinue some temporary provisions we applied early on in this public health emergency. Please read below for important information to help you when treating our members—your patients.

Member Cost Share Waiver Guidelines

Blue Cross and HMO Louisiana, Inc. have voluntarily waived member cost shares for hospital and ambulatory visits associated with the treatment of COVID-19 for dates of service on and after April 1, 2020. On May 31, 2020, self-funded employer groups discontinued the waiver of cost share amounts for their employees.

For dates of service on and after January 1, 2021, **member cost shares for our fully insured members will be reinstated for visits associated with the treatment of COVID-19 for all places of service.**

Member cost shares will continued to be waived for the following services until the applicable time periods defined in the respective state and federal laws have concluded.

Service	Requirement
<i>applicable for diagnosis codes U07.1, Z03.818 and Z20.822</i>	
COVID-19 Testing <i>(viral detection and antibody testing)</i>	with a provider order and excluding public health, school-related and return-to-work testing
Office Visit	when COVID-19 testing is performed during the same visit
Urgent Care Visit	
Emergency Room Visit	
Telehealth Visit	

Authorization Waivers

Beginning March 16, 2020, Blue Cross has voluntarily waived many of our authorization requirements throughout 2020 with various end dates as outlined in the chart below:

Service	End Date of Temporary Provision
Emergent services that are medically necessary and consistent with CDC guidance for members diagnosed with COVID-19	No authorization is required through December 31, 2020
Diagnostic Services [include services through AIM Specialty Health® (AIM)]	No authorization is required through December 31, 2020
Transfers from an Acute Care Hospital to an LTACH, SNF or Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility	Waiver of authorization ended on September 20, 2020
Extension of hospital stays for additional days through discharge date	Waiver of authorization ended on September 20, 2020

For dates of service on and after January 1, 2021, our normal authorization processes will apply.

Vaccines and Antiviral Drugs

We are closely monitoring the progress of these vaccines and new drugs, as well as proper coding and billing for these services. We will continue to update you as we know more.

Vaccines

Blue Cross will cover the administration costs of approved COVID-19 vaccines without any member cost share for our fully insured members through December 31, 2021. Some self-funded employer groups may “opt out” of this member cost share waiver. The federal government is currently paying for the COVID-19 vaccine, and therefore the cost of the vaccine itself should not be billed to Blue Cross.

Vaccine	Code Guidelines
Pfizer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91300 – vaccine • 0001A – first administration • 0002A – second administration
Moderna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91301 – vaccine • 0011A – first administration • 0012A – second administration

Monoclonal Antibodies

Monoclonal Antibodies are infusions used for outpatient high-risk patients. These antibodies are used to boost the patient’s immune system to fight the infection and are usually given in the emergency room, outpatient or infusion center settings. The FDA has set strict clinical requirements to determine which patients should be administered these infusions. Blue Cross is waiving the member cost share for the infusion of the monoclonal antibody product. Some self-funded employer groups may “opt out” of this member cost share waiver. The federal government is currently paying for the monoclonal antibody products, and therefore only the infusion cost should be billed to Blue Cross.

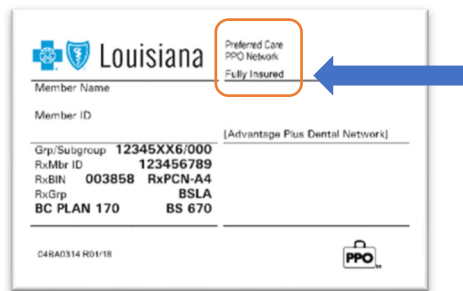
Antibody	Code Guidelines
Lilly (bamlanivimab)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q0239 – drug • M0239 – infusion and monitoring
Regeneron (has not been EUA approved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes and allowables are not available • At this time, Blue Cross considers this drug to be investigational

Refunding Members

If you have collected cost share amounts for COVID-related services that were covered by Blue Cross, those cost share amounts must be refunded to the member. Use iLinkBlue (www.BCBSLA.com/ilinkblue) to verify claims payment information.

Identifying Fully Insured Members

You can easily identify fully insured members by looking on the member ID card. It shows the provider network along with "Fully Insured" in the top right of the card.



Allowable Charges and Member ID Cards on iLinkBlue

To research provider allowable charges for COVID-19 services, use our allowable charges search tools that are available on iLinkBlue. You may also view member ID cards for our Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and HMO Louisiana members on iLinkBlue.

More Online

Be sure to visit our COVID-19 Provider Resources page, where you can access our latest provider communications. Go to www.BCBSLA.com/providers, then click on the "COVID-19 Provider Resources" link at the top of the page. We will continue to add updated information to this page as it develops.

Contact Us

If you have questions about the billing of COVID-19, you may send an email to our Provider Relations Department at provider.relations@bcbsla.com. Please put "COVID-19 Billing" in the subject line.

Thank you for working with us to serve our members, especially during this time of uncertainty. Please continue to contact Blue Cross as your COVID-19 crisis needs change. We value you as a key part of our provider networks and the services you bring to our members— your patients.

Sincerely,

Hiral Arges
VP, Provider Relations and Contracting
Network Administration

HA/mdm