



MONTANA HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS NOTICE

March 4, 2021

Outpatient Hospital, Critical Access Hospital (CAH), Laboratory, Physician, and Mid-Level Providers

Reminder

Reference Laboratory Billing Guidelines

Montana Healthcare Programs follows Medicare regulations relating to reference laboratory billing.

Hospitals

In accordance with the Social Security Act §1833(h)(5)(A), Montana Healthcare Programs allows Outpatient Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) to bill for reference laboratory services. If the hospital refers laboratory services to an outside laboratory and the hospital bills Montana Healthcare Programs for those laboratory services, the hospital must use modifier 90 to indicate reference laboratory services. It is the responsibility of the hospital to ensure the reference laboratory meets the Clinical Laboratory Improvement (CLIA) certification criteria for the type of laboratory services performed and the CLIA certification is current. If not, Montana Healthcare Programs is entitled to recover reimbursement made for the reference laboratory services.

Physicians, Mid-Levels, and Group Clinics

In accordance with the Physicians-Related Services Provider Manual, which is incorporated into Administrative Rules of Montana 37.86.104, providers are not allowed to be reimbursed by Montana Healthcare Programs for services provided by a reference laboratory. When billing Montana Healthcare Programs for services rendered by a reference laboratory, providers must append modifier 90 to the claim line. The Montana Healthcare Programs claims processing system has been updated to appropriately deny the lines submitted with modifier 90. Claims with a date of service on or after November 19, 2019, will be adjusted to ensure proper claims processing.

Providers are reminded to ensure the reference laboratory is enrolled with Montana Healthcare Programs and has sufficient information to submit a claim for reimbursement.

Contact Information

Physicians Program Officer (406) 444-3995

Hospital Services Program Officer (406) 444-4834

[For claims questions or additional information, contact Montana Provider Relations at \(800\) 624-3958 or \(406\) 442-1837 or email \[MTPRHelpdesk@conduent.com\]\(mailto:MTPRHelpdesk@conduent.com\).](#)

[Visit the Montana Healthcare Programs Provider Information website at <https://medicaidprovider.mt.gov>.](https://medicaidprovider.mt.gov)