



Title

Psychological Testing

For Neuropsychological Testing, please see policy #039

Benefits are determined by the individual subscriber certificate in effect at the time services are rendered.

When psychological testing is covered

We cover medically indicated **psychological testing**^{1,4} for any of the following:

Thought disorders: To rule in or rule out the presence of a thought disorder or other serious psychiatric diagnosis in order to:

- Clarify major defenses, cognitive style, and individual's strengths and weaknesses
- Individualize treatment plans and recommendations, such as the need for additions/deletions of treatment modalities or approaches

Psychiatric diagnosis: To make a psychiatric diagnosis which a provider has been unable to make by other methods (such as a second opinion interview) so as to:

- Improve and individualize treatment planning
- Better understand and manage a case nonresponsive to treatment.

Refractory global life dysfunction: Personality assessment may be particularly indicated when an individual is markedly dysfunctional in multiple areas of life (such as school, work, neighborhood, family, legal system) and has inadequately responded to previous interventions.

Danger assessment: to assess how dangerous a situation is, if a patient is suicidal or homicidal, when the clinical assessment interview has been unsuccessful.

When psychological testing is not covered

We do not cover **psychological testing**^{1,2,3} for educational or vocational purposes.

We do not cover **psychological testing**^{1,3} when testing has been performed in the last 12 months. However, in some cases, a retesting in a six to 12-month period may be clinically indicated, such as assessment of the following:

- rapid changes, often decrements, in cognitive functioning;
- changes concomitant with medication changes;
- changes in a severely disturbed individual, for these cases, a partial battery may be sufficient.

Coordination of care guidelines for psychological testing

Psychological Testing Requires Authorization

Managed Care Authorization Process for Psychological Testing

Step	Action
1	A mental health professional, the member, or the member's PCP may initiate a request for

	psychological testing.
2	If there is no behavioral health authorization on file for the current calendar year, the request for authorization may be called in to the Mental Health Referral Assistant by the requestor. Adults and children are authorized for 12 units of psychological testing.
3	If there is a behavioral health authorization on file for the current calendar year the requestor must submit the request on form #759, Outpatient Treatment Request Form.
4	A physician reviews all potential denials. The referring provider will be notified about the determination. Denials are sent in writing to the referring provider, PCP, and member.

Individual consideration

All our medical policies are written for the majority of people with a given condition. Each policy is based on medical science. For many of our medical policies, each individual's unique clinical circumstances may be considered in light of current scientific literature. For example, there may be rare instances where testing more than once a year is appropriate. For consideration of an individual patient, physicians may send relevant clinical information to:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Behavioral Health Department
One Enterprise Drive 02/05
Quincy, MA 02171

Coding information

Procedure codes are from current CPT, HCPCS Level II, Revenue Code, and/or ICD-9-CM manuals, as recommended by the American Medical Association, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and American Hospital Associations. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association national codes may be developed when appropriate.

The following codes are included below for informational purposes. Inclusion or exclusion of a code does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement. Please refer to the member's contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage as it applies to an individual member.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

- CPT code 96101, psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, e.g., MMPI, Rorshach, WAIS), per hour of the psychologist's or physician's time, both face-to-face time administering tests to the patient and time interpreting these test results and preparing the report
- CPT code 96102, psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality and psychopathology, e.g., MMPI, Rorshach, WAIS), with qualified health care professional interpretation and report, administered by technician, per hour of technician time, face-to-face (A technician is a person who, in the judgment of the billing provider, has been appropriately trained in the administration and scoring of the applicable psychological or neuropsychological assessment instruments)
- CPT code 96103, psychological testing (includes psychodiagnostic assessment of emotionality, intellectual abilities, personality, and psychopathology, (e.g., MMPI) administered by computer, with qualified health care professional interpretation and report
- Psychological testing is payable to the following providers only: psychiatry-specialty 26, psychologist-specialty 68, child psychiatry-specialty 23, and psychiatry/neurology-specialty 27

Policy update history

Psychological testing policy issued 3/93; modified 6/93; 12/95. Policies were combined 4/97. Psychological testing was clarified to include coverage for specific indications. Reviewed 2/98; no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 5/98; no changes in coverage were made. Updated 1/99 to include revision on coordination of care guidelines with changes in the authorization requirements effective 2/1/99. Updated 2/99 to reclarify the authorization process for psychological testing. Updated 2/2000 to include individual consideration guidelines. Reviewed 2/01, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/02 (MPG Psychiatry), no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/03 MPG Psychiatry, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 11/03 MPG pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/04 MPG Psychiatry, Ophthalmology and Endocrinology, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 5/04 MPG pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/05 MPG Psychiatry, ophthalmology and endocrinology, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 5/05 MPG-pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Updated 12/05 with new and deleted CPT codes effective 1/1/06. Updated 2/06 to include definition of technician noted with CPT codes 96119 and 96102. Reviewed 5/06 MPG-Pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/07 MPG-Psychiatry, Ophthalmology and Endocrinology, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 5/07 MPG-Pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/08 MPG -Ophthalmology, Psychiatry and Endocrinology, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 5/08 MPG-Pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made. Reviewed 2/09 MPG – Psychiatry, Ophthalmology and Endocrinology, no changes in coverage were made. Updated 4/09 to remove neuropsychological testing recommendations, coding information and references, as this is now separately addressed under Behavioral Health Policy, #039, Neuropsychological Testing effective 5/1/09; also updated managed care authorization process for psychological testing. Reviewed 5/09 MPG-Pediatrics, no changes in coverage were made.

Scientific background, Rationale and References

¹ Based on input from the Massachusetts Neuropsychiatric Society and the Massachusetts Psychologist Association.

² In accordance with local Medicare Policy and CMS MCM 2070.2, 2476.4C.

⁴ **Psychological testing criteria** were based on the following references:

Anastasi, A., 1988 Psychological Testing, 6th ed. N.Y. Macmillan

Butler, R.W. et al p.19 Psychological Assessment of Adults and Children in Kaplan, H.I. and Sadock, B.J. eds., Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, vol. 1 15th edition.

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