



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Health and Human Services**  
**Division of Medical Assistance**  
600 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111

**MassHealth**  
**Physician Bulletin 71**  
**OCTOBER 1999**

**TO:** Physicians Participating in MassHealth  
**FROM:** Mark E. Reynolds, Acting Commissioner  
**RE: REPORTING ANESTHESIA TIME**

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**Clarification**

The Division is clarifying its policy about reimbursement for anesthesia time. Effective immediately, anesthesia time starts when the anesthesiologist begins to prepare the patient for the induction of anesthesia in the operating room or in an equivalent area. Anesthesia time ends when the anesthesiologist is no longer in personal attendance; that is, when the patient may be safely placed under postoperative supervision.

The Division intends to modify its regulations within the next few months to reflect this clarification.

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**Billing**

As a reminder, you must specify in Item 24C on claim form no. 5 the time the anesthesia service begins and ends. Enter time units only in Item 24F. The computation of total anesthesia units automatically includes base units. Time units for anesthesia are measured in 15-minute periods. One time unit equals 15 minutes of anesthesia services or fraction thereof, if the fraction is at least five minutes.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions about the information in this bulletin, please contact the Unisys Provider Services Department at (617) 628-4141 or 1-800-325-5231.

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