

December 2018

Updated codes for applied behavior analysis (ABA) services

Background: The American Medical Association (AMA) has updated Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes for 2019. Healthy Blue is adopting the new codes and rates as indicated on the *Louisiana Medicaid ABA Fee Schedule*, effective with dates of service on or after January 1, 2019 (https://www.lamedicaid.com/provweb1/fee_schedules/ABA_FS_Current.pdf).

Authorization transition instructions

To ensure there are no interruptions of services during this transition, we have included detailed instructions below for updating current authorizations and submitting new requests.

For current authorizations with dates of service that extend beyond January 1, 2019	Email the following information to ABA@HealthyBlueLA.com: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member name • Member DOB • Member identification number • Current authorization number • Previously authorized codes and the number of units remaining for dates of services prior to January 1, 2019 • New codes with the number of units requested for each code for dates of service on or after January 1, 2019
For new authorization (or recertification) requests with dates of service on or after January 1, 2019	Request authorization for ABA services via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider website: https://providers.healthybluel.com • Fax: 1-866-877-5229 • Please use our <i>ABA Authorization Request Form</i>, which has been updated to reflect the new codes. It can be downloaded at https://providers.healthybluel.com > Forms > Behavioral Health

Updated codes for ABA services

The grid below includes the new CPT codes that will go into effect on January 1, 2019, along with descriptions and unit information:

New CPT code	Description	Unit
97151	Behavior identification assessment, administered by a physician or other qualified health care professional, each 15 minutes of the physician's or other qualified health care professional's time face-to-face with patient and/or guardian(s)/caregiver(s) administering assessments and discussing findings and recommendations, and non-face-to-face analyzing past data, scoring/interpreting the assessment, and preparing the report/treatment plan	15 min
97151 TF	Behavior identification assessment, administered by a physician or other qualified health care professional, each 15 minutes of the physician's or other qualified health care professional's time face-to-face with patient and/or guardian(s)/caregiver(s) administering assessments and discussing findings and recommendations, and non-face-to-face analyzing past data, scoring/interpreting the assessment, and preparing the report/treatment plan	15 min
97152	Behavior identification – supporting assessment, administered by one technician under the direction of a physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with the patient, each 15 minutes	15 min

<https://providers.healthybluel.com>

Healthy Blue is the trade name of Community Care Health Plan of Louisiana, Inc., an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

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New CPT code	Description	Unit
97153 HN	Adaptive behavior treatment by protocol, administered by technician under the direction of a physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with one patient, each 15 minutes	15 min
97154	Group adaptive behavior treatment by protocol, administered by technician under the direction of a physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with two or more patients, each 15 minutes	15 min
97155	Adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional, which may include simultaneous direction of technician, face-to-face with one patient, each 15 minutes	15 min
97155 TF	Adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional, which may include simultaneous direction of technician, face-to-face with one patient, each 15 minutes	15 min
97156	Family adaptive behavior treatment guidance, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional (with or without the patient present), face-to-face with guardian(s)/caregiver(s), each 15 minutes	15 min
97157	Multiple-family group adaptive behavior treatment guidance, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional (without the patient present), face-to-face with multiple sets of guardians/caregivers, each 15 minutes	15 min
97158	Group adaptive behavior treatment with protocol modification, administered by physician or other qualified health care professional, face-to-face with multiple patients, each 15 minutes	15 min

Submitting claims

Healthy Blue follows CMS guidelines for *Medically Unlikely Edits* (<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/NationalCorrectCodInitEd/index.html>). Medically Unlikely Edits (MUE) for a CPT code is the maximum units of service that a provider would report under most circumstances for a single beneficiary on a single date of service.

When billing for ABA services, please be sure to include the applicable modifier.

Please note, claims may deny due to:

- Authorization
 - If new authorizations with dates of service on or after January 1, 2019, are billed with the old CPT code
 - If current authorizations for dates of service on or after January 1, 2019, are not updated accordingly
- Medically Unlikely Edits — if the number of units billed exceed the maximum allowable units on a single date of service
- Missing or Invalid Modifiers — if a required modifier is not billed or an inappropriate modifier is billed

What if I need assistance?

For questions regarding ABA services, please contact our dedicated ABA phone line at **1-844-406-2389**. If you need assistance with any other item, contact your local Provider Relations representative or call Provider Services at **1-844-521-6942**.