

**From:** [Sharon Cabana](#)  
**To:** [Exhibits JSCVR](#)  
**Subject:** Telehealth and Covid 19  
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Good afternoon,

My name is Sharon Cabana. I am a licensed marriage and family therapist working in a primary care setting and private practice. I live in Clackamas County and practice in Marion, Washington, and Multnomah counties.

As many of you know, due to the spread of Covid-19, many providers have changed to offering telehealth sessions in order to reduce contact with the virus and support public health. Many of us have established accounts with HIPAA-compliant software, and, as many of you may be aware, there has been a relaxation of federal guidelines on telehealth software in order to ensure access to care for our most vulnerable populations.

Unfortunately, at this time, though telehealth coverage has been secured for Medicaid and Medicare, private insurance companies continue to engage in measures that create barriers to care. For example, Optum Health has required all in-network providers to complete attestation, a process that is taking Oregon workers 15 business days to complete. Other states are approving within 1 business day. While out-of-network providers do not have to complete this attestation, in-network providers may not be reimbursed for our services, directly and negatively impacting our businesses. In addition, Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield has several plans that are approved only through their platform "MDLive" which requires at least 90 days for credentialing, reimburses significantly below market, and effectively makes clients responsible for payment at a time when many are struggling with fear about losing their jobs and their health. This creates a domino effect were clients may not seek services, negatively impacting their capacity to work, and also negatively impacting our practices and our financial well-being.

I am writing to urge that the state step up as a leader in ensuring healthcare and coverage for every person seeking service in this time of crisis. Please consider establishing protocols to ensure that all telehealth services are covered regardless of private or state insurance.

As mental health workers, we stand with healthcare providers on the front lines of providing services and ensuring the safety of our clients. In addition, we provide support for those healthcare providers as they try to cope with the stresses of managing this pandemic. Please help support us and ensure that we can keep our businesses and practices open by receiving reimbursement for the valuable, and necessary, service we provide.

Respectfully,

Sharon Cabana, MA, LMFT

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