



**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of the Secretary

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY**

September 29, 2021

James G. Scott, Director  
Division of Program Operations  
Medicaid & CHIP Operations Group  
601 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 0300  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2898

Dear Mr. Scott:

**RE: LA SPA TN 21-0013**  
**FHQC and RHC Alternative Payment Methodology**

Please refer to our proposed Medicaid State Plan amendment (SPA) submitted under transmittal number (TN) 21-0013 with a proposed effective date of December 23, 2020. This SPA seeks approval to enable federally qualified health centers (FQHC) and rural health clinics (RHC) to be reimbursed outside of the established, all-inclusive prospective payment system (PPS) rate for administration of the COVID-19 vaccine.

We are providing the following in response to your request for additional information (RAI) dated September 17, 2021.

**Section E – Payments:**

1. Understanding that the PPS “cost base for FQHCs/RHCs did not include these costs” and that “the FQHC/RHC will receive their provider-specific PPS rate with no supplemental APM payment”, how are FQHC/RHCs reimbursed for administration of a COVID-19 vaccine when included with a comprehensive encounter?

**LDH RESPONSE:**

**It is LDH’s perspective that reimbursement for the COVID-19 vaccinations were not included in the cost base for FQHCs and RHCs, although reimbursement for routine vaccine administration is included as a part of the cost base. Based on guidance, it appears that the COVID-19 vaccine will, in fact, become a routine vaccine. Currently, the COVID-19 vaccine has a 100 percent FMAP at no cost to state Medicaid programs. With this in mind, when a COVID-19 vaccine is**

**administered in conjunction with a comprehensive encounter, there will be no additional payment to the FQHCs and RHCs. The administration is included with the encounter.**

2. Please replace the word expenditures with reimbursement.

“During the statewide COVID-19 PHE, Louisiana Medicaid will establish an alternative payment methodology (APM) for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics to receive reimbursement for COVID-19 vaccine only visits at the Medicare rate. Payments under this APM are to supplement costs for COVID-19 vaccine only visits, as the Prospective Payment System (PPS) cost base for FQHCs/RHCs did not include these costs. The COVID-19 vaccine-only visits fall outside of the current PPS rate and are not eligible for the PPS rate. The payments for the vaccine-only visits provide a needed supplement to FQHCs/RHCs’ reimbursement during this public health emergency. Reimbursement will start with dates of services on December 23, 2020, and continue through the end of the Federal PHE. Payments made to the FQHCs/RHCs under this APM will be made per submitted claim for a COVID-19 vaccine only visit. If the COVID-19 vaccine is administered as part of a comprehensive encounter visit, then the FQHC/RHC will receive their provider-specific PPS rate with no supplemental APM payment. The individual FQHCs/RHCs must agree to receive the APM.”

**LDH RESPONSE:**

**The word expenditures has been replaced with reimbursement. Please see the attached revised plan page.**

Please consider this a formal request to begin the 90-day clock. We trust this additional information will result in the approval of the pending SPA. We look forward to negotiating with CMS to ensure approval.

As always, we appreciate CMS’ assistance in resolving these issues. If further information is required, you may contact Karen H. Barnes at Karen.Barnes@la.gov or by phone (225) 342-3881.

Sincerely,



Patrick Gillies  
Medicaid Executive Director

PG:KHB:UN  
Attachments (1)

c: Karen H. Barnes  
Tobias Griffin  
Tamara Sampson

## Section 7 – General Provisions

### 7.4.1 Medicaid Disaster Relief for the COVID-19 National Emergency

On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a proclamation that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a national emergency by the authorities vested in him by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including sections 201 and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), and consistent with section 1135 of the Social Security Act (Act). On March 13, 2020, pursuant to section 1135(b) of the Act, the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services invoked his authority to waive or modify certain requirements of titles XVIII, XIX, and XXI of the Act as a result of the consequences COVID-19 pandemic, to the extent necessary, as determined by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), to ensure that sufficient health care items and services are available to meet the needs of individuals enrolled in the respective programs and to ensure that health care providers that furnish such items and services in good faith, but are unable to comply with one or more of such requirements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, may be reimbursed for such items and services and exempted from sanctions for such noncompliance, absent any determination of fraud or abuse. This authority took effect as of 6PM Eastern Standard Time on March 15, 2020, with a retroactive effective date of March 1, 2020. The emergency period will terminate, and waivers will no longer be available, upon termination of the public health emergency, including any extensions.

