



MaineCare Telehealth Guidance for Home- and Community-Based Waiver Service Providers During the COVID-19 Emergency May 28, 2020

As we respond to COVID-19, we encourage MaineCare Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver providers to consider utilizing telehealth for the delivery of MaineCare-covered services when appropriate and necessary. MaineCare has long had a robust telehealth policy and has recently created additional flexibility for its usage. Please read this document in its entirety to understand your options and additional resources.

This document is intended for providers of Sections 18, 20, 21, and 29 and provides guidance on the utilization of telehealth for covered services within those sections.

Please see MaineCare's comprehensive telehealth policy guidance for more information on [utilizing](#) and [billing](#) for services delivered via telehealth.

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Community Support: Sections 20, 21, and 29

During the COVID-19 emergency, Community Support may be provided using interactive telehealth and, when video is not an option, telephone options (i.e. video chat, FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, or phone calls). Please see additional [guidance](#) on the use of these platforms.

Community Support services/activities provided via telehealth and telephone options must be consistent with the "Description of Service" and "Goals" in the [Person-Centered Plan](#), thus coinciding with the member's current Person-Centered Plan and services outlined in the MaineCare Benefits Manual.

Ratio of Support: 1 Direct Service Provider (DSP) with up to 3 members remains in effect for all telehealth and telephone options.

Per the March 26, 2020 Telehealth Town Hall for Maine HealthCare Providers Q&A and Medicare updates: *As with in-person group sessions, you need to ensure that there are ground rules set regarding privacy, thoughtful participation, respectful treatment of all participants, etc. Best practice would be to obtain verbal consent with each individual participant via phone before the group session. Some of the challenges unique to telehealth include the potential for technical difficulties, which might be compounded with multiple connections from multiple sites. Be sure you know how to troubleshoot these (for example, if there are a lot of participants, turning off video and going audio only), and have a backup*

plan for participants to join via audio only. Background noise can also be an issue, and noise from one site can distract people at the others, so talk with your participants ahead of time about videoconferencing etiquette, etc.

Documentation: Comparable to face-to-face encounters, progress/daily notes should document how the intervention(s) provided via Telehealth and telephone options directly addressed Person-Centered Plan goals and identified services along with required units, service provided, staff name/signature, dates and times. If a group activity is provided, the provider will maintain documentation outside of a consumer file that lists the names of all participants.

Community Support provided remotely in congregate settings: Members may receive Community Support, Work Support, or Career Planning services via telehealth at the same time they receive per diem services (Home Support- Agency Per Diem, Family-Centered Support, or Shared Living). In Section 21, the per diem rate for Home Support- Agency Per Diem varies, as the rate methodology includes weekly authorized support hours. Should a Section 21 member receive a telehealth service in a Home Support- Agency Per Diem setting, that time may still be counted by the Home Support- Agency Per Diem provider toward the actual support hours delivered that week. This is due to the fact that, during any given hour when a member receives telehealth in a Home Support- Agency Per Diem setting, the Home Support- Agency Per Diem provider is still required to provide protective oversight and supervision.

Supporting members in the use of electronic devices and equipment: Provider staff must directly support members to access services remotely, as needed. This includes direct support professionals and personal support specialists in group home settings providing support in the set up and use of electronic devices and equipment. Direct staff support may be necessary for individuals to access telehealth technology and ensure they receive the benefits of services delivered remotely.

| Services Allowed Under Community Supports | Ideas/resources for Telehealth |
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| C1 Self-Care/ADLs | Support selfcare/check in about needs, support, ongoing learning, need for supplies/plan |
| C2 Mobility | Discuss mobility needs, check in on mobility devices |
| C3 Medication Administration | N/A under telehealth |
| C4 Independent Living Skills | Researching recipes, attend virtual cooking class |
| C5 Accessing Community Events & Activities | Access on line events such as museum tours, zoos and other virtual events |
| C6 Accessing Community Resources | Explore community websites to see if they are offering anything virtually- Public library, YMCA, Maine State Library Find and share/discuss/signup for resources such as Meals on Wheels, Food pantry deliveries and other needs, set up |
| C7 Job Preparedness | Discuss jobs and careers through sharing videos, using resources |

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| C8 Interpersonal Skills | Provide support to be/stay connected with friends-i.e. assist member with setting up a way to connect virtually with friends, family etc. |
| C9 Safety Skills | Review use of stove, microwave Share and talk about COVID-19 |
| C10 Activity & Physical Exercise | Online yoga/exercise class, researching and providing support regarding options for online classes, exercise calendar and plan |
| C11 Communication | Checking in, talking through the day, week, assist the member to call friends, stay connected, review communication devices/needs |
| C12 Spiritual / Religious Activities | Explore livestreaming worship/Facebook live services for/with a member, attend and discuss afterwards |
| C13 Personal Development & Learning | Reading groups, music lessons/group, knitting groups, art classes, make and share, increase financial literacy |
| C14 Building Unpaid Relationships | Write/compose thank you notes, emails to others, make a card/sign to thank the mailman or the clerk at the grocery store, first responders |

Home Support – Quarter Hour: Sections 21 and 29

During the COVID-19 emergency, Home Support-Quarter Hour (Sections 21 and 29) may be provided using telehealth and telephone options (video chat, FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, or phone calls). See MaineCare’s telehealth [guidance](#) for more information about utilizing these platforms.

