

**PROVIDER ALERT**  
**Temporary Telehealth Allowance**  
**December 22, 2021**

**Target Audience: SUD Residential, PRP-Adults and PRP-Minors**

**Issue**

Certain telehealth services are being allowed due to the recent increase of COVID-19 cases in Maryland and the threat posed by the Omicron variant to both participants and staff.

**Impact**

The Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) is allowing the following telehealth practices until further notice:

- PRP – All PRP services, including Groups, may be offered using telehealth. Groups must still be billed as "on-site" services, subject to the 1-hour time requirement for on-site services to qualify for an encounter.
- SUD – The requirement that telehealth be restricted to a maximum of 50% of SUD residential treatment service hours will again be lifted and will revert to the requirements outlined in [Telehealth Guidance for SUD Residential Treatment Services During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

Claims meeting the revised requirements may be submitted for dates of service within the month of December 2021.

These types of service delivery were previously discontinued at the end of the Public Health Emergency in July 2021. Coverage has reverted back to that time as referenced in this linked [PRP Telehealth and Telephonic Services Guidance](#).

**Requirements**

Providers are reminded of some key requirements:

- No "public-facing" applications such as Facebook Live, Tik-Tok, or Instagram shall be permitted.

- All audio services are subject to audit of telephone records, which the provider must maintain and make available for audit.
- Documentation of services must clearly show that participants have been apprised of the risks of telehealth/audio services and have given their consent.
- Verbal consent to treatment may be used but must be documented in the record including date and time the consent was provided.

The BHA will periodically review the status of this decision. Providers will receive at least thirty (30) days notice regarding any changes to the use of telehealth in these settings.

If you have questions about the information contained in this alert, please contact customer service at 1-800-888-1965

Thank you,

Optum Maryland Team

*Please visit our website at [maryland.optum.com](http://maryland.optum.com) for provider resources, online training, and more information.*