

Washington Apple Health (Medicaid)

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Policy

October 11, 2023

About this publication

This publication takes **effect October 11, 2023**, and supersedes earlier versions.

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Washington Apple Health means the public health insurance programs for eligible Washington residents. Washington Apple Health is the name used in Washington State for Medicaid, the children's health insurance program (CHIP), and state-only funded health care programs. Washington Apple Health is administered by the Washington State Health Care Authority.

Refer also to HCA's [ProviderOne billing and resource guide](#) for valuable information to help you conduct business with HCA.

How can I get HCA Apple Health provider documents?

To access provider alerts, go to HCA's [provider alerts webpage](#).

To access provider documents, go to HCA's [provider billing guides and fee schedules webpage](#).

Confidentiality toolkit for providers

The [Washington State Confidentiality Toolkit for Providers](#) is a resource for providers required to comply with health care privacy laws. To learn more about the toolkit, [visit the HCA website](#).

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What has changed?

The table below briefly outlines how this publication differs from the previous one. This table is organized by subject matter. Each item in the *Subject* column is a hyperlink that, when clicked, will take you to the specific change summarized in that row of the table.

Subject	Change	Reason for Change
Entire document	Formatting, grammar, and punctuation changes	To improve clarity and usability
About this publication	Added section	To provide general information regarding this publication and other HCA documents
How can I get HCA Apple Health provider documents?	Added section	To add reference to and hyperlinks for HCA provider billing guides, fee schedules, and provider alerts
Confidentiality toolkit for providers	Added section	To include this resource for health care providers required to comply with health care privacy laws
Copyright disclosure	Added section	To add this legal disclaimer
What has changed?	Added section	This new section replaces the Policy History section. It briefly outlines how this publication differs from the previous one.
Overview	Revised the title to this section. Rewrote section to reflect the end of the public health emergency (PHE).	To improve clarity and reflect the changes in vaccine costs due to the end of the PHE
Resources available	Moved these hyperlinks from the end of the document to a new section	To improve usability

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Subject	Change	Reason for Change
<p>COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration table</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved the table to a new location towards the beginning of the section. Removed the following discontinued CPT® and HCPCS codes: 91313, 0134A, 91314, 0141A, 0142A, 0144A, 91316, 0164A, 91304, 91312, 0121A, 0124A, 91315, 0151A, 0154A, 91317, 0171A, 0172A, 0173A, 0174A, 0041A, 0042A, 0044A. Added the following new CPT® codes: 91318, 91319, 91320, 91321, and 91322. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New location improves usability. To update the list of allowable vaccine and vaccine administration procedure codes. Retroactive to dates of service on and after September 11, 2023, HCA reimburses for only the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration codes listed in this table. The updated table also indicates the fee schedule where the information for each COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration code is found.
<p>Cost</p>	<p>Removed section</p>	<p>No longer applicable due to the end of the PHE</p>
<p>Special eligibility</p>	<p>Removed section</p>	<p>No longer applicable due to the end of the PHE</p>
<p>Reimbursement information and billing guidance</p>	<p>Removed information regarding template billing for COVID-19 mass vaccination</p>	<p>No longer applicable due to the end of the PHE</p>

Subject	Change	Reason for Change
Outpatient hospital (OPPS)	Removed information in section and replaced it with a reference and hyperlink to HCA's Outpatient Hospital Services Billing Guide	To remove redundancy
Childhood Vaccine Program	Added section	To give information on and billing guidance for this program
Other Billing Details	Removed billing details pertaining to modifier place of service usage and added a reference to HCA's Telemedicine Policy Billing Guide	To remove redundancy and reduce confusion

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Overview

Background

During the public health emergency (PHE) declared due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government purchased all COVID-19 vaccines. Now that the PHE has ended, the Health Care Authority (HCA) reimburses providers for the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccine administration as specified in this publication.

The maximum allowable fees for these services are posted on HCA's [Provider billing guides and fee schedules webpage](#), under *Outpatient Hospital, Physician-related/professional services, or Professional administered drugs*.

