

**UPDATED SUMMARY
HOUSE BILL 15-1029**

First Regular Session - Seventieth Colorado General Assembly

This summary applies to the reengrossed version of this bill as introduced in the second house. It does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. This summary reflects only the main points of the legislation.

Under current law, health benefit plans issued, amended, or renewed in this state cannot require in-person health care delivery for a person covered under the plan who resides in a county with 150,000 or fewer residents if the care can be appropriately delivered through telemedicine and the county has the technology necessary for care delivery via telemedicine.

Starting January 1, ~~2016~~ 2017, the bill removes the population restrictions and precludes a health benefit plan from requiring in-person care delivery when ~~telemedicine~~ *telehealth* is appropriate, regardless of the geographic location of the health care provider and the recipient of care. A provider need not demonstrate that a barrier to in-person care exists for coverage of ~~telemedicine~~ *telehealth* under a health benefit plan to apply.

In addition, carriers:

- ! Must reimburse ~~providers~~ *a participating provider who deliver delivers care through telemedicine telehealth on the same basis that the carrier is responsible for coverage of services delivered in person reimbursing that provider for providing the same service in person;*
- ! *Cannot deny coverage of a health care service that is a covered benefit because the service is provided through telehealth if delivery of the service via telehealth is appropriate;*
- ! *Must include in the payment for telehealth interactions reasonable compensation for the transmission costs to the site where the covered person is receiving services, unless the covered person is located at a private residence when receiving services;*
- ! ~~Cannot~~ *Must charge the same deductible, copayment, or coinsurance amounts that are not equally imposed on all terms and services covered and durational benefit limitation or maximum benefits under the health benefit plan to the health care services delivered via telehealth that the carrier applies to the same health care services when performed through in-person care; and*
- ! *Cannot impose an annual or lifetime dollar maximum that applies separately to telemedicine health care services delivered through telehealth.*

"Telehealth" is defined as a mode of delivery of health care services through telecommunications systems to facilitate the assessment, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, or self-management of a covered person's health care while the covered person is located at one site and the health care provider is located at a distant site. The term excludes delivery of health care services via telephone, facsimile machine, or electronic mail systems.

The bill applies to health benefit plans issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2017.

Italicized words indicate new material added to the original summary; dashes through words indicate deletions from the original summary.
Prepared by the Office of Legislative Legal Services.