

September 29, 2020

**ILLINOIS HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
M E M O R A N D U M**

SUBJECT: HFS CARES Portal is Open

The Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) has posted a [Provider Notice](#) announcing that the **HFS CARES Portal is now open** for CURE Fund applications (for background information, see IHA's Sept. 17 [memo](#)). The CURE Fund was authorized in [Public Act 101-637](#) by the General Assembly to facilitate the distribution of state and local funding received by the state as the result of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The HFS CARES Portal is open through 12 noon on Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020. The portal is available 24/7 during this timeframe. Online and call-in assistance is available to applicants with questions regarding the HFS CARES Program from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. CDT, Monday through Friday, at 866-385-0600. Call center support is available in English and Spanish.

HFS CARES Portal: Medicaid healthcare providers enrolled with HFS can apply for financial assistance by submitting an online application through the [HFS CARES Portal](#). Applicants can create a portal log in and begin reviewing and collecting required application documents to be submitted. Once a username and password log in are established to start a new application, applicants will be able save the application to finish at a later time. It is recommended that providers use Chrome or Edge browsers when accessing the HFS CARES portal for optimal performance.

Provider Eligibility: CARES Act funding must be used to cover COVID-19 pandemic related healthcare expenses that were not part of the provider's annual budget established before March 1, 2020. Eligible providers must have experienced economic hardship in the form of increased healthcare expenses, expenditures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or decreased utilization and revenues as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Medicaid healthcare providers operating in the State of Illinois will have the opportunity to apply for assistance, but not all will be eligible for funding. The application form will inform entities whether they are eligible to submit an application based on the Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) provided. According to today's HFS notice, funding will be awarded based on applicants meeting the eligibility criteria outlined in the HFS CARES Program. Funds will be prioritized for providers serving Medicaid members and to fill gaps not addressed by other resources. Per the General Assembly appropriation, at least 30% of the funds will be allocated to high impact areas of the state.

Reminder: Many provider types, such as **safety net hospitals**, long-term care facilities and Federally Qualified Health Centers, may have already received **a first-round of CARES payments from the State automatically**. Following this initial round of distributions, all providers **MUST**

utilize the portal to both apply for grant funding in future rounds as well as to supply required reporting and track future announcements. The second and any potential subsequent rounds of CARES payments will come later in the fall. HFS will continue to share information through traditional notices, and will also be posting updates on the [HFS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update Page](#). Providers receiving funding via the first round of CARES payments may apply via the portal for additional funding if they can demonstrate federally compliant COVID-19 costs or lost revenue.

Hospitals may contact the HFS CARES Act call center at 866-385-0600 or email questions to HFS.CARES@illinois.gov.

Questions regarding this memo may be directed to [IHA](#).