Home Support - Quarter Hour services/activities provided via telehealth and telephone options must be consistent with the “Description of Service” and “Goals” in [the Person-Centered Plan](#), thus coinciding with the member’s current Person-Centered Plan and services outlined in the MaineCare Benefits Manual.

Ratio of Support: 1 DSP to 1 waiver member.

Documentation: Comparable to face-to-face encounters, progress/daily notes should document how the intervention(s) provided via telehealth and telephone options directly addressed Person-Centered Plan goals and identified services along with required units, service provided, staff name/signature, dates and times and the delivery and duration of the service through telehealth.

| Services Allowed Under Home Support | Ideas/resources for Telehealth |
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| H1 Self-Care/ADLs | Support selfcare/check in about needs, support, ongoing learning, and practicing proper hand washing; watch COVID-19 videos and review resources such as face covering usage |
| H2 Mobility | Check in re use of equipment and mobility, assist with needs/make plan |

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| H3 Meal Planning & Preparation | Research recipes, plan meals, sign up for Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry resource |
| H4 Independent Living Skills | Online banking assistance/budgeting, meal preparation, shopping lists and support plan |
| H5 Medication Administration | N/A in telehealth |
| H6 Interpersonal Skills | Assist to keep in touch with family, friends using Zoom, mail, phone |
| H7 Safety Skills | Review fire evacuation plan, safety at home, develop a call list for emergency |
| H8 Activity & Physical Exercise | Online classes, create exercise plan- review and celebrate fitness goals |
| H9 Communication | Use communication device, explore apps for communication together |
| H10 Spiritual / Religious Activities | Explore livestreaming worship/Facebook live services for/with a member, attend and discuss |
| H11 Personal Development & Learning | Practice the use of technology, find free online classes to take, sign up and use audio books |
| H12 Accessing Community Events & Activities | Explore community websites to see if they are offering anything virtually- Public library, YMCA, sign up and attend together |
| H13 Accessing Community Resources | Explore resources such as Meals on Wheels, Food pantry deliveries and other needs, set up Explore Maine State Library audio books, book groups |

Work Support, Employment Specialist, and Career Planning: Sections 18, 20, 21, and 29

During the COVID-19 emergency, Work Support, Employment Specialist and Career Planning (Sections 18, 20, 21, and 29) may be provided using telehealth and telephone options (video chat, FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, or phone calls). See MaineCare’s telehealth [guidance](#) for more information utilizing these platforms.

Services/activities provided via Telehealth and telephone options must be consistent with the “Description of Service” and “Goals” in the [Person-Centered Plan](#), thus coinciding with the member’s current Person-Centered Plan and services outlined in the MaineCare Benefits Manual.

Ratio of Support: All services are to be provided with the ratio of 1 staff to 1 member, except for Work Support-Group which is determined by individual work setting.

Documentation: Comparable to face-to-face encounters, progress/daily notes should document how the intervention(s) provided via telehealth and telephone options directly addressed Person-Centered Plan goals and identified services along with required units, service provided, staff name/signature, dates and times. If Work Support-Group is provided, the provider will maintain documentation that lists the names of all participants outside of the client file.

Work Support and Career Planning provided remotely in congregate settings: Waiver members may receive per diem services (Home Support- Agency Per Diem, Family-Centered Support, or Shared Living) as well as telehealth Community Support, Work Support, or Career Planning services.

In Section 21, the per diem rate for Home Support- Agency Per Diem varies, as the rate methodology includes weekly authorized support hours. Should a Section 21 member receive a telehealth service in a Home Support- Agency Per Diem setting, that time may still be counted by the Home Support- Agency Per Diem provider towards the actual support hours delivered that week. This is due to the fact that, during any given hour when a member receives telehealth in a Home Support- Agency Per Diem setting, the Home Support- Agency Per Diem provider continues to be required to provide protective oversight and supervision.

