



TOTAL MEDICAL COMPLIANCE

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(888) 862-6742

## TELEHEALTH & COVID-19

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The OCR is allowing the **short-term** use of certain applications for telehealth visits that do not meet HIPAA security standards. This is for a limited time in order to support response to COVID-19.

Patients should be notified that these third-party applications potentially introduce privacy risks, similar to when a patient requests PHI via email. All available encryption and privacy modes should be enabled when using such applications.

Here are examples of what you can use:

- Applications like these can be used **for a limited time only** and are not to be used as a long-term solution as they do not meet all HIPAA security requirements.
  - FaceTime
  - Facebook Messenger video chat
  - Google Hangouts video
  - Skype
  - Zoom
- The best long-term solutions require a BAA, and include applications like:
  - Skype for Business (Microsoft Teams)
  - Updox
  - VSee
  - Zoom for Healthcare
  - Doxy.me
  - Google G Suite Hangouts Meet
  - TigerConnect

Some applications are providing services at no cost to providers for COVID-19 response.

Methods of communication like Facebook Live, TikTok, and Twitch should never be used because those communications are not direct or person to person.

Providers should conduct telehealth sessions in a private area away from others just as any other patient encounter.

Medicare has expanded its coverage of telehealth visits during the COVID-19 response. Providers should refer to billing guidelines for telehealth visit requirements.

Resources:

- [HHS/OCR Telehealth FAQ - COVID-19](#)
- [CMS Telehealth Fact Sheet](#)
- [AMA Telehealth Quick Guide](#)
- [The National Telehealth Policy Resource Center](#)
- [TMC COVID-19 Resource Page](#)