

NEWS RELEASE**Blue Cross NC Online Newsroom:** <http://mediacenter.bcbsnc.com>**For Immediate Release: April 1, 2020****Blue Cross NC to Waive Customer Costs for COVID-19 Treatment***Waiver of treatment costs is in addition to waiver of testing and screening costs***More information can be found at [BlueCrossNC.com/Coronavirus](https://www.bcbsnc.com/Coronavirus).**

DURHAM, N.C. – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) announced it is waiving member cost-sharing – including deductibles, co-payments, and coinsurance – for treatments related to COVID-19 if a member is diagnosed with the virus. This action is in addition to other measures the company has already put in place to help members afford and access care during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

“Blue Cross NC is doing all we can to make sure costs are not a barrier to care. We want our members to focus on getting well knowing that they are covered,” **said Gerald Petkau, chief operating officer and interim CEO at Blue Cross NC.** “This is a public health emergency that is requiring everyone in the health care community to do their part, and we’ll continue to respond and determine how to best serve our members in the face of COVID-19.”

Blue Cross NC will waive member cost-sharing for COVID-19 related treatments for both in-network and out-of-network providers. The company will reimburse providers in full at its in-network or Medicare rates in an effort to support them financially and administratively during this emergency.

Blue Cross NC will also work to shield members from balance billing and will work with providers to ensure access to affordable care during this crisis. Blue Cross NC encourages out-of-network providers to accept our payment in full and to work together to shield North Carolinians from financial harm.

The member cost-share waiver of COVID-19 related treatments applies to all fully insured, State Health Plan, and Medicare members. Self-funded employer groups will be given the option to apply these changes to their employees’ plans.

The member cost-share waivers for COVID-19 related treatments are effective immediately through June 1, 2020. We are committed to carrying out actions to assist our members and community in the face of COVID-19. We will continue to re-evaluate this and other measures.

Blue Cross NC has also put several other measures into place to help members during the COVID-19 public health emergency:

- **Expanding Coverage for Virtual Care Visits**
Virtual doctor visits will be covered the same as face-to-face visits according to a member’s health plan. Virtual visits include appointments with primary care providers,

specialists, behavioral health providers, and any North Carolina licensed providers who can provide services via secure video or telephone. This applies to all members. Blue Cross NC strongly encourages people to seek virtual care whenever possible. This will save lives by preventing the spread of disease, and reduce the strain on our hospitals, emergency rooms, and urgent care centers.

- **Waiving out-of-pocket costs for COVID-19 testing**

Blue Cross NC will provide coverage and waive cost-sharing (including deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance) for COVID-19 testing or for a doctor visit or call to determine if testing is necessary. Specifically, there will be no member cost-share for COVID-19 testing or screenings to determine if a testing is needed through virtual care visits, outpatient office visits, urgent care visits and ER visits. This applies to fully-insured, State Health Plan, and Medicare Advantage plans offered or administered by Blue Cross NC, including Experience Health. Blue Cross NC is consulting with self-insured employer groups with regard to revising their benefits.

- **Increasing access to medications**

Blue Cross NC is waiving early medication refill limits. This way, members can have the medicines they need on hand. Members can ask their doctor to order a 90-day prescription of your maintenance medication(s) for ongoing conditions or needs and ask for these to be mail-ordered for delivery. State and federal laws, formulary and quantity limits, and prior authorizations regarding prescriptions will still apply. This change applies to all Blue Cross NC card holders.

More information can be found at [BlueCrossNC.com/Coronavirus](https://www.bluecrossnc.com/Coronavirus).

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina:

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) is committed to making health care better, simpler and more affordable. We have been driving better health in North Carolina since 1933, working to tackle our communities' greatest health challenges. Blue Cross NC serves its customers and communities of more than 3.8 million members, including approximately 1.1 million on behalf of other Blue Plans. Blue Cross NC is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Visit Blue Cross NC online at www.bluecrossnc.com. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

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