The State Medicaid agency (agency) seeks to implement the policies and procedures described below, which are different than the policies and procedures otherwise applied under the Medicaid state plan, during the period of the Presidential and Secretarial emergency declarations related to the COVID-19 outbreak (or any renewals thereof), or for any shorter period described below:

N/A
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NOTE: States may not elect a period longer than the Presidential or Secretarial emergency declaration (or any renewal thereof). States may not propose changes on this template that restrict or limit payment, services, or eligibility, or otherwise burden beneficiaries and providers.

#### Request for Waivers under Section 1135

  X   The agency seeks the following under section 1135(b)(1)(C) and/or section 1135(b)(5) of the Act:

- a.        SPA submission requirements – the agency requests modification of the requirement to submit the SPA by March 31, 2020, to obtain a SPA effective date during the first calendar quarter of 2020, pursuant to 42 CFR 430.20.
- b.   X   Public notice requirements – the agency requests waiver of public notice requirements that would otherwise be applicable to this SPA submission. These requirements may include those specified in 42 CFR 440.386 (Alternative Benefit Plans), 42 CFR 447.57(c) (premiums and cost sharing), and 42 CFR 447.205 (public notice of changes in statewide methods and standards for setting payment rates).

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Supersedes TN: None – new pages

This SPA is in addition to Louisiana's approved Medicaid Disaster Relief SPAs 20-0004, 20-0006, 20-0009, 20-0021, 21-0006, 21-0007, and 21-0012, and does not supersede anything in those SPAs.

- c.   X   Tribal consultation requirements – the agency requests modification of tribal consultation timelines specified in [Louisiana] Medicaid state plan, as described below:

*To address the COVID-19 public health emergency, the State respectfully requests to modify the tribal consultation process by eliminating the number of notification days before submission of the SPA and/or conducting consultation after submission of the SPA.*

### Section A – Eligibility

1.        The agency furnishes medical assistance to the following optional groups of individuals described in section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii) or 1902(a)(10)(c) of the Act. This may include the new optional group described at section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XXIII) and 1902(ss) of the Act providing coverage for uninsured individuals.

*The State elects to cover all uninsured individuals as defined under 1902(ss) of the Act pursuant to Section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XXIII) of the Act, effective March 18, 2020.*

2.        The agency furnishes medical assistance to the following populations of individuals described in section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XX) of the Act and 42 CFR 435.218:

- a.        All individuals who are described in section 1905(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XX)

Income standard:                     

-or-

- b.        Individuals described in the following categorical populations in section 1905(a) of the Act:

Income standard:                     

3.        The agency applies less restrictive financial methodologies to individuals excepted from financial methodologies based on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) as follows.

Less restrictive income methodologies:

Less restrictive resource methodologies:

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4. \_\_\_ The agency considers individuals who are evacuated from the state, who leave the state for medical reasons related to the disaster or public health emergency, or who are otherwise absent from the state due to the disaster or public health emergency and who intend to return to the state, to continue to be residents of the state under 42 CFR 435.403(j)(3).

5. \_\_\_ The agency provides Medicaid coverage to the following individuals living in the state, who are non-residents:

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6. \_\_\_ The agency provides for an extension of the reasonable opportunity period for non-citizens declaring to be in a satisfactory immigration status, if the non-citizen is making a good faith effort to resolve any inconsistencies or obtain any necessary documentation, or the agency is unable to complete the verification process within the 90-day reasonable opportunity period due to the disaster or public health emergency.

7. Section B – Enrollment

1. \_\_\_ The agency elects to allow hospitals to make presumptive eligibility determinations for the following additional state plan populations, or for populations in an approved section 1115 demonstration, in accordance with section 1902(a)(47)(B) of the Act and 42 CFR 435.1110, provided that the agency has determined that the hospital is capable of making such determinations.
2. \_\_\_ The agency designates itself as a qualified entity for purposes of making presumptive eligibility determinations described below in accordance with sections 1920, 1920A, 1920B, and 1920C of the Act and 42 CFR Part 435 Subpart L.

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3. \_\_\_ The agency designates the following entities as qualified entities for purposes of making presumptive eligibility determinations or adds additional populations as described below in accordance with sections 1920, 1920A, 1920B, and 1920C of the Act and 42 CFR Part 435 Subpart L. Indicate if any designated entities are permitted to make presumptive eligibility determinations only for specified populations.

