



**MaineCare and Department of Education Guidance
for School-based Services Providers
September 2020**

The following guidance is jointly issued by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Office of MaineCare Services (OMS), Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), and the Maine Department of Education (MDOE). This is intended to answer questions regarding the provision of MaineCare-covered school-based services as schools re-open during the COVID-19 pandemic. These services may include but are not limited to: Children's Behavioral Health Day Treatment, Non-Emergency Transportation, Nursing Services, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Rehabilitative and Community Support Services for Children with Cognitive Impairments and Functional Limitations, and Speech Therapy.

- 1. Where can providers find the most up to date MaineCare information about COVID-19?**
MaineCare information is available [online](#). If you are not already subscribed to MaineCare's e-message service, please [sign up here](#) to receive important messages related to COVID-19. If you have questions about COVID-19 and MaineCare, contact us through COVID19MaineCare@maine.gov. Provider-specific guidance is available on the federal [CDC's Information for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) webpage](#).
- 2. Are staff or students K-12 eligible for asymptomatic testing under Governor Mills' standing order since they will be gathering for in-person learning?**
MaineCare covers the cost of COVID-19 testing for MaineCare members. If the student is not a MaineCare member, and is not otherwise insured, they can apply for coverage under MaineCare's [uninsured testing benefit](#).

Guidance on the standing order is available [online](#).

- 3. Do all services being provided need to be listed on a member's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)?**

If a student member has an IEP and is accessing services through IDEA, the health-related service must be listed on the IEP or IFSP. Please see previously issued guidance [here](#).

- 4. Where can providers find guidance on what the IEP is supposed to look like when it includes health-related services?**

Posted guidance is available for districts on the Maine Department of Education [website](#).

5. Are we still allowed to deliver services through telehealth?

Yes. MaineCare continues to reimburse providers who deliver services via telehealth to members. Please see this [guidance](#) for utilizing telehealth.

6. Does MaineCare allow in-person services to be delivered right now?

MaineCare has not restricted the delivery of in-person services and continues to reimburse for services provided either in-person or remotely utilizing telehealth, in accordance with the MaineCare Benefits Manual. Providers who are planning to re-open must follow all applicable guidance on how to do so safely during the pandemic.

[DOE Framework to Reopening](#)

[OCFS Guidance to Behavioral Health Service Providers](#)

[MaineCare COVID-19 Provider Guidance and Policy Updates](#)

7. Are MaineCare Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) services available for students who need access to MaineCare-covered services?

NET brokers continue to work with transportation and school-based providers to transport members to MaineCare covered services. The Department encourages providers to contact the appropriate broker in their transportation region to assist families with transportation options. Please know that a broker could determine that mileage reimbursement may be the most appropriate way to assist a family at this time. Please visit MaineCare's [NET webpage](#) for more information. Additional guidance regarding access to NET services during the COVID-19 emergency period is available [here](#).

8. Can a child access Section 28 services in a school-based program if they do not have the service identified through an IEP or an IFSP?

If a child does not have an IEP/IFSP, they could still receive Section 28 services in school. Section 28 policy does not require an IEP or IFSP for a member to receive services in a school-based program. This said, if a child does have an IEP/IFSP and the service is determined to be necessary to access their educational program, the service must be documented in their IEP/IFSP.

9. If school is virtual in the fall (or if the parent/guardian elects to register their child for virtual learning), are students still entitled to receive Section 28 school-based services or Section 65 Behavioral Health Day Treatment (BHDT) services?

MaineCare will reimburse for Section 28 or Section 65 BHDT services regardless of the location of service delivery—at school, in home, via telehealth, or in an approved alternate location. Families should discuss their situation directly with their schools and/or providers on how best to support the member given their educational arrangement.

