



**MassHealth**  
**Freestanding Birth Centers Bulletin 1**  
**April 2021**

**TO:** Freestanding Birth Centers Participating in MassHealth

**FROM:** Daniel Tsai, Assistant Secretary for MassHealth

**RE: Provider Participation Requirements and Service Codes and Descriptions**

## **Background**

This bulletin transmits MassHealth's freestanding birth centers (FBC) provider participation requirements, as well as the service codes payable for MassHealth FBCs. This bulletin is effective for dates of service on or after April 5, 2021.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) is authorized to license FBCs under M.G.L. c. 111, §§ 51 through 56 and regulations at 105 CMR 142.000: *Operation and Maintenance of Birth Centers*. Pursuant to these statutes and regulations, FBCs are licensed to provide obstetric services to pregnant, low-risk individuals and newborn services to infants during the immediate newborn period.

## **Provider Participation Requirements**

Prospective FBC providers must meet the following provider eligibility and participation criteria. Providers and provider applicants should contact MassHealth Customer Service as specified under the "Provider Enrollment" section later in this bulletin to request an enrollment package.

## **Definitions**

**Freestanding Birth Center (FBC).** A health facility not operated under a hospital license that is licensed by DPH as a birth center, pursuant to 105 CMR 142.000. A freestanding birth center does not include individual or group-practice offices.

**Low-Risk Pregnancy.** A normal, uncomplicated prenatal course as determined by documentation of adequate prenatal care and the anticipation of a normal, uncomplicated labor and birth, as defined by reasonable and generally accepted criteria adopted by professional groups for maternal, fetal, and neonatal health care.

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### **Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for participation as a MassHealth FBC provider, the applicant must meet the MassHealth and DPH requirements specified as follows.

- (1) For each service location, complete and submit the application for enrollment to MassHealth on the form provided for this purpose by MassHealth.
- (2) Be located and legally doing business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- (3) Operate under an FBC clinic license issued by DPH, in accordance with 105 CMR 142.000.
- (4) Be accredited by the [Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers \(CABC\)](#) by the later of the date of application or April 21, 2022.
- (5) Have a written agreement with a nearby hospital providing obstetrical and newborn services for the transfer of their patients for emergency treatment beyond that provided by the FBC.
- (6) Employ a director who is responsible to the governing body for the operation and maintenance of the center. The director must be a certified nurse-midwife, or an obstetrician or family practitioner with obstetrical privileges in a nearby hospital licensed in Massachusetts or operated by the Commonwealth.

### **Provider Enrollment**

Providers who wish to participate or continue to participate as a MassHealth FBC must complete an enrollment application as prescribed by MassHealth. Applicants should contact MassHealth Customer Service at (800) 841-2900 or by email at [providersupport@mahealth.net](mailto:providersupport@mahealth.net) to request an enrollment application. One form may be completed to enroll multiple locations.

### **FBC Service Codes**

The following service codes are the only payable codes for MassHealth FBC providers.

<b>Service Code</b>	<b>Service Description</b>
59400-TC	Routine obstetric care including antepartum care, vaginal delivery (with or without episiotomy, and/or forceps) and postpartum care (payment for the mother's length of stay for an all-inclusive global facility obstetrical service without use of forceps)
99460-TC	Initial hospital or birthing center care, per day, for evaluation and management of normal newborn infant (all-inclusive global facility payment for newborn's length of stay)
S4005	Interim labor facility global (labor occurring but not resulting in delivery) (global facility payment for prepartum services when delivery occurs at another facility)

## **Service Limitations**

All FBCs participating in MassHealth must comply with the regulations governing MassHealth, including but not limited to 130 CMR 450.000: *Administrative and Billing Regulations*.

FBCs must render services in accordance with all applicable statutes and regulations, including DPH's regulations at 105 CMR 142.000, and all applicable regulations cited therein.

FBCs may render services only to members who experience low-risk pregnancies. Surgical procedures must be limited to those normally provided during an uncomplicated birth, including episiotomy and repair. Surgical procedures such as forceps delivery, tubal ligation, abortion, or cesarean section must not be performed in birth centers.

No general or regional anesthesia may be administered, except that local anesthesia may be administered when performed within the scope of practice of the health care provider.

Members who are participating in the PCC plan do not require a referral for FBC services.

## **Member Eligibility**

According to MassHealth regulations at 130 CMR 450.231: *General Conditions of Payment*, a provider is responsible for verifying member eligibility before the delivery of a service. Providers must also ensure that the services provided are covered under the individual's MassHealth coverage type before service delivery. Information relating to member eligibility checks and coverage types is available on the MassHealth website at [www.mass.gov/masshealth](http://www.mass.gov/masshealth) under "MassHealth Provider Information."

## **Billing Instructions**

This bulletin, as well as MassHealth companion guides for electronic transactions and paper-claim billing guides, is available on the MassHealth website at [www.mass.gov/masshealth](http://www.mass.gov/masshealth) under "MassHealth Provider Library."

## **Recordkeeping Requirements (Medical Records)**

FBCs are governed by MassHealth recordkeeping provisions at 130 CMR 450.205: *Recordkeeping and Disclosure* and DPH regulations at 105 CMR 140.302: *Patient Records*.

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## **Fee Schedule**

Service codes noted above are within the current Executive Office of Health and Human Services fee schedule at 101 CMR 355.00: *Rates for Freestanding Birth Center Services*. 101 CMR 355.00 does not cover professional services that are billed separately from the FBC. Payment for professional services furnished in an FBC will be made in accordance with 130 CMR 433.000: *Physician Services*. All professional services must be furnished by a provider participating in MassHealth.

## **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](mailto:join-masshealth-provider-pubs@listserv.state.ma.us). No text in the body or subject line is needed.

## **Questions**

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