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*Department of Health Care Finance Informational Bulletin*

**DATE:** February 1, 2024  
**FROM:** Melisa Byrd, Senior Deputy Director/Medicaid Director  
**SUBJECT:** **Behavioral Health Integration Update: Carve-In Date and Bridge Policies**

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide notice that behavioral health services will be included in managed care contracts **beginning April 1, 2024**. This bulletin also describes temporary “bridge policies” that will be in effect after the transition to managed care.

### **Carve-In Date**

Beginning April 1, 2024, all Mental Health Rehabilitative Services (MHRS) and Adult Substance Use Rehabilitative Services (ASURS) will be covered by Managed Care Plans (MCPs) for their enrollees.<sup>1</sup> After the carve-in, providers will no longer submit claims for these services to the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF), and prior authorization responsibilities will shift from the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to the DHCF and the MCPs.

### **Bridge Policies**

DHCF plans to implement the following temporary policies after the behavioral health carve-in to help ease the transition into managed care for providers and beneficiaries.

1. MCOs shall enroll all DBH-certified providers who wish to participate in the network, as of the transition date, for a minimum period of eighteen (18) months.
2. For the first eighteen (18) months, the MCO shall pay, at minimum, the rates for behavioral health services established via regulation and published on the DHCF Medicaid Fee Schedule and supplemental Fee Schedules as identified by DHCF.
3. MCOs shall reimburse MHRS and ASURS services reflected in all enrollees’ active and current prior authorizations and/or treatment plans spanning April 1<sup>st</sup>, as well as one additional episode of care at the same level of care.

### **Notes and Resources**

- Please note that DHCF reserves the right to extend each of these policies in future option years.
- The DHCF Medicaid Fee Schedule and BH Billing Manual can be found at:  
[Department of Health Care Finance - Fee Schedule Download \(dc-medicaid.com\)](https://dc-medicaid.com/Department%20of%20Health%20Care%20Finance%20-%20Fee%20Schedule%20Download)  
[Microsoft Word - DBH Billing Manual 09142023 \(dc-medicaid.com\)](https://dc-medicaid.com/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20DBH%20Billing%20Manual%2009142023)
- All behavioral health integration bulletins can be found on the DHCF BH Integration landing page at [Behavioral Health Integration | dhcf \(dc.gov\)](https://dc.gov/Behavioral-Health-Integration).

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<sup>1</sup> Behavioral health services provided at free-standing mental health clinics (FSMHCs) are already covered by MCOs.