Resources available

Category	Resource
Materials to assist provider conversations with patients	<p>On the Washington Department of Health's (DOH's) website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking points for providers (PDF) Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy (PDF) Provider Discussion Guide: Building Confidence in the Johnson & Johnson Vaccine (PDF) Provider Discussion Guide: Building Confidence in COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines (PDF) Additional resources for healthcare providers Pro-Equity strategies for supporting patient access to vaccine <p>On the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 vaccine for preteens and teens (PDF) COVID-19 vaccine conversations with patients
Patient resources	<p>On DOH's website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factsheet about COVID-19 Vaccines Vaccinate WA: Find COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments Near You
Telehealth policy, billing, or coding questions	<p>Email HCA with any telehealth policy, billing, or coding questions.</p>

COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Clinical Policy

The following policy applies to services provided through fee-for-service (FFS) and services provided to clients covered under one of the Health Care Authority (HCA)-contracted managed care organizations (MCOs).

COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration table

Retroactive to dates of service on and after September 11, 2023, HCA reimburses for only the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration codes listed in the following table. The table also indicates the fee schedule where the information for each COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration code is found.

CPT® / HCPCS code	Short description	Labeler	Outpatient hospital fee schedule	Physician-related/ professional services fee schedule	Professional administered drug fee schedule
91318*	SARSCOV2 VAC 3MCG TRS-SUC	Pfizer	X		X
91319*	SARSCV2 VAC 10MCG TRS-SUC IM	Pfizer	X		X
91320*	SARSCV2 VAC 30MCG TRS-SUC IM	Pfizer	X		X
91321*	SARSCOV2 VAC 25 MCG/.25ML IM	Moderna	X		X
91322*	SARSCOV2 VAC 50 MCG/0.5ML IM	Moderna	X		X
91304*	SARSCOV2 VAC 5MCG/0.5ML IM	Novavax	X		X
90480**	ADMN SARSCOV2 VACC 1 DOSE		X	X	
M0201**	Covid-19 vaccine home admin	Home vaccine admin	X	X	

* Refer to Childhood Vaccine Program for clients 18 years of age and younger

** These are vaccine administration codes

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Providers

Providers must:

- Be enrolled with the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to administer COVID-19 vaccine shots.
- Have a Core Provider Agreement with HCA, which specifies the provider's scope of practice includes vaccine administration.

Pharmacist/Pharmacies

Pharmacists

Note the following when services are performed by a pharmacist:

- Pharmacists may prescribe, administer, and bill for COVID-19 vaccine administration.
- Pharmacists billing for this service must bill on a HIPAA 837 transaction using the billing taxonomy of 193200000X.
- HCA will reimburse for COVID-19 vaccine administration when administered by a pharmacy technician or a pharmacy intern under immediate supervision of a pharmacist with an ancillary utilization plan (AUP) approved by the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission. When billing for these services, enter the pharmacist who delegates the task as the servicing provider.
- When the service is performed by a pharmacist but billed by a clinic, follow the standard billing procedures.

Pharmacies

Pharmacies may bill for COVID-19 vaccine administration when the performing provider is a pharmacist. Note the following when billing:

- For the fee-for-service program, bill as a HIPAA 837 transaction using the pharmacy billing taxonomy of 193200000X and include the place of service.
- For agency-contracted managed care organizations (MCOs), bill as a pharmacy point-of-sale transaction and follow the National Council for Prescription Drug Program (NCPDP) standards. Enter 01 (Home) into the patient residence (field 384-4X). Enter the fee for vaccine administration into the incentive amount submitted (field 438-E30).

Reporting requirements

Ensure all data is entered into the Washington Immunization Information System (WAIIS) or another system designated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) according to CDC documentation and data requirements.

Reimbursement information and billing guidance

HCA reimburses for the vaccines and vaccine administration codes listed in the [COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration table](#).

Outpatient hospitals (OPPS)

HCA reimburses for vaccines in an outpatient setting. See HCA's [Outpatient Hospital Services Billing Guide](#) for more information. See the [COVID-19 vaccine and vaccine administration table](#) for billable procedure codes.

Childhood Vaccine Program

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Childhood Vaccine Program provides publicly purchased vaccines to participating providers for all children 18 years of age and younger. The program supplies all vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and eliminates or reduces cost barriers to receiving vaccinations. COVID-19 vaccines are included in this program. When billing for vaccines provided to HCA clients, HCA pays for the administration cost of the vaccine only and not for the vaccines themselves.

