

## Child Mental Health Specialist Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- **Purpose:** This FAQ is intended to provide guidance to providers contracting for outpatient mental health services covered by Apple Health (Medicaid), and who serve children and youth up to age 18 and younger. This applies to those working for a health clinic or as a sole proprietor and using the Mental Health billing guide (part 1)
- This does not apply to those working for a community mental health center or licensed behavioral health agency and using the Service Encounter Reporting Instructions (SERI) guide or the Mental Health billing guide (part 2).

### Brief overview

The Health Care Authority completed a State Plan amendment and WAC rule change to ensure alignment across the State Plan, RCW, and WAC. These requirements have been in place historically, though the changes made parity across HCA governance for those seeing children and youth under the age of 18.

The updates did not change the education and training requirements. The 100 hours of specialized training has always been in law and set the minimum qualification standards for providers seeing this population. The changes did create a path for providing services while gaining education and experience by including an option to be supervised by a practitioner who meets the requirements.

### Why was the Mental Health attestation updated?

The changes were to bring the Medicaid (Title XIX) State Plan (Attachment 3.6, Other Practitioner Services), RCW (71.34.020), and WAC (182-538D-0200) into alignment. The Mental Health Attestation form is used by providers to attest to meeting the requirements as a Child Mental Health Specialist, thus the form was updated to reflect current requirements.

### What are the requirements?

Qualified practitioners who are providing outpatient mental health services to children and youth, including diagnosing, and treating clients 17 years of age and younger, must meet one of the following:

Option 1	Option 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>100 hours of special training in child development and treatment of children, youth, and their families.</b></li><li>• <b>Equivalent of 1 year experience in the treatment of children, youth, and their families under the supervision of a practitioner who meets these requirements.</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be working under the supervision of someone who meets the requirements of Option 1.</li></ul>

### What counts for the educational requirement for seeing this population?

HCA does not have additional requirements or restrictions on how this requirement is met. Providers should assess their education and post-graduate training to determine whether they have 100 hours of training for treating this population.

## If I am independently licensed, do I have to be supervised by a children's mental health specialist?

For providers who do not meet the requirements, Option 2 was included in the updates requirements to create a path for providers to attain the necessary experience.

If you already meet the requirements in Option 1, you are not required to be supervised by a children's mental health specialist or a practitioner who meets those requirements.

## Who must have an attestation on file with the Health Care Authority?

The following mental health providers using the Mental Health billing guide (Part 1) users must have the [Mental Health attestation](#) on file with the Health Care Authority when providing services to Apple Health enrolled children and youth:

- Licensed psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners.
- Licensed independent clinical social workers.
- Licensed advanced social workers.
- Licensed marriage and family therapists
- Licensed mental health counselors.
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists

## What does the attestation do for those who complete the attestation?

A completed attestation puts an indicator on the provider's profile in ProviderOne. The Health Care Authority calls it the MH indicator. Without the indicator on file in ProviderOne claims will deny. It is important for providers seeing this population to have the paperwork completed so claims pay. This information has always historically been in the mental health billing guide part 1. [Provider billing guides and fee schedules | Washington State Health Care Authority](#)- Mental Health billing guide, pg. 36.

## Do I have to complete another attestation if I already have one on file?

No, you do not have to complete another attestation. If you have already met the requirements, you can continue business as usual.

## Who is exempt from having the attestation on file with the Health Care Authority?

Mental Health billing guide (Part 2) and Service Encounter Reporting Instructions (SERI) users who work for a community mental health center or licensed behavioral health agency.

## Is this required for psychiatric medication management providers?

No, psychiatric medication management is authorized under a different section of the Medicaid State Plan; therefore, psychiatric medication management services do not require the mental health attestation form.

## What is the age limit for the attestation?

The age limit is up to the day of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.