This drafted policy is open for a two-week public comment period. This box is not part of the drafted policy language itself and is intended for use only during the comment period to provide readers with a summary of what has changed.

As mandated by House Bill 4, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, HHSC is performing a targeted review of the Texas Health Steps (THSteps) Preventive Care Medical Checkups Policy to add language to allow the delivery of certain Texas Health Steps checkups by telemedicine during a declaration of state disaster.

The following is a summary of changes in scope for this policy review:

* Added language on the delivery of THSteps medical checkups by synchronous audio-visual or telephone (audio-only) technologies when HHSC issues direction authorizing the delivery during a declaration of state disaster.

Some policy language that is out of scope for this review is included in this document for context. New policy language has been underlined and deleted language has been struck-through to highlight proposed policy changes.

Note: The current language regarding Texas Health Steps (THSteps) preventive care medical checkups can be found in the Texas Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual (TMPPM), Vol 2: Children’s Services Handbook, Sections 4.0 - 4.5 at https://www.tmhp.com/resouces/provider-manuals/tmppm.

**Texas Medicaid**

# Texas Health Steps (THSteps) Preventive Care Medical Checkups

## Statement of Benefits

The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) service is Medicaid’s comprehensive and preventive care benefit for individuals birth through 20 years of age. In Texas, EPSDT is known as Texas Health Steps (THSteps). Preventive care medical checkups are a benefit of the THSteps Program at the time of service delivery for clients who are birth through 20 years of age. Providers must use procedure codes 99381, 99382, 99383, 99384, 99385, 99391, 99392, 99393, 99394, 99395 for THSteps Preventive Care Medical Checkups.

THSteps preventive checkups must include regularly scheduled examinations and screenings of general physical and mental health, growth, development, and nutritional status of infants, children and youth. Checkups must be offered in accordance with the THSteps Medical Checkup Periodicity Schedule to assure preventive health screenings occur at age-appropriate points in the client’s life.

A THSteps follow-up visit is required to complete necessary procedures related to the checkup. Providers must use procedure code 99211 for THSteps follow-up visits.

Exception to periodicity checkups are complete medical checkups, which are medically necessary and which might cause the total number of checkups to exceed the number allowed for the client’s age range if the client were to have all regularly scheduled checkups.

## Policy Overview/Scope

### Medical Checkups During a Declaration of State Disaster

1. During a Declaration of State Disaster, HHSC may issue direction to providers regarding the use of telemedicine or telehealth services to include the use of synchronous telephone (audio-only) platform to provide covered services outside of the allowances described herein. A Declaration of State of Disaster is when an executive order or proclamation by the governor declaring a state of disaster in accordance with Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code.
2. The following limitations apply to all age appropriate THSteps preventive medical checkups and exception-to-periodicity checkups during a Declaration of State Disaster when HHSC issues direction regarding the use of synchronous audiovisual and synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies:
   1. Individuals over 24 months of age through 20 years of age may receive a THSteps medical checkup or exception-to-periodicity checkup using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies.
   2. Individuals birth through 24 months of age may not receive a THSteps checkup or exception-to-periodicity checkup using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies.
   3. Individuals birth through 24 months of age must receive in-person checkups.
3. A medical checkup provided using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies must be completed according to the age-specific checkup requirements listed on the THSteps Periodicity Schedule.
4. Synchronous audiovisual delivery for medical checkups is preferred over synchronous telephone (audio-only) delivery.
5. An in-person THSteps follow-up visit must be completed within 6 months of the synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup in order for the checkup to be considered a complete THSteps checkup.
6. When HHSC issues direction, the following THSteps medical checkup services are authorized for delivery using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies during a Declaration of State Disaster:

#### Procedure Code

* 99382\*
* 99383
* 99384
* 99385
* 99392\*
* 99393
* 99394
* 99395

\*Limited to checkups for clients over 24 months of age and who received their 24-month checkup in-person.

1. Medical checkups and exception-to-periodicity checkups provided using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies are limited to checkups for children over 24 months of age (S-99382, S-99383, S-99384, S-99385, S-99392, S-99393, S-99394 and S-99395).
2. Medical checkups for children 24 months of age or younger must be completed in-person and may not be completed using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies (S-99381, S-99382, S-99391 and S-99392.
3. THSteps providers should use their clinical judgement regarding which checkup components may be appropriate for completion using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies.
4. THSteps providers are encouraged to ensure children receiving a medical checkup using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies receive age-appropriate vaccines and laboratory screenings.
5. Medical checkup services using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies should only be provided if agreed to by the individual or parent/guardian.

Refer to: The Telecommunication Services Handbook (Vol. 2, Provider Handbooks) for information on policy restrictions for services delivered by synchronous telephone (audio-only) technologies.

### THSteps Required Follow-up Visit

1. An in-person follow-up visit (S-99211) is required for all individuals receiving an initial synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup.
2. The in-person follow-up visit (S-99211) is required within 6 months of the synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup.
3. All age-appropriate checkup components noted on the THSteps Periodicity Schedule not completed during the synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup must be completed at the in-person follow-up visit (S-99211).

### Documentation Requirements

1. Documentation in the individual’s medical record for synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkups must meet all documentation requirements for an in-person checkup.
2. Documentation must indicate if the checkup was completed using synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) technology.
3. Documentation must include all checkup components that were not completed at the time of the synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup, the reason the component(s) were not completed and the plan to complete the components.
4. Documentation for the required in-person THSteps follow-up visit must indicate that the visit is related to a previously provided synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup or exception-to-periodicity checkup.
5. Documentation for the required in-person THSteps follow-up visit should include documentation of all age-appropriate checkup components completed during the follow-up visit.
6. Documentation must include anticipatory guidance and information on the next scheduled medical checkup or follow-up visit.

### Reimbursement

1. THSteps checkups billed as a synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup (S-99381 or S-99391; or S-99382 or S-99392) for children 24 months of age or younger, will be denied.
2. THSteps checkups and exception-to-periodicity checkups delivered using synchronous audiovisual technology must be billed using modifier 95.
3. THSteps checkups and exception-to-periodicity checkups delivered using synchronous telephone (audio-only) technology must be billed with modifier 93.
4. THSteps checkups billed as exception-to-periodicity checkup must also include the appropriate exception-to-periodicity checkup modifier (SC, 23 or 32).
5. Records are subject to retrospective review and incomplete checkups are subject to recoupment.

## Reimbursement/Billing Guidelines

### Checkups During a Declaration of State Disaster

1. Checkups billed as a synchronous audiovisual or synchronous telephone (audio-only) checkup (S-99381 or S-99391; or S-99382 or S-99392) for children 24 months of age or younger, will be denied.
2. Checkups delivered using synchronous audiovisual technology must be billed using modifier 95.
3. Checkups delivered using synchronous telephone (audio-only) technology must be billed with modifier 93.
4. Checkups billed as exception-to-periodicity checkups must also include the appropriate exception-to-periodicity checkup modifier (SC, 23 or 32).
5. Records are subject to retrospective review and incomplete checkups are subject to recoupment.