

December 2, 2020

Brian Zolynas  
Division of Medicaid and Children's Health Operations  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
90 Seventh Street, Suite 5-300 (5W)  
San Francisco, CA 94103-6707

**RE: Arizona SPA #20-021, Pharmacy Tech/Intern**

Dear Mr. Zolynas:

Enclosed is State Plan Amendment (SPA) #20-021, Pharmacy Tech/Intern, which updates the State Plan to allow Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Interns to administer the influenza vaccine and a potential COVID-19 vaccine, effective September 1, 2020. Due to the critical need for and the time sensitive nature of this request, the State is formally requesting an expedited review and approval of the attached SPA pages.

If you have any questions about the enclosed SPA, please contact Alex Demyan at (602) 417-4130.

Sincerely,



Dana Flannery  
Assistant Director  
Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING FORM CMS-179

Use Form CMS-179 to transmit State plan material to the regional office for approval. A separate typed transmittal form should be completed for each plan/amendment submitted.

**Block 1 - Transmittal Number** - Enter the State Plan Amendment transmittal number. Assign consecutive numbers on a **calendar year** basis (e.g., 92-001, 92-002, etc.).

**Block 2 - State** -Type the name of the State submitting the plan material.

**Block 3 - Program Identification** -Title XIX of the Social Security Act (Medicaid).

**Block 4 - Proposed Effective Date** - Enter the proposed effective date of material.

**Block 5 -Type of Plan Material** - Check the appropriate box.

**Block 6 - Federal Statute/Regulation Citation** - Enter the appropriate statutory/regulatory citation.

**Block 7 - Federal Budget Impact - 7(a)** - Enter 1st **Federal Fiscal Year** (FFY) impacted by the SPA & estimated Federal share of the cost of the SPA (in thousands) for 1st FFY. **7(b)** - Enter 2nd FFY impacted by the SPA & estimated Federal share of the cost for 2nd FFY. See SMM section 13026.

**Block 8 - Page No.(s) of Plan Section or Attachment** - Enter the page number(s) of plan material transmitted. If additional space is needed, use bond paper.

**Block 9 - Page No.(s) of the Superseded Plan Section or Attachment (if Applicable)** - Enter the page number(s) (including the transmittal sheet number) that is being superseded. If additional space is needed, use bond paper.

**Block 10 - Subject of Amendment** - Briefly describe plan material being transmitted.

**Block 11 - Governor's Review** - Check the appropriate box. See SMM section 13026 B.

**Block 12 - Signature of State Agency Official** -Authorized State official signs this block.

**Block 13 -Typed Name** -Type name of State official who signed block 12.

**Block 14 -Title** -Type title of State official who signed block 12.

**Block 15 - Date Submitted** - Enter the date you mail plan material to RO.

**Block 16 - Return To** -Type the name and address of State official to whom this form should be returned.

**Block 17–23 (FOR REGIONAL OFFICE USE ONLY).**

**Block 17 - Date Received** - Enter the date plan material is received in RO. See ROM section 6003.2.

**Block 18 - Date Approved** - Enter the date RO approved the plan material.

**Block 19 - Effective Date of Approved Material** - Enter the date the plan material becomes effective. If more than one effective date, list each provision and its effective date in Block 23 or attach a sheet.

**Block 20 - Signature of Regional Official** -Approving RO official signs this block.

**Block 21 -Typed Name** -Type approving official's name.

**Block 22 -Title** -Type approving official's title.

**Block 23 - Remarks** - Use this block to reference pen and ink changes, a partial approval, more than one effective date, etc. If additional space is needed, use bond paper.

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**Section 7 – General Provisions**  
**7.4. Medicaid Disaster Relief for the COVID-19 National Emergency**

On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States issued a proclamation that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a national emergency by the authorities vested in him by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including sections 201 and 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), and consistent with section 1135 of the Social Security Act (Act). On March 13, 2020, pursuant to section 1135(b) of the Act, the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services invoked his authority to waive or modify certain requirements of titles XVIII, XIX, and XXI of the Act as a result of the consequences COVID-19 pandemic, to the extent necessary, as determined by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), to ensure that sufficient health care items and services are available to meet the needs of individuals enrolled in the respective programs and to ensure that health care providers that furnish such items and services in good faith, but are unable to comply with one or more of such requirements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, may be reimbursed for such items and services and exempted from sanctions for such noncompliance, absent any determination of fraud or abuse. This authority took effect as of 6PM Eastern Standard Time on March 15, 2020, with a retroactive effective date of March 1, 2020. The emergency period will terminate, and waivers will no longer be available, upon termination of the public health emergency, including any extensions.

The State Medicaid agency (agency) seeks to implement the policies and procedures described below, which are different than the policies and procedures otherwise applied under the Medicaid state plan, during the period of the Presidential and Secretarial emergency declarations related to the COVID-19 outbreak (or any renewals thereof), or for any shorter period described below:

N/A.

*The flexibilities described in this SPA shall be implemented throughout the duration of the Presidential and Secretarial emergency declarations related to the COVID-19 outbreak (or any renewals thereof).*

NOTE: States may not elect a period longer than the Presidential or Secretarial emergency declaration (or any renewal thereof). States may not propose changes on this template that restrict or limit payment, services, or eligibility, or otherwise burden beneficiaries and providers.

