



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Health and Human Services**  
**Office of Medicaid**  
[www.mass.gov/masshealth](http://www.mass.gov/masshealth)

**MassHealth**  
**Managed Care Entity Bulletin 40**  
**August 2020**

**TO:** Accountable Care Partnership Plans and Managed Care Organizations Participating in MassHealth

**FROM:** Amanda Cassel Kraft, Acting Medicaid Director

**RE: 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. MassHealth also partners with a wide variety of service providers in order to offer its members access.

In light of the state of emergency declared in the Commonwealth due to the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and to facilitate the testing of MassHealth members suspected of having COVID-19, including at rapid testing sites operating in accordance with MassHealth and Department of Public Health rules and regulations, and in recognition of the unique costs incurred by providers collecting specimens from those members, MassHealth has implemented flexibilities to allow providers to separately bill and receive payment for COVID-19 specimen collection and testing services.

Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) and Accountable Care Partnership Plans (ACPPs) (together "managed care plans") must ensure that they deliver all covered services in an amount, duration, and scope that is no more restrictive than the MassHealth fee-for-service program. Managed care plans should stay up to date on any changes to the amount, duration, and scope of services that MassHealth may announce via subsequent bulletins or guidance.

In this bulletin, MassHealth clarifies managed care plan requirements for payment to a provider for specimen collection when the provider also conducts or bills for the laboratory test.

MassHealth is also directing managed care plans to conform their payment systems to permit the use of a certain modifier by providers in billing for specimen collection, testing, and resulting. In addition, MassHealth is directing plans to cover all medically necessary laboratory testing for COVID-19.

Finally, through this bulletin, MassHealth is directing managed care plans to pay for medically necessary specimen collection, testing, and resulting services as set forth in this bulletin.

This bulletin is not applicable to One Care Plans, Senior Care Organizations or Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) organizations.

**MassHealth**  
**Managed Care Entity Bulletin 40**  
**August 2020**  
**Page 2 of 5**

**Coverage of COVID-19 Specimen Collection**

As described in [Managed Care Entity Bulletin 29](#), managed care plans are directed to conform their specimen collection and testing services coverage policies to match those set forth in [All Provider Bulletin 294](#). To clarify MCE Bulletin 29, managed care plans must allow providers to bill separately for either or both 1) the collection of specimens for the purpose of clinical laboratory testing for COVID-19 using codes G2023 or G2024, and 2) the laboratory analysis of such specimens. As such, MCOs and ACPPs must cover provider collection of the specimen for COVID-19 testing when the provider is also conducting or billing for the actual laboratory test.

These flexibilities apply to dates of service beginning March 12, 2020, for the duration of the state of emergency declared by Executive Order No. 591. Managed care plans are directed to pay for specimen collection code G2023 and G2024 consistent with this bulletin at the following rates:

CODE	RATE	DESCRIPTION
G2023	\$23.46	Specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), any specimen source;
G2024	\$25.46	Specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), from an individual in a skilled nursing facility or by a laboratory on behalf of a home health agency, any specimen source

**Coverage of Additional COVID-19 Specimen Collection Services**

In addition, through [All Provider Bulletin 296](#), MassHealth is allowing certain 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 that bulletin and are not otherwise billing for a medical visit relating to the COVID-19 testing process. Managed care plans are directed to allow providers eligible to bill codes G2023 and G2024 to apply modifier “CG” to these codes, which will trigger additional payment for the ordering and resulting services associated with this modifier, as set forth below. Details around the use of modifier “CG” by providers for specimen collection may be found in All Provider Bulletin 296. MCOs and ACPPs must configure their payment systems and conform their coverage policies to match those set forth in that bulletin.

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. MassHealth is directing managed care plans to pay the following rates for COVID-19 diagnostic testing with additional ordering and resulting services, as indicated by the use of modifier “CG” on a claim:

**MassHealth  
Managed Care Entity Bulletin 40  
August 2020  
Page 3 of 5**

CODE	RATE	DESCRIPTION
G2023 CG	\$44.27	Specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), any specimen source. [Used when provider 1) has a qualified ordering clinician present at the specimen collection site available to order medically necessary COVID-19 diagnostic tests; and 2) ensures the test results are provided to the patient (along with any initial follow-up counseling, as appropriate), either directly or through the patient's ordering clinician.]
G2024 CG	\$46.27	Specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), from an individual in a skilled nursing facility or by a laboratory on behalf of a home health agency, any specimen source. [Used when provider 1) has a qualified ordering clinician present at the specimen collection site available to order medically necessary COVID-19 diagnostic tests; and 2) ensures the test results are provided to the patient (along with any initial follow-up counseling, as appropriate), either directly or through the patient's ordering clinician.]

**Payment for COVID-19 Laboratory Testing Services**

Also through All Provider Bulletin 296, MassHealth is covering all medically necessary laboratory testing for COVID-19. Managed care plans are directed to pay for the following COVID-19 laboratory testing services, at the rates set forth below:

**MassHealth  
Managed Care Entity Bulletin 40  
August 2020  
Page 4 of 5**

<b>CODE</b>	<b>RATE</b>	<b>FOR DATES OF SERVICE ON OR AFTER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
U0002	\$51.31	March 12, 2020	2019-nCoV Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19) using any technique, multiple types or subtypes (includes all targets).
87635	\$51.31	March 12, 2020	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), amplified probe technique
U0003	\$100.00	March 18, 2020	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), amplified probe technique, making use of high throughput technologies as described by CMS-2020-01-R.
U0004	\$100.00	March 18, 2020	2019-nCoV Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19), any technique, multiple types or subtypes (includes all targets), non-CDC, making use of high throughput technologies as described by CMS-2020-01-R
86328	I.C.	April 10, 2020	Immunoassay for infectious agent antibody(ies), qualitative or semiquantitative, single step method (e.g., reagent strip); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]).
	\$45.23	August 1, 2020	
86769	I.C.	April 10, 2020	Antibody; severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]).
	\$42.13	August 1, 2020	

**MassHealth  
Managed Care Entity Bulletin 40  
August 2020  
Page 5 of 5**

**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 inquiry to [providersupport@mahealth.net](mailto:providersupport@mahealth.net), or fax your inquiry to (617) 988-8974