



Florida Healthy Kids Corporation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, March 26, 2020

**FLORIDA HEALTHY KIDS TAKES PROACTIVE STEPS TO PROTECT MEMBERS
DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

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Media Contact: Ashley Carr
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TALLAHASSEE, Fla – In light of the ongoing coronavirus (aka COVID-19) outbreak across the nation and in Florida, the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation’s (FHKC) Board of Directors today adopted and recognized benefit and eligibility adjustments to help ensure children face fewer barriers in accessing the care they may need during this emergency.

CFO Jimmy Patronis said, “As the threat of COVID-19 impacts our state, it’s important we do all we can to lessen the financial burden this public health emergency has on Florida families. Our children are the future, and I applaud Dr. Haridopolos and the Florida Healthy Kids Board of Directors for working to increase affordability and streamline access to care for COVID-19 testing to ensure our children are protected. Floridians are resilient but we must continue to work together to weather this storm.”

FHKC Board Chairman Dr. Stephanie Haridopolos said, “Floridians are currently facing unprecedented times and many new challenges in the wake of COVID-19. While current knowledge gives us hope that COVID-19 will largely spare our children, we must be proactive and take every precaution possible to help them stay healthy. I speak for the full Board of Directors in saying we are proud to take these steps to protect Florida’s kids, and we appreciate the leadership displayed by many at the national, state and local levels to make this possible.”

The measures adopted or recognized by the FHKC Board include:

To ensure affordability of medical care:

- Waiver of all costs associated with COVID-19 testing
- Waiver of copays for most commonly used services through April 30 (done in partnership with Aetna Better Health of Florida, Simply Healthcare Plans and Community Care Plan)

To improve access to care:

- Relaxed prior authorizations for hospitals, physicians, home health and durable medical equipment
- Allowance of 90-day supply of medications at retail and mail-order pharmacies (only for medications for which a 90-day supply is clinically appropriate)
- Waiver of early refill requirements

To provide ample opportunity for eligibility and enrollment (upon a family's request):

- Retroactive enrollment for new applicants to the start of the month when the application is approved, and payment is received
- Additional time to complete annual renewals
- Additional time to pay premiums and retroactively enroll (*e.g. March payment is made on March 27; coverage is retroactive back to March 1*)

The benefit adjustments allow health plans to provide much-needed relief to Florida Healthy Kids (subsidized and full-pay) families, and the eligibility adjustments apply to the following Florida KidCare programs: Florida Healthy Kids (subsidized and full-pay) and MediKids (subsidized and full-pay).

These measures are made possible through multiple federal and state regulatory mechanisms, including an approved Section 1135 waiver submitted by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) after President Trump's emergency declaration on March 13; the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) state plan and proposed state plan amendment; executive orders issued by Governor Ron DeSantis; and federal legislation.

Section 1135 waivers afford state Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP programs greater flexibility to remove administrative burdens and expand access to needed services. Further, the CHIP state plan, which serves as the basis for the program's regulatory framework, includes consumer-centric provisions that can be enacted during times of disaster.

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About the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation

The Florida Healthy Kids Corporation is a nonprofit, public-private partnership created by the Florida Legislature to expand access to affordable, child-centered health insurance. The Corporation administers Florida Healthy Kids (healthykids.org), a comprehensive health and dental insurance program for Florida children from age 5 through the end of age 18. The Corporation also provides marketing, customer services and administrative services for Florida KidCare.

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