

## Telehealth Parity: Need-to-Know

### Have you benefited from Telehealth therapy sessions?

Please consider calling your health insurance company and lawmaker (state representative and state senator) to let them know.

### What is Telehealth Parity?

1. Illinois is one of a few states that do not have a Telehealth Parity law.
2. A parity law ensures that Telehealth sessions are held to the same benefit standard as in-person sessions. Without a parity law, insurance companies can set their own benefit coverage and provider reimbursement rates for Telehealth.
3. Parity will keep you seeing your therapist whether in-person or from home.

### Why now?

1. The Illinois General Assembly will be considering a Telehealth Parity bill during its new session beginning January 14<sup>th</sup>.
2. Legislators appreciate hearing from you!
3. Sharing your story with your local lawmakers will help them understand the importance of Telehealth.
4. A brief phone call or an email will go a long way in securing Telehealth as a permanent insurance benefit.

### How can I help?

1. Locate your state representative and state senator's contact information. Here's a link to an interactive map that can help you locate your representative and senator: ([www.illinoispolicy.org/maps/](http://www.illinoispolicy.org/maps/)).
2. Call or email your legislator. A phone call works better, but an email will do just fine.
3. Briefly share how Telehealth has benefited you and remember that your story matters! You do not need to share your clinical information.
4. Please state that you are in favor of a Telehealth Parity law, and the continuation of Telehealth psychotherapy benefits after the pandemic.

### How do I contact my health insurance company?

1. Contact your health insurance's customer service hotline. The number is located on the back of your insurance card.
2. When speaking with a representative, please share how Telehealth has benefited you.
3. Request that your insurance company continues Telehealth benefits after the pandemic has ended.
4. Your representative may say that you will be able to continue Telehealth on a third-party platform (e.g., MDLive), but this is not Telehealth Parity. Your therapist may not be credentialed with the third-party platform. Please tell the representative that Telehealth psychotherapy benefits should be treated the same as in-person psychotherapy benefits.
5. If you have a self-funded health insurance plan, you will need to contact your employer's benefit administrator. The benefit administrator is usually a part of your employer's HR department.