

# COVID Relief Update



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# HHS Provider Relief Fund-Vaccine Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF)

- On May 3, HHS announced a new COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF). Since providers cannot bill patients for COVID-19 vaccination fees, the CAF is intended to address an outstanding compensation need for providers on the front lines vaccinating underinsured patients.
- CAF is focusing on instances where individuals have insurance, but vaccines are either not covered or are but typically with patient cost-sharing.
- To address these gaps, the CAF will be compensating providers for eligible claims, at national Medicare rates.
  - In March, those rates increased from approximately \$28 to \$40 for the administration of single-dose vaccines and from approximately \$45 to \$80 for the administration of COVID-19 vaccines requiring two doses.



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# HHS Provider Relief Fund-Vaccine Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF)

- To be eligible for this fund; providers must:
  - Administer the vaccines regardless of the recipient's ability to pay COVID-19 vaccine administration fees or coverage status;
  - Must administer COVID-19 vaccine at no out-of-pocket cost to the recipient; and
  - Must first seek appropriate reimbursement from a program or plan that covers COVID-19 vaccine administration fees for the vaccine recipient.
- The CAF will accept eligible claims for insured individuals that were vaccinated on or after December 14, 2020.
  - Claims must be submitted electronically
  - All reimbursement is subject to availability of funds.



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# HHS Provider Relief Fund-Vaccine Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF)

- **What will the CAF cover:**
  - Eligible providers will be reimbursed at national Medicare rates for vaccine administration fees, and for any patient cost sharing related to vaccination, including: co-pays, deductibles, and co-insurance.
- **How to File a Claim to CAF:**
  - Providers may enroll in the program through the HRSA COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF) Portal <https://bit.ly/3aSyijU> and agree to the Terms and Conditions, including accepting defined program reimbursement as payment in full and agreeing not to balance bill the patient.
  - After submitting a claim(s) for COVID-19 vaccine administration fees to patients' health plan carrier for payment, if the claim is either denied by that insurer or only partially paid, providers may then submit a claim(s) to the CAF Portal for payment consideration.
    - Providers must also verify no other third party payer will reimburse them for vaccine administration fees for that patient encounter.
  - Claims are accepted via clearinghouses or through electronic or manual submissions via the CAF Portal.



# HHS Provider Relief Fund-Vaccine Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF)

- **For more information, HHS/HRSA will be holding two educational webinars:**
  - May 6, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
    - Register at: [https://attglobal.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1457791&tp\\_key=1e9669347e](https://attglobal.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1457791&tp_key=1e9669347e)
  - May 12, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
    - Register at [https://attglobal.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1457852&tp\\_key=b798d5ec1b](https://attglobal.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1457852&tp_key=b798d5ec1b)



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# HHS Provider Relief Fund – Targeted Rural Relief

- On May 4, 2021, HHS committed \$1B to targeted rural relief. The funds will be allocated in three distinct ways:
  - HRSA's Rural Health Clinic COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program will provide \$460 million to more than 4,600 rural health clinics (RHCs) across the country.
    - RHCs will use the funds to maintain and increase COVID-19 testing, expand access to testing for rural residents, and broaden efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus in ways tailored to their local communities.
    - **HRSA will provide up to \$100,000 per RHC-certified clinic site and will issue the funds this summer.**
  - HRSA will provide \$398 million to existing grantees of the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) to work with approximately 1,730 small rural hospitals – those with fewer than 50 beds – and Critical Access Hospitals on COVID-19 testing and mitigation.
    - **SHIP state grantees will use the funding to support all eligible rural hospitals, up to \$230,000 per hospital, and will issue the funds later in the year.**



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# HHS Provider Relief Fund – Targeted Rural Relief

- Finally, through the Rural Health Clinic Vaccine Confidence (RHCVC) Program, HRSA will make nearly \$100 million available in grants to eligible RHCs nationwide to address health equity gaps by offering support and resources to medically underserved rural communities where COVID-19 vaccine uptake lags in comparison to more populated areas.
  - **HRSA will fund all eligible RHCs that apply.**
    - *Details about the application process are still pending.*
  - RHCs will be able to use the funds to increase vaccine confidence, improve health care in rural areas, and reinforce key messages about prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.



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## HHS Provider Relief Fund – Still to Come.....

- Estimated PRF Fund Availability: \$32B with \$7.5B (\$1B just announced) specifically earmarked for rural providers.
  - *Rural Provider Distribution will require an application process. HHS Secretary has broad powers to define “rural” providers.*
- Eventual Reporting on the Use of PRF Funds



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## Key Reminders....

- Reminder...Payroll Protection Program Application Cycle Closes at the end of May!
  - Additional \$7.25 billion in funding has been allocated to the PPP.
- Medicare sequestration is back on hold through 12/31/2021!
  - Should be reflected for both traditional Medicare & Medicare Advantage!



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# Wrap Up & Questions

Unmute using \*6 or the mic icon in the app or use the chat to ask.



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