



COVID-19 update

Keeping you prepared

Leadership webinar follow up

We hope you were able to join the discussion on Tuesday with some of our leadership team who shared what we're doing to help the entire health system while also ensuring our members have access to the care they need during this time. Our goal is to keep you informed of, and provide transparency to, Blue Shield's response to COVID-19. A recording is available [here](#).

We value your time and would be interested to hear your feedback. Please take a minute to let us know how we did by taking a brief [survey](#).

Below is information on a few additional topics related to topics discussed on the call.

Updates on testing: Home test kits, anti-body testing, and pop-up test sites

With our President and CEO, Paul Markovich, as co-chair of Governor Newsom's [task force](#) that aims to increase daily testing by five-fold by the end of April, we are especially cognizant of the availability and viability of tests available.

Home test kits, anti-body testing, and pop-up test sites have been frequent topics in the news media, raising questions for our members. Blue Shield is closely monitoring the trajectory of COVID-19, including state and federal policy. As of now, here is where we stand on these topics:

- **Home test kits**

The Food and Drug Administration authorized the first in-home test for coronavirus on April 21. At this time, Blue Shield and Blue Shield Promise only cover self-administered test kits that are FDA-approved, or emergency use authorized, or authorized under other guidance from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services consistent with the federal CARES Act. Other self-administered tests available in the market may not be accurate and are not covered.

In addition, Blue Shield and Blue Shield Promise require that self-administered tests are ordered by a health care provider, sent to the approved laboratory specified on the kit, and processed in accordance with FDA and other guidance, as applicable. This policy is in accordance with applicable legislation, including the federal CARES Act.

Blue Shield and Blue Shield Promise will not cover self-administered test kits that fail to meet the conditions specified above.

Members should call the phone number on the back of their member ID card to confirm coverage.

- **Anti-body testing**

Anti-body testing is covered, consistent with the CARES Act mandate, and consistent with our policy to waive out-of-pocket costs for co-payments, coinsurance, and deductibles for COVID-19 testing or screenings as prescribed by a healthcare professional. To be covered with no cost sharing, the antibody testing must be approved under FDA or other government guidance. This will apply as long as the public health emergency is in effect.

- **Pop-up test sites**

We are accepting and processing claims for COVID-19 testing at pop-up sites with no copayment, coinsurance or deductible for members.

More comprehensive information on Blue Shield's response to COVID-19, including questions on testing and treatment for COVID-19, is available in this [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has added new symptoms to their guidelines

This week the CDC added additional symptoms to their [website](#) to keep up with the growing understanding of how the COVID-19 virus presents.

There are numerous studies in flux on the differences in how COVID-19 may manifest in the younger population (30-50) versus the elderly (74+), so this is not meant to be an exhaustive list and, will likely be updated as other symptoms are

confirmed to be caused by this virus.

There is a Self-Checker tool on the CDC website that can be used to determine if a person who is experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms should seek emergency care.

We will continue to keep you informed on new confirmed symptoms as they are acknowledged by the CDC.

Stay up to date

Blue Shield is closely monitoring the trajectory of the COVID-19 public health emergency, including state and federal policy. We will continue to keep you informed.

More information is available on our NEW [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) web page for brokers and employers](#) – which is updated regularly. For daily updates of communications as they are released you can still visit the [COVID-19 Resources page](#) on [Broker Connection](#). You can also see the latest updates from Blue Shield on our [News Center](#) or have them emailed to you by [subscribing here](#).

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