Supporting waiver members in the use of electronic devices and equipment: Provider staff must directly support members to access services remotely, as needed. This includes direct support professionals and personal support specialists in group home settings providing support in the set up and use of electronic devices and equipment. Direct staff support may be necessary for individuals to access telehealth technology and ensure they receive the benefits of services delivered remotely.

| Services Allowed Under Work Support/ Employment Specialist | Ideas for Telehealth |
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| W1 Adhering to Workplace Policies | Connect to any remote learning/training provided by employer |
| W2 Maintaining or Improving Productivity | Research, teach use of apps for technology |
| W3 Maintaining Employment | Connect to employer/business plan return to work schedule and needs, timeline |
| W4 Support for Hygiene, Self-care, Dress Code, etc. | Create picture lists, discuss support needs, plan, develop technology supports |
| W5 Building Co-worker (natural) Supports | Assist to stay connected to coworkers through attending meetings, phone calls |
| W6 Promoting Workplace Relationships | Assist to stay connected to Supervisor/HR on a regular basis |
| W7 Adhering to Safety Practices | Review Company Policies, Procedures and any safety trainings available |
| W8 Career Advancement | Explore careers using virtual platforms, visit virtual businesses |
| W9 Other | Assist with gathering benefit information, resources such as unemployment and weekly reporting |
| ES1 Periodic Interventions to Reduce Paid Supports | Research and train technology options for return to work |
| ES2 Transferring to Another Similar Job | Assist with exploring options if job is eliminated |
| ES3 Job Development (ONLY when BRS has denied services) | Develop employment plan, update resume and references |
| Services Allowed Under Career Planning | Ideas for Telehealth |
| CP1-Initial Development of Discovering Personal Genius Plan/Career Plan | Development of the Career Plan, review and discuss finding, next steps |

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| CP2-Discovering Personal Genius/Career Plan Activities | Research businesses, plan outreach, find connections and schedule on-site activities for fall, practice informational interviews |
| CP3-Assistance with Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services | Gather information, complete application, review and submit to Vocational Rehabilitation by mail or electronically |
| CP4-Assistance with Referral to Benefits Counseling Services (BCS) | Gather information for referral packet, complete, review and submit to BCS |
| CP5-Assistance with Assistive Technology Referral | Discuss technology needs, explore options and gather information for referral packet, review and submit |
| CP6-Development of the Employment Staging Record/Career Plan | Develop and review Career Plan, schedule interviews, gather information |

Additional Resources and Links

Information on Using Technology: [National Council on Aging: Tools for Reaching a Remote Audience](#)

Self-Advocacy videos: [Wisconsin Self Determination Channel](#)

Job Preparation: [Explore Work website](#)

Career Videos: [Career One Stop](#)

Career Workshops: [DVR Career Exploration Workshop \(CEW\) curriculum](#), [DVR Transition CEW curriculum for high-school students](#), and [DVR Bridges CEW curriculum](#)

Job Seeking: [Job Hunting in Maine Guide](#), [Guided Group Discovery for Youth \(and individuals with limited or no work experience\)](#), and [Guided Group Discovery for Youth \(and individuals with limited or no work experience\) PowerPoint](#)

Personal Development: [Maine Financial Education Framework and Resource Guide](#), [Cultural and Virtual Museums](#), [National Park Service](#), [The Smithsonian](#), [The Smithsonian Science Center](#), [The National Gallery of Art](#), [the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled](#)

Activity and Physical Exercise: [Nike Training Club Videos](#), Planet Fitness is offering free on-line workout classes on their Facebook page and YouTube channel

Exploring Work: Resources to help individuals think about the advantages to working, what interests, skills, abilities they have and how they relate to making a good job match.
[National Career Development Association](#) and [Explore Work Training Courses](#)

Discovery Education: [Learn more about careers related to Agriculture](#)

Career Interest Assessments: [Photo Career Quiz](#), [O*Net OnLine](#), [Career One Stop](#), [Career Clusters Interest Survey](#) (printable PDF)

Resume Guides: [Job Star Central](#)

Make Digital Career Portfolios: Wishboard App (Android), Corkulous App (Apple), iMovies

Financial Literacy: These links provide information and activities to learn more about money habits, wants vs. needs, banking, credit and how to develop a budget:

[Maine Financial Education Framework and Resource Guide](#); [Cents and Sensibility: A Guide to Money Management](#); [MyMoney.Gov: Resources for Youth](#); [Money Smart: Selecting the Money Smart Curriculum](#); and [Mint: A free service that helps individuals manage their money with oversight](#)

Remote Coaching and Task Lists: [MeMinder](#)

Provider Technical Assistance with Telehealth

Providers who need assistance with implementing and/or have general billing questions regarding telehealth services are encouraged to contact the Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC) by email: netrc@mcdph.org or 1-800-379-2021. Specific questions can also be submitted to NETRC at <https://www.netrc.org/contact.php>. Many other helpful telehealth resources are available on NETRC's website, including NETRC's Telehealth Toolkit for COVID-19.

MaineCare providers with telehealth questions related to MaineCare-specific billing and/or policies should contact their [Provider Relations Specialist](#) or call Provider Services at 1-866-690-5585.