June 17, 2020

“NASW/TX is incredibly appreciative of the March 20, 2020 Governors Order that state-run and regulated plans reimburse for all telehealth services at the same rate as in-person, including visits over the telephone. We have heard from social workers that these changes have allowed for the continuity of needed mental health services during the pandemic. The extension of this order through June 2020 provides time to evaluate the continued spread and make wise forward-thinking decisions. However, Texas’ regulatory oversight does not extend to self-funded and non-marketplace plans, and these make up for the majority of the private insurance coverage in Texas. We encourage these plans to continue following the Governor’s Order, including any future extensions, and allow mental health providers to conduct their visits over the telehealth platform of their choice at the same rate as in-person visits, including services over audio-only telephone. These telehealth policies are necessary for the safety of both high-risk providers and clients alike to slow the spread of COVID-19 while continuing to provide needed services. We hope these plans step up and do what is safest for everyone in our community.”

Will Francis, LMSW
Executive Director
National Association of Social Workers – Texas Chapter