

COVID-19 Testing

Effective 10/1/2022, the following changes are taking effect in regards to COVID-19 testing. These changes are supported by the federal regulations, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)¹⁻⁵.

Screening Diagnosis Codes

COVID-19 Testing CPT/HCPCS codes will deny as not medically necessary and not covered when billed with one of the ICD-10 codes below related to screening. According to the federal regulations, The Plan is not required to cover testing “for any other purpose not primarily intended for individualized diagnosis or treatment of COVID-19 or another health condition...”

- Z01.84: Encounter for antibody response examination
- Z02.0: Encounter for examination for admission to educational institution
- Z02.1: Encounter for pre-employment examination
- Z02.3: Encounter for examination for recruitment to armed forces
- Z02.5: Encounter for examination for participation in sport
- Z02.6: Encounter for examination for insurance purposes
- Z02.71: Encounter for disability determination
- Z02.79: Encounter for issue of other medical certificate
- Z02.89: Encounter for other administrative examinations
- Z02.9: Encounter for administrative examinations, unspecified
- Z11.52: Encounter for screening for COVID-19

Laboratory Testing Using High-Throughput Technology

HCPCS codes U0003, U0004, and U0005 should only be billed by labs and facilities utilizing high-throughput amplified probe technologies to detect and diagnose COVID-19.

- Claims submitted for these codes at any place of service other than independent laboratory or a facility will be denied. Professional charges for these codes (regardless of location) will also be denied.

Pricing for Non-Contracted Labs

According to Section 3202(a) of the CARES Act, if The Plan or issuer does not have a negotiated rate with the provider, The Plan or issuer shall reimburse the provider in an amount that equals the cash price for such service as listed by the provider on a public internet website, or The Plan or issuer may negotiate a rate with the provider for less than such cash price.

The Plan will begin to adjust pricing for these non-contracted labs to the published cash price. If there is no published cash price for a lab, The Plan will reimburse an amount consistent with CMS established rates for the applicable codes.

References

1. Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
<https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr6201/BILLS-116hr6201eh.pdf>. Published 2020. Accessed 7/22/2022.
2. Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3548/text>. Published 2020. Accessed 7/22/22.
3. FAQs ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT AND CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT IMPLEMENTATION: PART 42.
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/FFCRA-Part-42-FAQs.pdf>. Published 2020. Accessed 7/22/2022.
4. FAQs ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT AND CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT IMPLEMENTATION: PART 43.
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/FFCRA-Part-43-FAQs.pdf>. Published 2020. Accessed 7/22/2022.
5. FAQs ABOUT FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT AND CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT IMPLEMENTATION: PART 44.
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/faqs-part-44.pdf>. Published 2021. Accessed 7/22/2022.