

Coronavirus workers' comp update

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) is initiating temporary policy changes that will allow flexibility in the provision of care to injured workers. These changes will be effective until the state of emergency related to COVID-19 is lifted within the state where the injured resides.

Injured Workers/Providers

Telemedicine – BWC will temporarily permit the injured worker's home as an acceptable origination site.

Telephone services – BWC will temporarily permit MCOs to authorize the use of telephone visits in lieu of face-to-face visits for injured workers in a state of crisis or who are at risk to travel to a face-to-face visit during the state of emergency.

Prior authorization requirements – BWC will waive the prior authorization requirement for telephone services when:

- The provider substitutes a telephone call in lieu of face-to-face visit for previously approved psychological counseling service; or
- A provider eligible to render an E&M service substitutes a telephone call in lieu of face-to-face E&M visit when the provider determines the visit would create an unnecessary or increased risk of exposure to either the injured worker or provider.

Billing and reimbursement – Telemedicine services that meet the guidelines will be reimbursed at the same rate as equivalent face-to-face visits. To be eligible, providers must have an active license in the state where the injured worker is located.

Medical documentation – Under the temporary policy change, providers are required to reference the following:

- Current state of emergency for COVID-19; and

