
Local Educational Agency (LEA) Service: Psychology/Counseling

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This section contains information about psychology and counseling 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.

Psychology and Counseling Services

Psychology and counseling involve the application of psychological principles, methods and procedures of understanding, predicting and influencing behavior, such as the principles pertaining to learning, perception, motivation, emotion and interpersonal relationships. It includes diagnosis, prevention, treatment and amelioration of psychological problems and emotional and mental disorders.

Covered Services

Psychology and counseling services include:

- IEP/IFSP psychological assessments
- IEP/IFSP psychosocial status assessments
- Psychosocial status assessments (non-IEP/IFSP)
- Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP)
- «Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) screenings»
- Psychology and counseling treatments, including individual and group treatments

Rendering Practitioners: Reimbursable Services

The following chart indicates the services that are reimbursable to LEAs when performed by the indicated qualified practitioner(s).

Table of Qualified Practitioners and Reimbursable Services

Qualified Practitioners	Reimbursable Services
Licensed psychologists Licensed educational psychologists Credentialed school psychologists	IEP/IFSP psychological assessments Psychosocial status assessments (non-IEP/IFSP) Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP) «ACEs screenings» Psychology and counseling treatments, including individual and group treatments
Licensed clinical social workers Credentialed school social workers Licensed marriage and family therapists Associate marriage and family therapists Registered associate clinical social workers	IEP/IFSP psychosocial status assessments Psychosocial status assessments (non-IEP/IFSP) Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP) «ACEs screenings» Psychology and counseling treatments, including individual and group treatments
Credentialed school counselors	IEP/IFSP psychosocial status assessments Psychosocial status assessments (non-IEP/IFSP) Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP) «ACEs screenings» Psychology and counseling treatments, including individual and group treatments»

Qualified Practitioners	Reimbursable Services
Licensed physicians Licensed physician assistants	Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP) «ACEs screenings» Psychology and counseling treatments, including individual and group treatments
Registered credentialed school nurses	Health education/anticipatory guidance (non-IEP/IFSP) «ACEs screenings»

«**Note:** To submit ACEs screening claims for LEA BOP reimbursement, qualified practitioners must complete the free, two-hour online training that certifies eligible clinicians to receive Medi-Cal payment for these screenings. The training is located on the [DHCS ACEs Aware website](#).»

For qualification requirements for qualified practitioners, refer to the *Local Educational Agency (LEA): Rendering Practitioner Qualifications* section in this manual.

Recommendations

Assessments

Psychological assessments, psychosocial status assessments and health education/anticipatory guidance require a recommendation by one of the following practitioners, within the practitioner's scope of practice (*Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 42, Section 440.130[d]).

- Physician
- Registered credentialed school nurse
- Licensed clinical social worker
- Licensed psychologist
- Licensed educational psychologist
- Licensed marriage and family therapist

The recommendation must be documented in the student's files. In substitution of a recommendation, a 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, IHSP or other care plan. Recommendations for psychology and counseling treatment services, as required by *California Code of Regulations*, Title 22, Section 51309(1) and *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 42, Section 440.130[d]) may come from one of the following practitioners, within the practitioner's scope of practice.

- Licensed physician
- Registered credentialed school nurse
- Licensed clinical social worker
- Licensed psychologist
- Licensed educational psychologist
- Licensed marriage and family therapist

If the recommendation is obtained from a licensed physician, the physician may be employed by or contracted with the LEA, or may come from the student's primary care physician. A recommending physician does not need to be the student's primary care physician, and does not need to personally evaluate the student to issue a recommendation for psychology and counseling treatment services. However, the recommending physician must have a working relationship with the LEA and treating practitioner, and must review the student's records prior to recommending 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 recommendation, which must be maintained in the student's file, must be updated annually and is valid for one year from the date of the recommendation. Recommendations 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 psychology and counseling services.

Supervision Requirements Table

Qualified Practitioners	Supervision Requirements
Licensed physicians Credentialed school psychologists Credentialed school social workers Credentialed school counselors	No supervision required to provide psychology and counseling services
Licensed physician assistants with a written Practice Agreement (California <i>Business and Professions Code</i> , Sections 3502 and 3502.3)	Supervision required as indicated under California <i>Business and Professions Code</i> , Section 3502
«Registered credentialed school nurses	No supervision required to provide health education/anticipatory guidance services or ACEs screenings»
Licensed psychologists Licensed educational psychologists Licensed clinical social workers Licensed marriage and family therapists	Employed licensed practitioners without a valid pupil personnel services (PPS) credential issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing must be appropriately supervised by a PPS-credential holder Contracted practitioners employed by non-public schools and agencies must be licensed to practice by their respective Board or possess a pupil personnel services credential with the appropriate specialization
Associate marriage and family therapists Registered associate clinical social workers	Requires supervision to provide psychology and counseling services

Supervising Practitioners

Associate marriage and family therapists and registered associate clinical social workers require supervision by the following professionals holding a valid license for at least two years prior to commencing any supervision:

- Licensed clinical social worker
- Licensed marriage and family therapist
- Licensed professional clinical counselor
- Licensed clinical psychologist
- Licensed physician certified in psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology

Any person supervising an associate marriage and family therapist must comply with the requirements set forth in *California Code of Regulations*, Title 16, Section 1833.1. Any person supervising an associate clinical social worker shall comply with the requirements set forth in *California Code of Regulations*, Title 16, Section 1870.

