



Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicaid
www.mass.gov/masshealth

MassHealth
All Provider Bulletin 296
May 2020

TO: All Providers Participating in MassHealth

FROM: Amanda Cassel Kraft, Acting Medicaid Director

RE: MassHealth Payment for COVID-19 Specimen Collection and Testing

Background

MassHealth's mission is to improve the health outcomes of our diverse members and their families by providing access to integrated health care services that sustainably and equitably promote health, well-being, independence, and quality of life. In support of that mission, MassHealth provides broad coverage of medically necessary health care services to its members. In light of the state of emergency declared in the Commonwealth due to the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, MassHealth is introducing additional guidance to all providers relating to billing for specimen collection.

This bulletin supplements [All Provider Bulletin 294](#) by providing additional guidance for providers regarding payment for specimen collection for purposes of testing for COVID-19 and certain related services. In particular, it will allow providers who can bill for specimen collection codes G2023 and G2024 to bill those codes with modifier CG and receive an additional payment, so long as they meet the requirements described in this bulletin and are not otherwise billing for a medical visit relating to the COVID-19 testing process.

This bulletin applies to members enrolled in MassHealth fee-for-service, the Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Plan, or a Primary Care Accountable Care Organization (ACO). Information about coverage through MassHealth Managed Care Entities will be included in a forthcoming MCE bulletin.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is coordinating with federal and local partners to respond to COVID-19. As this situation evolves, EOHHS may issue additional guidance on this topic as informed and directed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

As with [All Provider Bulletin 289](#), [All Provider Bulletin 291](#), and [All Provider Bulletin 294](#), this bulletin, and the flexibilities described herein, shall remain effective for the duration of the state of emergency declared via [Executive Order No. 591](#). Upon the expiration of that state of emergency, MassHealth will evaluate the continued need for each of the flexibilities that follow, and make appropriate adjustments, as necessary.

MassHealth
All Provider Bulletin 296
May 2020
Page 2 of 3

Coverage of Certain COVID-19 Specimen Collection Services

As described in [All Provider Bulletin 294](#), MassHealth has implemented numerous flexibilities to allow providers to separately bill and receive payment for COVID-19 specimen collection services, in addition to the other billable services. Providers billing MassHealth for specimen collection services rendered pursuant to this policy must use HCPCS codes G2023 or G2024. Specimen collection code G2023 is currently payable at \$23.46 and G2024 is currently payable at \$25.46, as set forth in [Administrative Bulletin 20-44](#). MassHealth permits providers enrolled in the MassHealth physician, acute outpatient hospital, community health center, family planning agency, or clinical laboratory programs to bill for these services.

Under this bulletin, MassHealth is also allowing eligible providers to apply modifier “CG” to codes G2023 and G2024, which will trigger additional payment, the rate of which will be established by a forthcoming EOHHS administrative bulletin. This modifier can be applied when, in addition to collecting the specimen, the provider:

- 1) has a qualified ordering clinician present at the specimen collection site available to order medically necessary COVID-19 tests; and
- 2) ensures that the test results (and any initial follow-up counseling, as appropriate) are provided to the member, either directly or through the member’s ordering clinician.

This modifier may only be applied to codes G2023 and G2024 when the provider does not separately bill for a medical visit or encounter (*e.g.*, E&M or T code) for the actual specimen collection, or for the ordering or the initial resulting of the COVID-19 test. Put differently, eligible providers may bill MassHealth for modifier CG applied to codes G2023 or G2024, or a non-modified specimen collection code and a medical visit or encounter during which the provider also orders the testing, collects the specimen, or provides the test results (and appropriate initial follow-up counseling) to the member. Providers may continue to separately bill MassHealth for medical visits or encounters unrelated to the COVID-19 testing process and for any visits or encounters for medically necessary follow-up treatment or care beyond the initial resulting. In addition, providers who have billed for modifier CG applied to codes G2023 or G2024 may also separately bill for COVID-19 laboratory analysis of the specimen billed under codes U0002, U0003, U0004, or 87635, as appropriate.

These flexibilities apply to dates of service beginning May 22, 2020, for the duration of the state of emergency declared by Executive Order No. 591. Providers billing MassHealth for the services described in this bulletin must comply in all respects with all other applicable laws, regulations, subregulatory guidance, and contracts.

Additional Information

For the latest MA-specific information, visit www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19.

The latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for healthcare professionals is available at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html.

**MassHealth
All Provider Bulletin 296
May 2020
Page 3 of 3**

MassHealth Website

This bulletin is available on the [MassHealth Provider Bulletins](#) web page.

To sign up to receive email alerts when MassHealth issues new bulletins and transmittal letters, send a blank email to join-masshealth-provider-pubs@listserv.state.ma.us. No text in the body or subject line is needed.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about the information in this bulletin, please contact the MassHealth Customer Service Center at (800) 841-2900, email your inquiry to providersupport@mahealth.net, or fax your inquiry to (617) 988-8974.