Temporary Waiver of In-Person Examination Requirement for Prescribing Controlled Substances

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has issued a temporary waiver to allow health care practitioners with valid DEA registrations to prescribe controlled substances via telemedicine visits for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Generally, a provider may not issue a controlled substance prescription without an in-person medical examination.

For as long as the Secretary’s designation of a public health emergency remains in effect, DEA-registered practitioners may issue prescriptions for controlled substances to patients for whom they have not conducted an in-person medical evaluation provided all of the following conditions are met:

- The prescription is issued for a legitimate medical purpose by a practitioner acting in the usual course of his/her professional practice;
- The telemedicine communication is conducted using an audio-visual, real-time, two-way interactive communication system;
- The practitioner is acting in accordance with applicable Federal and State law.

Important Note: This waiver applies only to DEA requirements. State laws also govern the requirements for prescriptions resulting from telehealth visits. **Verify that your state has announced a similar waiver before issuing prescriptions for controlled substances resulting from a telehealth service.**

Please refer to the DEA’s COVID-19 Information Page for additional information:

https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/coronavirus.html