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4. \_\_\_ The agency adopts a total of \_\_\_ months (not to exceed 12 months) continuous eligibility for children under age enter age \_\_\_ (not to exceed age 19) regardless of changes in circumstances in accordance with section 1902(e)(12) of the Act and 42 CFR 435.926.

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5. \_\_\_\_ The agency conducts redeterminations of eligibility for individuals excepted from MAGI-based financial methodologies under 42 CFR 435.603(j) once every \_\_\_\_ months (not to exceed 12 months) in accordance with 42 CFR 435.916(b).
6. \_\_\_\_ The agency uses the following simplified application(s) to support enrollment in affected areas or for affected individuals (a copy of the simplified application(s) has been submitted to CMS).
- a. \_\_\_\_ The agency uses a simplified paper application.
  - b. \_\_\_\_ The agency uses a simplified online application.
  - c. \_\_\_\_ The simplified paper or online application is made available for use in call-centers or other telephone applications in affected areas.

**Section C – Premiums and Cost Sharing**

1. \_\_\_\_ The agency suspends deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and other cost sharing charges as follows:

*Please describe whether the state suspends all cost sharing or suspends only specified deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or other cost sharing charges for specified items and services or for specified eligibility groups consistent with 42 CFR 447.52(d) or for specified income levels consistent with 42 CFR 447.52(g).*

2. \_\_\_\_ The agency suspends enrollment fees, premiums and similar charges for:
- a. \_\_\_\_ All beneficiaries
  - b. \_\_\_\_ The following eligibility groups or categorical populations:

*Please list the applicable eligibility groups or populations.*

3. \_\_\_\_ The agency allows waiver of payment of the enrollment fee, premiums and similar charges for undue hardship.

*Please specify the standard(s) and/or criteria that the state will use to determine undue hardship.*

**Section D – Benefits***Benefits:*

1. \_\_\_\_ The agency adds the following optional benefits in its state plan (include service descriptions, provider qualifications, and limitations on amount, duration or scope of the benefit):
2. \_\_\_\_ The agency makes the following adjustments to benefits currently covered in the state plan:

*Please describe.*

3. \_\_\_\_ The agency assures that newly added benefits or adjustments to benefits comply with all applicable statutory requirements, including the statewide requirements found at 1902(a)(1), comparability requirements found at 1902(a)(10)(B), and free choice of provider requirements found at 1902(a)(23).
4. \_\_\_\_ Application to Alternative Benefit Plans (ABP). The state adheres to all ABP provisions in 42 CFR Part 440, Subpart C. This section only applies to states that have an approved ABP(s).
  - a. \_\_\_\_ The agency assures that these newly added and/or adjusted benefits will be made available to individuals receiving services under ABPs.
  - b. \_\_\_\_ Individuals receiving services under ABPs will not receive these newly added and/or adjusted benefits, or will only receive the following subset:

*Please describe.*

*Telehealth:*

5. \_\_\_\_ The agency utilizes telehealth in the following manner, which may be different than outlined in the state's approved state plan:

*Please describe.*

*Drug Benefit:*

6. \_\_\_\_ The agency makes the following adjustments to the day supply or quantity limit for covered outpatient drugs. The agency should only make this modification if its current state plan pages have limits on the amount of medication dispensed.

*Please describe the change in days or quantities that are allowed for the emergency period and for which drugs.*

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7. ☐ Prior authorization for medications is expanded by automatic renewal without clinical review, or time/quantity extensions.
8. ☐ The agency makes the following payment adjustment to the professional dispensing fee when additional costs are incurred by the providers for delivery. States will need to supply documentation to justify the additional fees.

*Please describe the manner in which professional dispensing fees are adjusted.*

9. ☐ The agency makes exceptions to their published Preferred Drug List if drug shortages occur. This would include options for covering a brand name drug product that is a multi-source drug if a generic drug option is not available.

