



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Wellmark waives cost-share for COVID-19 treatment

**DES MOINES, IA** (April 1, 2020) — Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield announced today it will waive members' cost-share related to the treatment of COVID-19 (copay, coinsurance and deductible) when seeking care from an in-network provider, effective Feb. 4 through at least June 16, 2020.

"We want to eliminate cost barriers for our members to get care for COVID-19," said Cory Harris, Wellmark's President and Chief Operating Officer. "Additionally, we are making this retroactive to care as soon as COVID-19 medical codes were made available."

This applies to all Wellmark fully-insured and Medicare Supplement members. Wellmark will work with self-funded groups that want to implement similar benefits for their members.

This is in addition to Wellmark's [previous announcement](#) related to COVID-19 which included:

- **Using virtual visits.** To avoid the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), Wellmark members have access to virtual health care visits for all appropriate medical and behavioral health visits with no member cost-share. For those who don't currently have a health care provider, please use an in-network provider or [Doctor on Demand](#)®. Wellmark will allow telephonic visits when audio/visual capabilities are not accessible.
- **Covering diagnostic tests for COVID-19.** Members will have no cost-share for appropriate testing to establish the diagnosis of COVID-19.
- **Increasing access to prescription medications.** Wellmark prescription drug benefit plans allow for early refill. We also will ensure formulary flexibility if there are medication shortages or other access issues. Members will not be liable for any additional charges if they receive a non-formulary medication as a result of a shortage of their current medication.
- **Supporting our members 24/7.** Members also have access to Wellmark's [BeWell 24/7](#)™ (844-842-9355) service that connects them to real people who can help with a variety of health-related concerns.
- **Working with individuals and businesses suffering economic disruption.** Wellmark will allow our individual and small business policyholders to request a 60-day grace period when making premium payments for due dates between March 17 and June 30, in order to maintain their coverage. We will work with any mid-size or large groups on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriate payment timeframes.
- **Reimbursing providers for virtual visits.** Wellmark's Iowa and South Dakota network providers will receive the same fee for virtual visits as an in-person visit. These changes apply to all appropriate medical and behavioral health virtual visits with any Wellmark in-network provider.

Members can find additional information at [Wellmark.com/coronavirus](https://www.wellmark.com/coronavirus).

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