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# Telehealth policy updates

Learn about recent Federal legislation and policies related to telehealth.

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Recent legislation authorized an extension of many of the Medicare telehealth flexibilities that were in place during the COVID-19 public health emergency through September 30, 2025.

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## Extensions of telehealth access options

The Federal government took a range of steps to expedite the adoption and awareness of telehealth. Some of the telehealth flexibilities have been made permanent while others are temporary. Telehealth policies allow:

- Medicare patients can receive telehealth services for non-behavioral/mental health care in their home through September 30, 2025.

- There are no geographic restrictions for originating site for Medicare non-behavioral/mental telehealth services through September 30, 2025.
- Telehealth services can be provided by all eligible Medicare providers through September 30, 2025.
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) can serve as Medicare distant site providers for non-behavioral/mental telehealth services through September 30, 2025. For an encounter furnished using interactive, real-time, audio and video telecommunications technology or for certain audio-only interactions in cases where the patient is not capable of, or does not consent to, the use of video technology services, payment to RHCs and FQHCs are subject to the national average payment rates for comparable services under the physician fee schedule (PFS) through December 31, 2025.
- An in-person visit within six months of an initial Medicare behavioral/mental telehealth service, and annually thereafter, is not required through September 30, 2025. For FQHCs and RHCs, the in-person visit requirement for mental health services furnished via communication technology to beneficiaries in their homes is not required until January 1, 2026.
- Non-behavioral/mental telehealth services in Medicare can be delivered using audio-only communication platforms through September 30, 2025. Interactive telecommunications system may also permanently include two-way, real-time audio-only communication technology for any telehealth service furnished to a patient in their home if the distant site physician or practitioner is technically capable of using an interactive telecommunications system, but the patient is not capable of, or does not consent to, the use of video technology.

**Tip:** Read about [prescribing controlled substances](#) via telehealth.

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## Rural health

Telehealth can increase access to health care in rural communities. To support access to care, telehealth policies allow:

- FQHCs and RHCs can serve as Medicare distant site providers for non-behavioral/mental telehealth services through September 30, 2025. For an encounter furnished using interactive, real-time, audio and video telecommunications technology or for certain audio-only interactions in cases where the patient is not capable of, or does not consent to, the use of video technology services, payment to RHCs and FQHCs are subject to the national average payment rates for comparable services under the physician fee schedule (PFS) through December 31, 2025.
- Non-behavioral/mental telehealth services in Medicare can be delivered using audio-only communication platforms through September 30, 2025. Interactive telecommunications system may also permanently include two-way, real-time audio-only communication technology for any telehealth service furnished to a patient in their home if the distant site physician or practitioner is technically capable of using an interactive telecommunications, but the patient is not capable of, or does not consent to, the use of video technology.
- FQHCs and RHCs can permanently serve as a Medicare distant site provider for behavioral/mental telehealth services.
- Medicare patients can permanently receive telehealth services for behavioral/mental health care in their home.
- There are no geographic restrictions for originating site for Medicare behavioral/mental telehealth services on a permanent basis.
- Behavioral/mental telehealth services in Medicare can permanently be delivered using audio-only communication platforms.

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## Behavioral health

Telehealth is an effective tool that expands access to behavioral health services. To support access to telebehavioral health care, telehealth policies allow:

- FQHCs and RHCs can permanently serve as a Medicare distant site provider for behavioral/mental telehealth services.
- Medicare patients can permanently receive telehealth services for behavioral/mental health care in their home.
- There are no geographic restrictions for originating site for Medicare behavioral/mental telehealth services on a permanent basis.
- Behavioral/mental telehealth services in Medicare can permanently be delivered using audio-only communication platforms.
- Marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors can permanently serve as Medicare distant site providers.
- An in-person visit within six months of an initial Medicare behavioral/mental telehealth service, and annually thereafter, is not required through September 30, 2025. For FQHCs and RHCs, the in-person visit requirement for mental health services furnished via communication technology to beneficiaries in their homes is not required until January 1, 2026.

## More information:

[Telehealth policy](#) — Health Resources and Services Administration

[Calendar Year 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Calendar Year 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Calendar Year 2023 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Calendar Year 2022 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule](#) and [Telehealth update](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Federally Qualified Health Centers](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

[Rural Health Clinics](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

[Telehealth](#) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Telehealth & Remote Patient Monitoring](#) (PDF) — Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[Federal Telehealth Policy](#) — National Policy Telehealth Resource Center

[Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025](#) (PDF)

[American Relief Act, 2025](#) (PDF)

[Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#) (PDF)

[Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022](#) (PDF)

[Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021](#) (PDF)

*Last updated: March 20, 2025*