

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Health Care Finance



Office of the Deputy Director-Medicaid

Transmittal # 20-13

TO: All DC Medicaid Providers

FROM: Melisa Byrd
Senior Deputy Director and State Medicaid Director

DATE: April 8, 2020

SUBJECT: **Updates to the *Laboratory Billing Codes and Reimbursement Rates for COVID-19 Testing***

THE INFORMATION IN THIS TRANSMITTAL HAS BEEN UPDATED TO INCLUDE NEW TESTING CODES. PLEASE SEE TRANSMITTAL #20-22 FOR THE MOST RECENT UPDATE PUBLISHED ON MAY 14, 2020.

Purpose

This transmittal provides notice of coverage and reimbursement for additional HCPCS and CPT related to COVID-19 diagnostic testing. It also provides updates to the billing guidance contained in [Transmittal # 20-08: Laboratory Billing Codes and Reimbursement Rates for COVID-19 Testing](#); issued by the Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) on March 20, 2020. Under the prior transmittal, claims billed and submitted for COVID-19 diagnostic tests HCPCS U0001 and U0002 would be paid but testing under CPT 87635 would have been denied. However, based on the availability of new testing modalities, and recent coverage information by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), CPT 87635, HCPCS G2023 and G2024 may now be billed by laboratories and reimbursed by DHCF for medically necessary, clinically appropriate COVID-19 specimen collection and diagnostic testing.

Background

DHCF continues to make quick coverage and reimbursement decisions to meet the healthcare needs of residents during this public healthcare emergency. Earlier, DHCF issued a transmittal only allowing reimbursement for COVID-19 diagnostic tests billed as HCPCS U0001 and U0002. This approach was adopted to help streamline/simplify billing practices and mitigate any reimbursement rate disparity concerns.

Subsequently, DHCF now has more information about newer testing modalities that may be distinct from HCPCS U0001 and U0002 but satisfy the requirements of the CPT 87635. One such testing is the COVID-19 rapid response testing using nucleic acid. Moreover, on March 23, 2020, CMS issued an FAQ on its coverage of CPT 87635.

In addition, CMS recently also approved HCPCS G2023 and G2024 to identify and reimburse specimen collection for COVID-19 testing. Both HCPCS are billable by clinical diagnostic laboratories only.

Billing Codes & Reimbursement

With CMS approved coverage of these CPT and HCPCS, DHCF will immediately adopt their coverage and reimbursement for laboratories conducting medically necessary, clinically appropriate COVID-19 specimen collection and diagnostic testing. The billing and reimbursement rates are based on the Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) for DC or other published guidance by CMS. If newer rates are published by CMS or the MAC, the rates may be updated accordingly.

The table below provides the relevant billing and reimbursement guidance for all COVID-19 laboratory tests to date.

HCPCS/CPT	Description	Effective Date	Max Units	PA Required	Rates
U0001	CDC 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) real-time RT-PCR diagnostic test panel	2/4/2020	1	No	\$35.92
U0002	2019-nCoV Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19) using any technique, multiple types or subtypes (includes all targets)	2/4/2020	1	No	\$51.33
G2023	Specimen collection for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), any specimen source	3/1/2020	1	No	\$23.46
G2024	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	3/1/2020	1	No	\$25.46
87635	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	4/1/2020	1	No	\$51.33

Contact

DHCF will continue to provide updates to this information as appropriate. If you have questions, please contact Bidemi Isiaq, Associate Director, Rates & Reimbursements, at Bidemi.isiaq@dc.gov or 202-442-9202.

Cc: DC Hospital Association
DC Primary Care Association
DC Health Care Association
DC Home Health Association
DC Behavioral Health Association
DC Coalition of Disability Service Providers