

COVID-19 related benefit updates begin May 11

The COVID-19 national and public health emergencies that have been in effect for the past three years will come to an end on May 11, 2023. While that's good news, a sign that the pandemic is no longer an official crisis, it doesn't mean that COVID is no longer a threat to the public. Vaccinations, boosters, and over-the-counter tests will likely still be a part of our lives for some time.

In 2020, the Fund adopted several temporary benefit changes to comply with federal regulations that are set to expire with the end of the public health emergencies.

Below are the emergency updates effective May 11 and the temporary benefits for comparison:

- Beginning in 2021 and through 2022, the Fund covered over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 test kits at no cost to participants.
Beginning May 11, out-of-pocket reimbursements from Empire BlueCross BlueShield will no longer be provided for OTC COVID test kits.
- Starting in 2020 in-network and out-of-network COVID vaccinations and boosters were covered at no cost.
Beginning May 11, coverage for in-network COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be provided at no cost similar to other standard vaccinations. Vaccinations received out-of-network will be covered at 70 percent of the allowed amount.
- In 2020, all copayments for COVID-19 testing and all services that directly resulted in COVID-19 testing were eliminated.
Beginning May 11, COVID tests administered by an in-network provider require a \$10 copayment; testing received at urgent care facilities will require a \$25 (Plan A) or \$30 (Plan B) copayment; and testing obtained out-of-network will be covered at 70 percent of the allowed amount.
- **COBRA timelines will revert to pre-pandemic status on July 11, 2023.**
For more information on these timelines, please call the Fund office.

For more information, please call the Benefits Fund at (877) RN BENEFITS [762-3633] to speak with a Participant Service Representative.

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