**Request for Waivers under Section 1135**

X  The agency seeks the following under section 1135(b)(1)(C) and/or section 1135(b)(5) of the Act:

- a.  X  SPA submission requirements – the agency requests modification of the requirement to submit the SPA by March 31, 2020, to obtain a SPA effective date during the first calendar quarter of 2020, pursuant to 42 CFR 430.20.
- b.  X  Public notice requirements – the agency requests waiver of public notice requirements that would otherwise be applicable to this SPA submission. These requirements may include those specified in 42 CFR 440.386 (Alternative Benefit Plans),
- c.  X  Tribal consultation requirements – the agency requests modification of tribal

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consultation timelines specified in [Arizona] Medicaid state plan, as described below:

*Current state plan language provides for an expedited Tribal Consultation process in situations that require immediate submission of a policy change to CMS. However, the current language details the Agency soliciting written comment “in the meeting notification with a description of the policy change and the date when the change will be submitted to CMS” at least 14 days prior to submission to CMS. While the Agency did hold an emergency Tribal Consultation meeting to discuss these policy changes, AHCCCS was not able to meet this 14 day requirement prior to submission to CMS, and are thus seeking relevant flexibility.*

**Section A – Eligibility**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The agency furnishes medical assistance to the following optional groups of individuals described in section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii) or 1902(a)(10)(c) of the Act. This may include the new optional group described at section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XXIII) and 1902(ss) of the Act providing coverage for uninsured individuals.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ The agency furnishes medical assistance to the following populations of individuals described in section 1902(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XX) of the Act and 42 CFR 435.218:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ All individuals who are described in section 1905(a)(10)(A)(ii)(XX)
 

Income standard: \_\_\_\_\_

-or-
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Individuals described in the following categorical populations in section 1905(a) of the Act:

Income standard: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ The agency applies less restrictive financial methodologies to individuals excepted from financial methodologies based on modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) as follows.

Less restrictive income methodologies:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ The following eligibility groups or categorical populations:

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Please list the applicable eligibility groups or populations.

- 1. \_\_\_ The agency allows waiver of payment of the enrollment fee, premiums and similar charges for undue hardship.

Please specify the standard(s) and/or criteria that the state will use to determine undue hardship.

Section D – Benefits

Benefits:

- 1. \_\_\_ The agency adds the following optional benefits in its state plan (include service descriptions, provider qualifications, and limitations on amount, duration or scope of the benefit):

- 2. X The agency makes the following adjustments to benefits currently covered in the state plan:

Home Health: The state allows physicians and other licensed practitioners, in accordance with State law, to order Medicaid Home Health services as authorized in the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Medicare interim final rule (CMS-1744-IFC).  
Other Licensed Practitioners: Licensed Pharmacists employed by an AHCCCS-registered pharmacy and acting within the scope of their practice to order and administer AHCCCS covered vaccines and anaphylaxis agents to adults and children. As identified in their scope of practice, Licensed Pharmacists may order and prescribe Flu and COVID-19 related vaccines.  
Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Interns employed by an AHCCCS-registered pharmacy and acting within the scope of their practice may also administer AHCCCS covered influenza and COVID-19 vaccines under the supervision of an immunizing pharmacist.

- 3. X The agency assures that newly added benefits or adjustments to benefits comply with all applicable statutory requirements, including the statewideness requirements found at 1902(a)(1), comparability requirements found at 1902(a)(10)(B), and free choice of provider requirements found at 1902(a)(23).
- 4. X Application to Alternative Benefit Plans (ABP). The state adheres to all ABP provisions in 42 CFR Part 440, Subpart C. This section only applies to states that have an approved ABP(s).
  - a. X The agency assures that these newly added and/or adjusted benefits will be made available to individuals receiving services under ABPs.
  - b. \_\_\_ Individuals receiving services under ABPs will not receive these newly added and/or

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adjusted benefits, or will only receive the following subset:

*Please describe.*

*Telehealth:*

5.  The agency utilizes telehealth in the following manner, which may be different than outlined in the state's approved state plan:

*Please describe.*

*Drug Benefit:*

6.  The agency makes the following adjustments to the day supply or quantity limit for covered outpatient drugs. The agency should only make this modification if its current state plan pages have limits on the amount of medication dispensed.

7.  Prior authorization for medications is expanded by automatic renewal without clinical review, or time/quantity extensions.

8.  The agency makes the following payment adjustment to the professional dispensing fee when additional costs are incurred by the providers for delivery. States will need to supply documentation to justify the additional fees.

9.  The agency makes exceptions to their published Preferred Drug List if drug shortages occur. This would include options for covering a brand name drug product that is a multi-source drug if a generic drug option is not available.

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**Section E – Payments**

**Optional benefits described in Section D:**

1.  Newly added benefits described in Section D are paid using the following methodology:

a.  Published fee schedules –

Effective date (enter date of change): \_\_\_\_\_

Location (list published location):

<https://www.azahcccs.gov/PlansProviders/RatesAndBilling/FFS> (Physician fee schedule and Hospital Outpatient Fee Schedule (OPFS).)

b.  Other:

*Describe methodology here.*

*Increases to state plan payment methodologies:*

2.  The agency increases payment rates for the following services:

*Please list all that apply.*

a.  Payment increases are targeted based on the following criteria:

*Please describe criteria.*

b. Payments are increased through:

i.  A supplemental payment or add-on within applicable upper payment limits:

*Please describe.*



ii. \_\_\_\_ An increase to rates as described below.

Rates are increased:

\_\_\_\_ Uniformly by the following percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Through a modification to published fee schedules –

Effective date (enter date of change): \_\_\_\_\_

Location (list published location): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Up to the Medicare payments for equivalent services.

\_\_\_\_ By the following factors:

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