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# Florida Blue extends grace period for payment of premiums

March 26, 2020 – Florida Blue, the state's leading health insurer, announced today it will implement an extended grace period through May 31, 2020 for customers unable to pay premiums as a result of the COVID-19 health crisis that would otherwise have been subject to termination of coverage.

The grace period applies to Affordable Care Act, Medicare Supplement, and other individual health plan members, as well as most of its employer group health plans. In addition, Florida Blue is working with its self-funded ERISA employers

to assist them in meeting the needs of their employees.

“Florida Blue understands our customers and members are facing tremendous uncertainty due to the COVID-19 health crisis. We want to alleviate additional stress and anxiety at this time over the potential termination of their health coverage and allow them to focus on their health and safety,” said Pat Geraghty, Florida Blue president and CEO.

The decision also includes extending the grace period for non-payment of premiums for its individual and group dental, vision and life insurance plans through May 31, 2020. Florida Blue will also continue its policy of delaying disenrollment from its Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plans for premium delinquency until annual renewals.

Florida Blue members with questions about the coronavirus, who have symptoms and need help finding a doctor to do a COVID-19 test or any other concern, should call Florida Blue at the phone number on the back of their member ID card or 1-800-352-2583. Medicare members can call 1-800-926-6565.

#### Increased Access to Virtual Health Care

Florida Blue also increased virtual health access for its members in response to COVID-19. The insurer added no-cost access to Teladoc for its Medicare Advantage members and waived all copays for all its Affordable Care Act members and many employer group health plan members. Teladoc provides 24/7 virtual health care via phone, video or mobile app for non-emergency medical concerns.

Sanitas Medical Centers, which exclusively serves Florida Blue members, continues to offer free bilingual virtual care to its current patients via its mySanitas Chat website and mobile app.

Florida Blue has expanded its network of primary care doctors and specialists who are able to treat patients through a virtual visit at the regular office visit cost share during the crisis. Members can call their doctor to see if they offer virtual visits.

## Free Emotional Support Helpline for All Floridians

Additionally, Florida Blue partnered with New Directions Behavioral Health to open a free emotional support helpline for all Floridians, including those who do not have insurance or have coverage with another health plan. The toll-free, bilingual helpline is available 24 hours a day at 833-848-1762. It connects individuals with specially trained behavioral health counselors who can assist anyone experiencing feelings of stress, anxiety, trauma and grief due to the health crisis. These counselors cannot answer questions about COVID-19 testing or treatment.

## About Florida Blue

Florida Blue, Florida's Blue Cross and Blue Shield company, has been providing health insurance to residents of Florida for more than 75 years. Driven by its mission of helping people and communities achieve better health, the company serves more than 5 million health care members across the state. In total, Florida Blue and its affiliated companies serve 27 million people in 35 states. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla., it is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

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