



CARES Act Includes Welcomed Benefit Enhancements

On Friday, March 27, 2020—after days of debate—the president approved a \$2 trillion economic rescue package designed to provide financial assistance to Americans and their families, and billions of dollars in loans for businesses. The package is the largest fiscal stimulus in modern U.S. history and is the government's most recent response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The bill is more than 880 pages in length, and most of the bill focuses on financial assistance to individuals and businesses. [Click here for a complete overview of the stimulus package.](#)

There are, however, a few welcomed enhancements to employee benefit plans:

Section 3701. Health Savings Accounts for Telehealth Services

This section allows a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) with a health savings account (HSA) to cover telehealth services prior to a patient reaching the deductible, increasing access for patients who may have the COVID-19 virus and protecting other patients from potential exposure. This provision will last until December 31, 2021.

Section 3702. Over-the-Counter Medical Products without Prescription

This section allows patients to use funds in HSAs and Flexible Spending Accounts for the purchase of over-the-counter medical products, including those needed in quarantine and social distancing, without a prescription from a physician. Under this section menstrual care products are now considered a qualified medical expense and are eligible for payment or reimbursement through an FSA, HRA or HSA. All expenses incurred after December 31, 2019 qualify.

Scott Benefit Services has been lobbying Congress for these enhancements for some time, and we are excited to see them make their way into the CARES Act.