

## Duncan-Sanford, Judy A

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**From:** Duncan-Sanford, Judy A  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2020 4:13 PM  
**Subject:** Optum San Diego Public Sector – Fee For Services MediCal and TERM Networks – Telephone and Telehealth Approved – Details Included

**Importance:** High



Dear FFS and/or TERM Providers:

In response to the current COVID-19 emergency, California Department of Health Care Services has provided guidance to allow for behavioral health services to be provided by telephone and telehealth to ensure access to health and safety during the COVID-19 public emergency. In addition, the US Department of Health & Human Services has relaxed HIPAA Rules to ensure providers have the ability to leverage telehealth to ensure access to services and reduce the spread of disease.

**Effective immediately, Behavioral Health Services may be delivered via telephone or telehealth under the following guidelines:**

- The US Department of Health & Human Services has released guidance that a covered health care provider that wants to use audio or video communication technology to provide telehealth to clients during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency can use any non-public facing remote communication product that is available to communicate with clients.
- Covered health care providers may use popular applications that allow for video chats, including Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, or Skype, to provide telehealth without risk that the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) might seek to impose a penalty for noncompliance with the HIPAA Rules related to the good faith provision of telehealth during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency.
- Providers are encouraged to notify patients that these third-party applications potentially introduce privacy risks, and providers should enable all available encryption and privacy modes when using such applications
- Under this Notice, however, Facebook Live, Twitch, TikTok, and similar video communication applications are public facing, and should not be used in the provision of telehealth by covered health care providers
- For further details, please see: [Telehealth remote communications during the COVID-19 emergency](#)

**Submission of Claims**

- CPT Codes – NO change – The CPT Code billed should reflect the services rendered (i.e. 90791 Initial Assessment/Diagnostic Evaluation, 90834 Outpatient Psychotherapy w/client, etc.)
- Place of Service (POS)
  - Telehealth – 02 (*Both Phone and Telehealth*)

**You may start rendering telephone and telehealth services as appropriate for your clients immediately.**

If you have any questions please email them to Provider Services at [sdu\\_providerserviceshelp@optum.com](mailto:sdu_providerserviceshelp@optum.com)

Thank you,

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