



March 16, 2020

Texas Department of Insurance  
Commissioner Kent Sullivan  
Via email to [commissionersombudsman@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:commissionersombudsman@tdi.texas.gov)

Dear Commissioner Kent Sullivan,

The Texas Psychological Association represents the voices of over 4,500 psychologists in this state, but today we are writing on behalf of our clients and the communities we serve. The COVID-19 pandemic is causing fear and panic across our state. It is imperative that the public maintain consistent access to mental health services in these difficult times.

Psychologists want to help. Continuity of care for our clients throughout this crisis is critical. Many of our clients depend on regular mental health services, and that need is compounded by the current state of emergency.

A significant number of our members are experiencing barriers as they prepare to provide telehealth services. Our members report that coverage varies significantly by plan, and plans that cover telehealth services have unnecessarily complicated and time-consuming approval processes built into the platforms that providers are required to use. This is extremely discouraging both for psychologists and their clients. This needs to change quickly, as Texans have already begun practicing social distancing.

We applaud the Governor's and the Texas Department of Insurance's (TDI) efforts thus far in encouraging insurers to incentivize telemedicine and telehealth. The state needs this leadership now more than ever. Yet it appears that the focus is often on access to physical health services, and treatment directly related to the symptoms of COVID-19. We ask that TDI also prioritize access to mental health services, as these services are necessary not only for the people who become infected with this disease, but also their friends and family members across the state.

We appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Executive Director, Jessica Magee, at [Jessica@TexasPsyc.org](mailto:Jessica@TexasPsyc.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan A. Mooney, PhD." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Megan A. Mooney, PhD  
President, Texas Psychological Association  
Licensed Psychologist

cc: Libby Elliott, Government Relations