Billing information

When billing for vaccines under the Childhood Vaccine Program:

- Bill the vaccine by reporting the CPT® code for the vaccine given with modifier SL.
- Bill the COVID-19 vaccine administration code (CPT® code 90480).

Vaccination in the home

HCA pays an additional fee for administering the COVID-19 vaccine in the home (HCPCS code M0201) for the following situations.

The patient:

- Has a condition that makes them more susceptible to contracting a pandemic disease such as COVID-19.
- Is generally unable to leave the home, and if they do leave home, it requires a considerable and taxing effort.
- Has a disability or faces clinical, socioeconomic, or geographical barriers to getting a COVID-19 vaccine in settings other than their home.
- Faces challenges that significantly reduce their ability to get vaccinated outside the home, such as challenges with transportation, communication, or caregiving.

For more information, see the CMS policy [Additional Payment for Administering the Vaccine in the Patient's Home](#).

Provider Reimbursement for COVID-19 Vaccine Counseling Visits

Counseling Visits

A counseling visit is a conversation between a provider or qualified health professional, nurse, or medical assistant, and a client about the COVID-19 vaccine. Conversations may include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- The client's reasons for not being vaccinated
- Addressing concerns identified by the client
- Providing tailored and individualized medical advice regarding COVID-19 vaccine for the client
- Providing resources about how to get a COVID-19 vaccine, if applicable.

Document counseling visits in the client's medical record according to standard documentation guidelines.

Vaccination Status

The provider must check a client's vaccination status in the provider's medical records and the DOH Washington Immunization Information System (WAIS) database. Immunization registry checks may be performed within a reasonable timeframe of the vaccine counseling visit to accommodate for data lags. If there is no indication that the client is vaccinated, or there is indication that the client is only partially vaccinated, the provider can reach out to the client for a counseling visit. If immunization registry checks are infeasible, client attestation to vaccination status is acceptable.

Billing Information

Providers and qualified health professionals

Providers who counsel clients about COVID-19 vaccine information and availability can bill in the following ways (review CPT® guidelines for code guidance):

- If the provider is already seeing the client for a prescheduled visit, and counseling for COVID-19 vaccination increases complexity of the visit or the time spent with the client, the provider may account for this by choosing the appropriate evaluation and management (E/M) level.
- The provider may bill CPT® code 99401 using modifier 25 in addition to billing an E/M visit. The E/M visit in this case does not include the time spent on COVID counseling.
- The provider may bill CPT® code 99401 individually if no E/M visit occurred and COVID vaccine counseling was provided.

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Nurses/Medical Assistants

Nurses and medical assistants who counsel clients about COVID-19 vaccine information and availability may bill using CPT® code 99211. Usually, the presenting problem(s) are minimal.

Indian health service (IHS) providers

HCA reimburses the encounter rate for Medicaid covered professional services following HCA's [Tribal Health Billing Guide](#). HCA does not reimburse the encounter rate for drugs/pharmaceuticals.

Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and Rural health clinics (RHCs)

COVID-19 counseling CPT® codes 99211-99215, 99401, and 99441-99443 are encounter eligible for FQHCs and RHCs when billed by an encounter-eligible provider as outlined in WACs [182-548-1300\(1\)](#) and [182-549-1300\(1\)](#). HCA pays for one encounter per day for FQHCs and RHCs unless there are separate visits with separate diagnosis, or the visits are performed by providers with different specialties. Registered nurses and medical assistants are not encounter-eligible provider types in the RHC and FQHC setting.

Other Billing Details

When billing for vaccines or vaccine administration, note the following other billing details:

- The claim must include either ICD diagnosis code **Z71.89** (other specified counseling) or **Z71.85** (encounter for immunization safety counseling) in the primary position.
- When performing counseling visits, be prepared to provide the vaccine or be able to refer to appropriate, accessible vaccine sites for the client in counseling.
- If the client receives the vaccine in the office after a counseling visit, use also the appropriate CPT® codes for vaccine administration, which may be billed with the same date of service.
- If this service is provided via audio-visual telemedicine or audio-only telemedicine, see the instructions in HCA's [Telemedicine Policy Billing Guide](#) related to modifiers and place of service.
- No facility fee may be charged for counseling billed by a physician practice or other practice site that is owned by or affiliated with a hospital.