



McDermottPlus Healthcare Preview

WEEK OF AUGUST 3, 2020

What Happened to August Recess?

+ **NEGOTIATIONS ON THE NEXT COVID-19 STIMULUS PACKAGE CONTINUE.**

Last week, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) released the Republican proposal for the next COVID-19 stimulus package, the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protections and Schools Act (HEALS Act). The Democrats passed a COVID-19 stimulus package, the HEROES Act, in May. Now, Republicans and Democrats must come together to develop a package that both sides, and the White House, can agree to. There are significant differences between the bills, including a \$2 billion delta in the costs of the entire packages. Many of the policies, including the healthcare provisions, can be adjusted to meet the needs of the negotiators. For example, changes to the Medicare Advanced and Accelerated Payments can be dialed to address the start date of repayments or the interest rate. However, some provisions, such as liability protections, are more binary and could be a sticking point in the negotiations. This week, we are watching for clues from those writing the package and negotiators on how provisions have changed and when we can expect a final package.

+ **PROVIDER RELIEF FUND UPDATES FROM HHS.** Late last week, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced updates to the Provider Relief Fund (PRF). Specifically, they extended the deadline for Medicaid and Dental providers to apply for funding to August 28. They also announced that they are re-opening the Medicare General Distribution portal on August 10 for Medicare providers who missed the opportunity to submit an application for the second tranche of General Distribution funding, which would provide 2% of revenue. Providers have until August 28 to submit an application for the Medicare General Distribution. Finally, HHS announced it is also allowing providers who experienced a change in ownership in 2020 to apply for Medicare General Distribution first tranche funding. HHS was previously relying on 2019 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services payment data to make payments in the General Distribution first tranche. This portal will also open on August 10. Notably, none of these actions spent additional money, as all of the eligible providers were theoretically already budgeted into the PRF distribution process.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

No healthcare related hearings in the Senate this week.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

No healthcare related hearings in the House this week.

CONTACT INFO

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