



MedStar Family  
Choice

**MedStar Family Choice Provider Alert**  
**COVID-19 PPE Requests and Balance Billing Medicaid Participants**

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) released the attached guidance on June 1, 2020. The guidance is in response to questions of whether providers may bill for personal protective equipment (PPE) or balance bill participants for these costs.

The guidance states that balancing billing Medicaid recipients for the costs related to PPE are not permitted and is in violation of the rules for the Maryland Medicaid program. This prohibition extends to members of MedStar Family Choice.

The guidance also contains information on how providers can obtain PPE for their offices from local government authorities.



# MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

**TO:** Medicaid Providers  
Managed Care Organizations

**FROM:** Jill Spector, Director *Jill Spector*  
Medical Benefits Management

**RE:** COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requests and Balance Billing  
Medicaid Participants

**DATE:** June 1, 2020

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The Maryland Medical Assistance Program (“the Program”) has received inquiries as to whether providers may bill for personal protective equipment (PPE) or balance bill participants for these costs. Costs associated with the purchase of PPE are not eligible for reimbursement nor should they be charged to Medicaid participants. Providers may request PPE from their local authority only for urgent and non-elective procedures. All other PPE must be procured directly by the provider.

## **Balance Billing Medicaid Participants for PPE Is Prohibited**

In accordance with COMAR 10.09.36, in order to participate in the Program providers must accept payment by the Program as payment in full for covered services rendered and make no additional charge to any person for covered services. This requirement applies to both fee-for-service (FFS) and managed care organization providers. Any Medicaid provider that practices balance billing is in violation of its agreement with the Program and is thus subject to sanctions, including termination from the Program. A provider is responsible for educating and supervising staff on this prohibition so that balance billing does not occur.

For additional information, see the [Maryland Medical Assistance Program, General Provider Transmittal No. 81 and Managed Care Organizations Transmittal No. 104](#) dated June 25, 2015.

## **Process for Requesting PPE from State and Local Stockpiles**

On May 6, 2020, the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health issued the [Amended Directive and Order Regarding Various Healthcare Matters](#), which requires adherence to the following conditions relevant to the use of and request for State and local stockpiles of PPE. Any licensed healthcare facility or healthcare provider resuming elective and non-urgent medical

procedures shall have at least one week's supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) for themselves, staff, and as appropriate, for patients. Any healthcare facility or healthcare provider who is unable to provide PPE for themselves, staff, and patients where appropriate shall immediately restrict operations to urgent and non-elective procedures and appointments.

Providers continue to have the ability to request PPE for non-elective or urgent medical procedures. To request PPE and other health related equipment except ventilators, providers should complete an Emergency Medical Material Request Form and send it to their local point of contact. PPE requests to any State or local health or emergency management agency will be denied for elective and non-urgent medical procedures. The healthcare facility or healthcare provider must be able to procure all necessary PPE for its desired services via standard supply chains.

- [Emergency Medical Material Request Form -- April 1, 2020](#)
- [Contact List by County](#)
- [PPE Supplier List](#)