

Advocate Now BCBSM PPO: Graduate Mental Health Student

Those affected are Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) members with a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan. What's been taken away is the ability for interns and individuals who have graduated and are working toward independent licensure to serve as treatment providers through BCBSM's PPO system.

The problem is that BCBSM is going to drastically reduce the mental health treatment providers in Michigan. BCBSM has created this "problem." They could do several things to solve the problem they have created that would not reduce the number of mental health treatment providers in Michigan.

The reality is that BCBSM is willfully cutting off access to over 10,000 limited licensed mental health

Even if BCBSM makes the change, the supervision requirements for the four professions will remain the same.

What changes is that there are far fewer places where you can get mental health treatment. That means you'll have longer wait times for treatment, and you'll have to travel farther to receive it if you're on BCBSM's PPO plans. Ultimately, BCBSM is willfully making it harder for rural and underserved populations to receive care and for longer wait times for mental health treatment for everyone who's in their PPO plan in Michigan.

BCBSM is willfully cutting off the pipeline of licensed mental health practitioners that Michigan will have in the future.

Six things that you must do!

You can find templates to help you write or call to advocate for the first 5 items listed at

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For the first 5 items, tell them if you are considering dropping out of your graduate program, if an internship site is now unavailable, if you are concerned about meeting the requirements for graduation or independent licensure, or if clients won't be able to see you anymore, and the impact this will have on you and clients.

1. The first thing to do is contact your Michigan House of Representatives member and complain that BCBSM PPO coverage is acting like HMO coverage and will cause thousands of Michigan interns and limited licensed mental health providers to lose their clients as well as their jobs. You can find your Representative's information at <https://www.house.mi.gov/#findarepresentative>

2. The second thing to do is to contact your Michigan Senator and complain that BCBSM PPO coverage is acting like HMO coverage and will cause thousands of Michigan interns and limited licensed mental health providers to lose their clients as well as their jobs. You can find your Senator's information at <https://www.senate.michigan.gov/>

3. The third thing you must do is to contact the entire Michigan House Health Policy Committee and complain that BCBSM PPO coverage is acting like HMO coverage and will cause thousands of Michigan interns and limited licensed mental health providers to lose their clients as well as their jobs. You can find Michigan House Health Policy Committee Member's information at <https://www.house.mi.gov/Committee/HHEAL>

4. The fourth thing to do is to contact the entire Michigan Senate Finance, Insurance, and Consumer Protection Committee and complain that BCBSM PPO coverage is acting like HMO coverage and will cause thousands of

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Michigan interns and limited licensed mental health providers to lose their clients as well as their jobs. You can find Michigan Senate Finance, Insurance, and Consumer Protection Committee Member's information at <https://www.senate.michigan.gov/information/committees/all-committees/2025-2026/finance-insurance-and-consumer-protection>

When it comes to House and Senate members, if you flood their phone lines and emails with complaints, they will need to listen. But the one thing we also need to be mindful of is that, because BCBSM is the biggest HMO and PPO provider in the state of Michigan, they fund many campaigns for Michigan Senate and House members. So, we also want to be mindful, and it's helpful when we're pushing back to ask members to hold BCBSM accountable.

5. The fifth thing to do is to contact Michigan's Governor Gretchen Whitmer and complain that BCBSM PPO coverage is acting like HMO coverage and will cause thousands of Michigan interns and limited licensed mental health providers to lose their clients as well as their jobs. You can find Governor Gretchen Whitmer's contact information at <https://sombgovweb.state.mi.us/ContactGovernor>

6. Now, there is a sixth thing you can do, but I do want to say to *please be mindful of the amount of personal information you share on social media about you or your clients!* You can post on all your social media outlets about all of this in a way that **manages the personal information that you share, especially about your clients.**

So, what exactly do you want to say?

1. BCBSM offered PPO coverage that people paid for, yet they will be getting HMO coverage for mental health treatment, which is a breach of contract.
2. Complain treatment providers and their clients will no longer be covered by BCBSM's PPO.
3. Complain that BCBSM is drastically reducing the number of mental health providers in MI for 2027.
4. Complain that BCBSM is destroying the pipeline of new mental health treatment providers for MI when we already have too few mental health treatment providers in MI5.
5. The fact that it's very confusing that we have Blue Cross Blue Shield in other states actually recognizing the importance of what the supervisor offers the supervise as well as trying to protect the pipeline of incoming mental health treatment providers in states like Illinois that are attempting to bridge that gap while here in Michigan, our Blue Cross Blue Shield is actually completely decimating not only current mental health treatment providers, but also significantly impacting the pipeline that will allow us to have providers in the future.

I really hope you'll take on some advocacy efforts, because unless we make some noise, BCBSM will go ahead with this very, very detrimental policy.

You can watch a video explaining all of this at <https://youtu.be/sggqTSAksIs>

You can find a 7-page PDF of all of this information, a 2-page short PDF of this information, and advocacy templates and scripts at <https://www.stephanietburns.com/bcbsm>

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