

Preparing for PHE Unwinding

Termination of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) on May 11 will trigger the end of many emergency waivers and flexibilities that physicians, patients, and other stakeholders have become accustomed to. While American Academy of Family Physicians has been expecting and preparing for the end of the PHE, it is committed to working with policymakers and members to ensure the smoothest possible transition.

[AAFP wrote to President Biden](#) urging the administration to publish a comprehensive plan for unwinding the flexibilities and waiver authorities available under the PHE, and to use its authority to minimize disruption. This includes:

- Protecting equitable, affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and testing
- Ensuring physician practices can purchase and stock COVID-19 vaccines once they transition to the commercial market
- Preventing Medicare telehealth coverage and payment disruptions
- Protecting patients' access to lifesaving opioid use disorder treatment via telehealth
- Removing administrative, cost, and other barriers for individuals with long COVID seeking the healthcare services and federal assistance they need
- Permanently expanding Medicare resident supervision flexibilities

Meanwhile, on Feb. 24, the Drug Enforcement Administration announced proposed permanent rules for prescribing controlled medications via telemedicine beyond the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The full text of the proposals may be found [here](#) and [here](#). The public is invited to submit comments on the proposed rules by

March 26.

At the state level, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services issued a [bulletin on March 2](#) to update Medicaid, Healthy Michigan Plan, Children's Special Health Care Services, Maternity Outpatient Medical Services, and MIChild coverage of telemedicine services beginning on May 12.

MDHHS has also started sending Medicaid redetermination packets to beneficiaries about options as eligibility requirements will restart. According to the department, Michigan's Medicaid

caseload grew by more than 700,000 people during the COVID-19 PHE. Renewals for traditional Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan Plan will take place monthly starting in June 2023 and run through May 2024. Michigan Medicaid beneficiaries should [click here](#) to learn what they need to do to prepare.

For updates on the status of time-limited Michigan Medicaid policies, physicians and other healthcare professionals in Michigan are encouraged to review the [Michigan Medicaid policy bulletin and L letter webpages](#)

. Policies that will change due to the end of the PHE will be fully promulgated; this means there will be a 35-day public comment period and an issuance of a final bulletin at least 30 days prior to the effective date.