



State of Vermont

Department of Vermont Health Access

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Agency of Human Services

## SUPPORTING EXPANDED ACCESS TO COVID-19 TESTING

The Department of Vermont Health Access, within the Agency of Human Services, is committed to working with the Vermont Department of Health and Vermont's health care partners to expand access to COVID-19 testing across the State of Vermont. To learn more about Vermont's COVID-19 Testing Plan, please visit:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID-19-Testing-Plan.pdf>

## VERMONT MEDICAID COVERED SERVICES

Vermont Medicaid-participating providers should visit the Vermont Medicaid Portal and consult the Fee Schedule to confirm services provided to eligible Vermont Medicaid members are covered by Vermont Medicaid and to review reimbursement information. <http://www.vtmedicaid.com/#/feeSchedule>

Vermont Medicaid has eliminated co-payments for hospital outpatient services and eliminated co-payments for medications used to treat the symptoms of COVID-19. These changes ensure that no co-payments apply to Medicaid-covered services for COVID-19 testing, diagnosis, and treatment.

## VERMONT MEDICAID COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19 TESTING & SPECIMEN COLLECTION

COVID-19 testing and specimen collection in Vermont should be in accordance with the guidelines produced by the Vermont Department of Health.<sup>1</sup> Vermont Medicaid-enrolled **clinical diagnostic laboratories** may submit claims for medically appropriate COVID-19 testing when ordered by a physician using: U0001, U0002, U0003, U0004, or 87635. The appropriate code is dependent upon the type of laboratory and/or the lab test technique.

During the period of the federal public health emergency, Vermont Medicaid-enrolled **clinical diagnostic laboratories** may also submit claims for separate, medically appropriate specimen collection for COVID-19 testing when ordered by a physician and specimen collection is completed:

- by trained personnel of the laboratory for a Vermont Medicaid member from their home, including a nursing home, using G2023; or
- by trained personnel of the laboratory on behalf of a home health agency, using G2024.

Specimen collection may not be billed to Vermont Medicaid if a Vermont Medicaid member collects their own specimen.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/infectious-disease/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-health-care-professionals>

Vermont Medicaid-enrolled **hospital outpatient departments** may submit claims for medically appropriate specimen collection from a Vermont Medicaid member using C9803. Collected specimens must be sent to a laboratory for diagnostic testing.

For Vermont Medicaid-enrolled **providers eligible to submit claims for medically necessary evaluation and management services**, specimen collection is already included as part of an evaluation and management visit for assessment of a Vermont Medicaid member (e.g. E/M 99201-99205 or 99212-99215) and should **not** be billed separately. (Providers billing for other primary procedures for the same patient on the same day should not bill for specimen collection.) CMS released [guidance](#) indicating that providers may be reimbursed for assessment and specimen collection for COVID-19 testing using the level 1 evaluation and management code, 99211, for all patients when this is the only procedure being provided for the patient on that day. Collected specimens must be sent to a laboratory for diagnostic testing.

For **home health services**, when a Vermont Medicaid member is already receiving home health services and receives a Medicaid-covered home health visit, a specimen may be collected by the home health nurse during the visit when ordered under the written plan of care. The collected specimen must be sent to a laboratory for diagnostic testing. Specimen collection is not reimbursed separately because it is part of the covered visit.

For COVID-19 tests ordered and specimen collection performed by **pharmacists**, please see the proposed policy change for Vermont Medicaid. Collected specimens must be sent to a laboratory for diagnostic testing. The proposed policy change is located here:

<https://humanservices.vermont.gov/sites/ahsnew/files/documents/MedicaidPolicy/GCRProposedPolicies/20-074-Proposed-Pharmacist-COVID-Testing.pdf>.

### **Diagnosis Coding for COVID-19 Infections**

U07.1, 2019-nCoV acute respiratory disease, should be assigned only for confirmed diagnosis of the 2019 novel coronavirus disease as documented by a provider.

If a provider documents “suspected,” “possible,” “probable,” or “inconclusive,” a code should be assigned explaining the reason for the encounter:

- Z03.818 Encounter for observation for suspected exposure to other biological agents ruled out (possible exposure to COVID-19, ruled out after evaluation);
- Z11.59 Encounter for screening for other viral diseases (asymptomatic); or
- Z20.828 Contact with and (suspected) exposure to other viral communicable diseases (confirmed exposure to COVID-19).

Providers should add other diagnoses by sequencing additional appropriate codes for associated manifestations subsequent to the principal diagnosis when COVID-19 meets the definition of principal diagnosis. Providers should visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/icd10cm.htm> for the most up-to-date coding guidelines for COVID-19.

## REMINDER TO PROVIDERS

Vermont Medicaid-enrolled providers are reminded that COVID-19 tests performed must be Food and Drug Administration-approved or granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) through the Food and Drug Administration for the public health emergency and in accordance with the guidance of the Vermont Department of Health. Providers who are already receiving reimbursement from another source for specimen collection or for COVID-19 testing should not bill Vermont Medicaid.

**Providers who have remaining questions should contact Vermont Medicaid Provider Services at 1-802-878-7871 (press 3) for more information.** Vermont Medicaid's Provider and Member Relations unit will continue to work with providers to provide support and facilitate payment for services covered by the Vermont Medicaid program.