10. Our district is holding special education classes in a location other than my child's normal school. Can they still receive MaineCare services?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools enrolled with MaineCare may need to deliver services to MaineCare members at temporary service locations (“alternative settings”) so that members can safely maintain access to services. MaineCare has issued [guidance regarding the use of alternative settings](#) to help enrolled providers utilize this option. Alternative settings flexibilities are available for the duration of the [federal Public Health Emergency \(PHE\)](#); the PHE is set to expire on October 22, 2020, but Secretary of Health and Human Services Azar is able to either extend it past that date or end it early. After the PHE ends, all alternative settings must be enrolled in MaineCare if providers wish to be reimbursed for services provided there. Therefore, if schools envision utilizing an alternative setting beyond the current end of the PHE, we strongly recommend enrolling the site now.

Providers who need assistance with enrollment should contact Provider Services at 1-866-690-5585, Option 2 for Enrollment, TTY 711. If you have questions whether your alternative setting meets the guidelines, please contact Aaron Fotter at aaron.fotter@maine.gov or 207-624-4025.

11. Will MaineCare pay for 1:1 support that I receive from my child’s school district?

MaineCare reimbursement may be provided when services are delivered in accordance with Section 65, Children’s Behavioral Health Day Treatment, or Section 28, Rehabilitation and Community Support Services for Children with Cognitive Impairments and Functional Limitations.

12. For the provision of Section 65 Children’s Behavioral Health Day Treatment services, can social worker sessions be held via telehealth?

Telehealth is approved for use in Behavioral Health Day Treatment (BHDT) by BHPs and clinicians, where in-person contact may not be appropriate. As noted above, the provider’s clinical judgment should inform the appropriateness of using telehealth as a mode of service delivery based on the member’s needs and goals identified in the treatment plan. As a reminder, BHDT services may not be delivered solely for academic purposes.

Please see additional [guidance](#) for telehealth for more information.

13. Is there a way for a member to have the same BHP both in the classroom and at home, or at home for both classroom support and other support? Under current guidelines, my child would need a BHP for in class work and then a different BHP for community activities, which has a long waitlist.

MaineCare policy does not prohibit a particular BHP from delivering services to a member in multiple environments. Families should discuss directly with their schools and/or providers how best to deliver services to the member given their educational arrangement.

Where a member has an established relationship with a school-based provider and now requires home and community-based support during non-school hours, a referral for home and community-based services must be submitted through Kepro. Information on the referral process is located [online](#).

14. My child requires 1:1 support to be successful in remote, on-line video (e.g. Zoom) learning. I cannot always provide that level of support. Can MaineCare cover specialized Section 28 in-home supports provided during school hours?

Section 28 services may be delivered in a variety of settings, and services are not restricted to a particular time of day. Families should discuss directly with their schools and/or providers how their needs may best be met given their home and educational arrangements.

15. As a Children’s Private Non-Medical Institution (PNMI) residential provider, we are trying to figure out how to support children receiving hybrid instruction, as we do not typically schedule residential staff during the day. Are we able to utilize additional 1:1 staffing hours to support children during the school day in our programs?

PNMI providers should plan to adjust their staffing patterns as necessary to support their residents’ needs. When a behavioral support service (like Section 28 or Behavioral Health Day Treatment) is determined to be necessary to access their educational program as documented in the child’s IEP/IFSP, the PNMI should discuss the child’s situation directly with their parent/guardian, school, and/or providers on how best to support the member given their educational arrangement. MaineCare will continue to reimburse for services documented in the IEP/IFSP when provided in accordance with the MaineCare Benefits Manual. PNMI 1:1 upstaffing may be utilized as deemed medically necessary when a member experiences an escalation in behavioral discontrol meeting the criteria outlined in Section 97.02-7(A).

Technical Assistance

MDOE’s Office of Special Services and OMS are available to provide technical assistance and training to school districts so that they can maximize MaineCare funding to support services to eligible students. For additional information regarding MaineCare, please contact Trista Collins, State Medicaid Educational Liaison, at trista.collins@maine.gov. For additional information regarding Special Education, please contact MDOE’s Office of Special Services at 624-6713.

You may also visit MaineCare’s [School-Based Services webpage](#) for more information on School-Based Services and MaineCare.