
Local Educational Agency (LEA) Service: Nutrition

Page updated: March 2021

This section contains information about nutrition services rendered in connection with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Medi-Cal Billing Option Program.

- Qualifications that practitioners must meet to render services are outlined in the *Local Educational Agency (LEA) Rendering Practitioner Qualifications* section of this manual.
- Modifier descriptions are located in the *Modifiers: Approved List* section of this manual. Additional modifier information is in the *Local Educational Agency (LEA) Billing and Reimbursement Overview* section of this manual.
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Health and Support Plan (IHSP) are defined in the *Local Educational Agency (LEA): Individualized Plans* section of this manual.
- Documentation and records retention requirements are described in the *Local Educational Agency (LEA): A Provider's Guide* section of this manual.

Nutrition Services

Nutritional assessment and nutrition education, consisting of assessments and non-classroom nutrition education delivered to the LEA eligible student based on the outcome of the nutritional health assessment (diet, feeding, laboratory values, and growth).

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 51360.

Covered Services

Nutrition services include:

- IEP/IFSP nutritional assessments
- Health/nutrition assessments (non-IEP/IFSP)
- Nutritional counseling treatments

Rendering Practitioners: Reimbursable Services

The following chart indicates the services that are reimbursable to LEAs when performed by the indicated qualified practitioners.

Reimbursable Services Table

Qualified Practitioners	Reimbursable Services
Registered dietitians	IEP/IFSP nutritional assessments
Certified nurse practitioners	Health/nutrition assessments
Certified public health nurses	(non-IEP/IFSP)
Licensed physicians	Nutritional counseling treatments
Licensed physician assistants	
Licensed registered nurses	
Registered credentialed school nurses	

Referrals and Prescriptions

Assessments

Nutritional assessments require a written referral by a physician (California *Business and Professions Code*, Section 2586). In substitution of a written referral by a physician, a registered credentialed school nurse, teacher or parent may refer the student for an assessment. The referral must be documented in the student's files.

Treatments

All treatment services must be established and documented in the student's IEP, IFSP or other care plan. Referrals for nutritional treatment services and prescriptions for medical nutrition therapy, as required by *Business and Professions Code*, Section 2586, may come from physicians employed by or contracted with the LEA or may come from the student's primary care physician.

A referring or prescribing physician does not need to be the student's primary care physician, and does not need to personally evaluate the student to issue a referral or prescription for nutritional treatment services. However, the referring or prescribing physician must have a working relationship with the LEA and treating practitioner, and must review the student's records prior to referring or prescribing services. If authority has been delegated by a supervising physician, the following practitioners may sign authorization forms:

- Nurse practitioners practicing under standardized procedures, developed in collaboration with a physician (California *Business and Professions Code*, Section 2835.7)
- Physician assistants with a written Practice Agreement (prior to January 1, 2020, a Delegation of Services Agreement) and who are under the supervision of a licensed physician (California *Business and Professions Code*, Sections 3502 and 3502.3)

The written referral or prescription, which must be maintained in the student's file, must be updated annually and is valid for one year from the date of the prescription/referral. Referrals may be established and documented in the student's IEP, IFSP, IHSP or other care plan.

Supervision Requirements

The following chart indicates whether a rendering practitioner requires supervision to provide nutrition services.

Supervision Requirements Table

Qualified Practitioners	Supervision Requirement
Licensed physicians Registered dietitians Registered credentialed school nurses Licensed registered nurses Certified public health nurses Certified nurse practitioners	No supervision required to provide nutrition services
Licensed physician assistants with a written Practice Agreement (<i>Business and Professions Code, Sections 3502 and 3502.3</i>)	Supervision required as indicated under <i>Business and Professions Code, Section 3502</i>

Service Limitations: Daily

Nutritional counseling treatment services that are authorized in an IEP, IFSP or IHSP are limited to 24 units per student per day.

Health/nutrition assessments provided to non-IEP/IFSP students are limited to four units per student, per day.

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations Chart: Nutrition Services

The following chart contains the CPT® procedure codes with modifiers, if necessary, to bill for nutrition services. Service limitations are also included.

The “Qualified Practitioners (Modifier)” listing following some charts indicates whether an additional modifier (beyond those already indicated in the “Procedure Code/Modifier” column) must be entered on the claim to identify the type of practitioner who rendered the service.

Reimbursement rates for these services are in the *Local Educational Agency (LEA) Billing Codes and Reimbursement Rates* section of this manual.

IEP/IFSP Assessments

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations: Nutrition Assessment Table

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
96156 TL (IFSP)	Initial IFSP nutritional assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	One per lifetime per provider
96156 TM (IEP)	Initial or triennial IEP nutritional assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	One every third state fiscal year per provider
96156 52 TL (IFSP) or 96156 52 TM (IEP)	Annual IEP/IFSP nutritional assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	One every state fiscal year per provider when an initial or triennial IEP/IFSP nutritional assessment is not billed
96156 TS TL (IFSP) or 96156 TS TM (IEP)	Amended IEP/IFSP nutritional assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	One every 30 days per provider

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Registered dietician (AE)
- Licensed nurse (TD)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)

Assessments (Non-IEP/IFSP)

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations: Health/Nutrition Assessment Service Table

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
96156	Health/nutrition initial assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	4 units per day
96156 TS	Health/nutrition re-assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	4 units per day

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Registered dietician (AE)
- Licensed nurse (TD)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)

Treatments (Pursuant to IEP, IFSP or IHSP)

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations: Nutritional Counseling Treatments Table

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
S9470 TL (IFSP) or S9470 TM (IEP) or S9470 (IHSP)	Nutritional counseling treatment, 15-minute increment	24 units per day

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Registered dietician (AE)
- Licensed nurse (TD)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)

Legend

Symbols used in the document above are explained in the following table.

Symbol	Description
«	This is a change mark symbol. It is used to indicate where on the page the most recent change begins.
»	This is a change mark symbol. It is used to indicate where on the page the most recent change ends.