



**MassHealth**  
**All Provider Bulletin 325**  
**September 2021**

**TO:** All Providers Participating in MassHealth

**FROM:** Amanda Cassel Kraft, Assistant Secretary for MassHealth 

**RE: Temporary Extension of Flexibilities to Permit Separate Payment for Specimen Collection**

### **Background**

Through [All Provider Bulletin 319](#) and its predecessor bulletins, MassHealth implemented numerous flexibilities to allow providers to separately bill and receive payment for COVID-19 specimen collection services and other billable services. By the terms of All Provider Bulletin 319, these flexibilities were scheduled to expire on September 15, 2021. Through this bulletin, MassHealth is extending the COVID-19 specimen collection-related flexibilities described in All Provider Bulletin 319 through December 31, 2021, after which they will expire. Except as provided herein, or in other guidance published by MassHealth, the remainder of All Provider Bulletin 319 will remain unchanged.

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 (MCEs) and the Program for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) will be included in a forthcoming MCE bulletin.

### **Temporary Extension of Flexibilities to Permit Separate Payment for Specimen Collection**

Through December 31, 2021, MassHealth will continue to allow providers to separately bill and receive payment for COVID-19 specimen collection services, in addition to the other billable services provided during the encounter. More specifically, and notwithstanding any requirement to the contrary, including 130 CMR 401.411(A), 130 CMR 405.433(B), 130 CMR 410.455(A), 130 CMR 421.433(B), and 130 CMR 433.439(A), MassHealth will continue to permit providers enrolled in the MassHealth physician, acute outpatient hospital, community health center, family planning agency, or clinical laboratory programs to bill MassHealth separately for either or both 1) the collection of specimens for the purpose of clinical laboratory testing for COVID-19, and 2) the laboratory analysis of such specimens. Additionally, notwithstanding any requirement to the contrary, providers rendering either or both of these COVID-19-related laboratory services during the course of or in connection with a payable medical visit, whether such visit occurs in person or via telehealth, may continue to bill MassHealth for the provision of those services separately from the medical visit. For example, a provider rendering COVID-19-related specimen collection and laboratory analysis services during the course of a payable medical visit may bill MassHealth for (1) the COVID-19 specimen collection, (2) the laboratory analysis of that specimen, and (3) the medical visit.

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In addition, MassHealth also allows eligible providers to apply modifier “CG” to codes G2023 and G2024, which will trigger additional payment. 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 results of the COVID-19 test. Put differently, eligible providers may continue to bill MassHealth for modifier CG applied to codes G2023 or G2024, or a nonmodified 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, as appropriate.

Rates for these codes and modifiers are set in [101 CMR 320.00: Clinical Laboratory Services](#).

### **Additional Information**

For the latest Massachusetts-specific information, visit the following link:

[www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19](http://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 the following link: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html).

### **MassHealth Website**

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

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### **Questions**

#### **Dental Services**

Phone: (800) 207-5019; TTY: (800) 466-7566

#### **Long-Term Services and Supports**

Phone: (844) 368-5184 (toll free)

Email: [support@masshealthltss.com](mailto:support@masshealthltss.com)

Portal: [MassHealthLTSS.com](http://MassHealthLTSS.com)

Mail: MassHealth LTSS

PO Box 159108

Boston, MA 02215

Fax: (888) 832-3006

**All Other Provider Types**

Phone: (800) 841-2900; TTY: (800) 497-4648  
Email: [providersupport@mahealth.net](mailto:providersupport@mahealth.net)  
Fax: (617) 988-8974