### Section E – Payments

*Optional benefits described in Section D:*

1. ☐ Newly added benefits described in Section D are paid using the following methodology:

- a. ☐ Published fee schedules –

Effective date (enter date of change): \_\_\_\_\_

Location (list published location): \_\_\_\_\_

- b. ☐ Other:

*Describe methodology here.*

*Increases to state plan payment methodologies:*

2. ☒ The agency increases payment rates for the following services:

*During the statewide COVID-19 PHE, Louisiana Medicaid will establish an alternative payment methodology (APM) for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics to receive reimbursement for COVID-19 vaccine only visits at the Medicare rate. Payments under this APM are to supplement costs for COVID-19 vaccine only visits, as the Prospective Payment System (PPS) cost base for FQHCs/RHCs did not include these costs. The COVID-19 vaccine-only visits fall outside of the current PPS rate and are not eligible for the PPS rate. The payments for the vaccine-only visits provide a needed supplement to FQHCs/RHCs' reimbursement during this public health emergency. Reimbursement will start with dates of services on December 23, 2020, and continue through the end of the Federal PHE.*

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*Payments made to the FQHCs/RHCs under this APM will be made per submitted claim for a COVID-19 vaccine only visit. If the COVID-19 vaccine is administered as part of a comprehensive encounter visit, then the FQHC/RHC will receive their provider-specific PPS rate with no supplemental APM payment.*

*The individual FQHCs/RHCs must agree to receive the APM.*

- a. ☒ Payment increases are targeted based on the following criteria:

*FQHC and RHC providers that administer the COVID-19 vaccine when E&M service is not performed.*

*FQHC and RHC providers must agree to the APM to obtain reimbursement for the COVID 19 vaccine-only visits at the leveraged Medicare assessment of cost per COVID-19 vaccine administration.*

- b. Payments are increased through:

- i. ☐ A supplemental payment or add-on within applicable upper payment limits:

*Please describe.*

- ii. ☒ An increase to rates as described below.

☐ Uniformly by the following percentage:

☒ Through a modification to published fee schedules –

Effective date (enter date of change): December 23, 2020

Location (list published location): [Louisiana Medicaid COVID-19 Fee Schedules](#)

☒ Up to the Medicare payments for equivalent services.

☐ By the following factors:

*Please describe.*

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*Payment for services delivered via telehealth:*

3. \_\_\_\_ For the duration of the emergency, the state authorizes payments for telehealth services that:
- a. \_\_\_\_ Are not otherwise paid under the Medicaid state plan;
  - b. \_\_\_\_ Differ from payments for the same services when provided face to face;
  - c. \_\_\_\_ Differ from current state plan provisions governing reimbursement for telehealth;

*Describe telehealth payment variation.*

- d. \_\_\_\_ Include payment for ancillary costs associated with the delivery of covered services via telehealth, (if applicable), as follows:
- i. \_\_\_\_ Ancillary cost associated with the originating site for telehealth is incorporated into fee-for-service rates.
  - ii. \_\_\_\_ Ancillary cost associated with the originating site for telehealth is separately reimbursed as an administrative cost by the state when a Medicaid service is delivered.

*Other:*

4. \_\_\_\_ Other payment changes:

*Please describe the group or groups of individuals with greater needs and the amount(s) protected for each group or groups.*

**Section F – Post-Eligibility Treatment of Income**

1. \_\_\_\_ The state elects to modify the basic personal needs allowance for institutionalized individuals. The basic personal needs allowance is equal to one of the following amounts:
- a. \_\_\_\_ The individual's total income
  - b. \_\_\_\_ 300 percent of the SSI federal benefit rate
  - c. \_\_\_\_ Other reasonable amount: \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_ The state elects a new variance to the basic personal needs allowance. (Note: Election of this option is not dependent on a state electing the option described the option in F.1. above.)

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The state protects amounts exceeding the basic personal needs allowance for individuals who have the following greater personal needs:

*Please describe the group or groups of individuals with greater needs and the amount(s) protected for each group or groups.*

**Section G – Other Policies and Procedures Differing from Approved Medicaid State Plan /Additional Information**

**PRA Disclosure Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0938-1148 (Expires 03/31/2021). The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1 to 2 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. Your response is required to receive a waiver under Section 1135 of the Social Security Act. All responses are public and will be made available on the CMS web site. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: CMS, 7500 Security Boulevard, Attn: PRA Reports Clearance Officer, Mail Stop C4-26-05, Baltimore, Maryland 21244-1850. \*\*\*CMS Disclosure\*\*\* Please do not send applications, claims, payments, medical records or any documents containing sensitive information to the PRA Reports Clearance Office. Please note that any correspondence not pertaining to the information collection burden approved under the associated OMB control number listed on this form will not be reviewed, forwarded, or retained. If you have questions or concerns regarding where to submit your documents, please contact the Centers for Medicaid & CHIP Services at 410-786-3870.

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