

May 15, 2020



[Home](#) | [About](#) | [Members](#) | [Annual Meeting](#) | [Education](#) | [Advocacy](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Archive](#) | [Advertise](#)

## Top News

### **DWC Adopts Emergency Regulations — Telehealth Medical-Legal Visits**



Division of Workers' Compensation

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Division of Workers' Compensation is proposing to adopt emergency regulations that would allow for a telehealth visit for purposes of performing a Medical-Legal visit – in limited circumstances. The regulations will only stay in effect as long as the Governor has a stay-at-home order in place in your community. Once the restriction is lifted, the regulations will no longer be in force, unless the DWC adopts them through the normal regulatory process.

The limited circumstances for a telehealth Medical-Legal visit include:

1. In cases only dealing with AOE-COE issues; or,
2. The evaluator is asked to address the termination of an injured worker's indemnity benefit payment; or,
3. The evaluator is asked to address a dispute regarding work restriction; and,
4. The parties have agreed to the telehealth visit; and
5. The physician attests that an in-person evaluation is not required; and,
6. The evaluation is consistent with appropriate and ethical medical practice.

The Emergency Regulations also:

1. Allows the physician to perform an electronic interview and review of records prior to an in-person evaluation. The electronic interview must be performed by the physician via a video conference in which all parties can see each other.

The emergency regulations envision that the QME would take the initiative to schedule the electronic interview and in-person evaluation. Payers would have to get the records to physician 10 days prior to the scheduling of the electronic interview, so it seems that the QME would also have to notify the payer of the scheduled interview in order for them to comply with the regs, although the regs are not clear on this point. All services would be billed using the existing Medical-Legal Fee Schedule. It's unclear how or whether QMEs/AMEs would be able to bill the interview before completing the in-person evaluation.

[\*\*READ THE DWC EMERGENCY REGULATION\*\*](#)

## DWC Posts Additional Adjustments to Official Medical Fee Schedule Including Expansion of Telehealth to Address COVID-19 Emergency (Physician and Non-Physician Practitioner Services)



Division of Workers' Compensation

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has posted an order dated May 7, 2020, adjusting the Physician and Non-Physician Practitioner Services section of the Official Medical Fee Schedule (OMFS) to conform to additional Medicare fee schedule changes pursuant to Labor Code section 5307.1. The order includes technical updates and provisions to support expanded access to telehealth services. [READ MORE](#)

### COVID-19 Guidance

## Another Coronavirus Casualty: California's Budget



California Healthline

The coronavirus has claimed another victim: California's finances. Gov. Gavin Newsom unveiled his revised 2020-21 state budget plan Thursday at a somber briefing punctuated by bleak talk of deficits, program cuts and record unemployment. His \$203 billion spending proposal — nearly \$19 billion less than his ambitious January budget blueprint — includes a slight increase in public health funding to help California in its fight against COVID-19, but falls far short of the amount public health leaders say is needed to respond immediately and prepare for future threats. [READ MORE](#)

## Risk Score May Help Predict Occurrence of Critical Illness in Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19



JAMA Internal Medicine via DG Alerts

A clinical risk score can help clinicians identify patients with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) who may subsequently develop critical illness at the time of hospital admission, according to a study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*. The tool, dubbed COVID-GRAM, uses 10 variables that are generally readily available at hospital admission to predict critical illness. [READ MORE](#)

## HHS Stimulus: Practices May Not Be Eligible To Retain Funds



Physicians Practice

If your practice recently received an electronic payment as part of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) distribution of stimulus relief funds, you may be wondering whether or not you can retain those funds. Although the first reaction of many providers is to assume they have a right to retain the payment (after all, almost every practice has suffered losses as a result of COVID-19), this may not actually be a correct assumption. [READ MORE](#)

### COA Report

#### Connect with COA



[Recent Issues](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Web Version](#)

Colby Horton, Vice President of Publishing, 469-420-2601 | [Download media kit](#)  
Brie Ragland, Editor, 469-420-2604 | [Contribute news](#)

#### California Orthopaedic Association

1246 P Street | Sacramento, CA 95814 | 916-454-9884 | [Contact Us](#)

[Learn how](#) to add us to your safe sender list so our emails get to your inbox.