Licensed physician assistants shall comply with the requirements set forth in *California Business and Professions Code*, Sections 3502 and 3502.3.

Service Limitations: Daily

Psychology/counseling treatment services that are authorized in an IEP, IFSP or IHSP are limited to 24 units per student per day. This daily limitation includes a maximum of three initial service increments (3 units x 15 minutes = 45 minutes) and 21 additional service increments.

«Psychosocial status assessments provided to non-IEP/IFSP students are limited to four units per student per day.»

«Health education/anticipatory guidance provided to non-IEP/IFSP students is limited to one unit per student per day.»

«Service Limitations: Annual

ACEs screenings provided to non-IEP/IFSP students are limited to four units per student per year.»

Initial and Additional Treatment Services

An LEA provider may bill each type of psychology/counseling initial service (individual or group) once, per student, per day. The initial service for psychology/counseling is based on 15 thru 45 continuous minutes; one unit may be billed for each 15-minute increment. A maximum of three units may be billed for the initial service; all units are reimbursable under one initial service maximum allowable rate. As a reminder, an initial service of 45 minutes is only required when a practitioner is wishing to be reimbursed for an additional 15-minute service increment.

Additional services are billed when more than 45 minutes are spent on the initial service. Additional services are billed in time increments of 15 minutes and may be rounded up when seven or more continuous minutes are provided. Additional LEA services must be billed in conjunction with an initial service treatment CPT® code. If the student receives more than one treatment session per day (for example, two psychology/counseling therapy treatment sessions at different times during the day), the total treatment time for the second session must be billed as additional treatment services.

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations Chart: Psychology and Counseling Services

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

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 for
IEP/IFSP Psychological Assessments Table**

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
96130 TL (IFSP)	Initial IFSP psychological assessment	One per lifetime per provider
96130 TM (IEP)	Initial or triennial IEP psychological assessment	One every third state fiscal year per provider
96130 52 TL (IFSP) or 96130 52 TM (IEP)	Annual IEP/IFSP psychological assessment	One every state fiscal year per provider when an initial or triennial IEP/IFSP psychological assessment is not billed
96130 TS TL (IFSP) or 96130 TS TM (IEP)	Amended IEP/IFSP psychological assessment	One every 30 days per provider

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Credentialed school psychologist (no modifier)
- Licensed educational psychologist (no modifier)
- Licensed psychologist (no modifier)

**Procedure Codes/Service Limitations for
IEP/IFSP Psychosocial Status Assessments Table**

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

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Associate marriage and family therapist (HL)
- Credentialed school counselor (no modifier)
- Credentialed school social worker (AJ)
- Licensed clinical social worker (AJ)
- Licensed marriage and family therapist (no modifier)
- Registered associate clinical social worker (HM)

Assessments (Non-IEP/IFSP)

**Procedure Codes/Service Limitations for
Non-IEP/IFSP Psychosocial Status Assessments Table**

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
96156	Psychosocial status assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	1 unit per day
96156 TS	Psychosocial status re-assessment, each completed 15-minute increment	1 unit per day

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Associate marriage and family therapist (HL)
- Credentialed school counselor (no modifier)
- Credentialed school psychologist (AH)
- Credentialed school social worker (AJ)
- Licensed clinical social worker (AJ)
- Licensed educational psychologist (AH)
- Licensed marriage and family therapist (no modifier)
- Licensed psychologist (AH)
- Registered associate clinical social worker (HM)

**Procedure Codes/Service Limitations for
Non-IEP/IFSP Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Screening Services Table**

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
G9919	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) screening score of 4 or greater, 15-minute increment	4 units per year
G9920	ACEs screening score of 0 to 3, 15-minute increment	4 units per year

«**Note:** To submit ACEs screening claims for LEA BOP reimbursement, qualified practitioners must complete the free, two-hour online training that certifies eligible clinicians to receive Medi-Cal payment for these screenings. The training is located on the [DHCS ACEs Aware website](#).»

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Associate marriage and family therapist (HL)
- «Credentialed school counselor (no modifier)»
- Licensed clinical social worker and credentialed school social worker (AJ)
- «Licensed marriage and family therapist (no modifier)»
- Licensed psychologist, licensed educational psychologist, credentialed school psychologist and clinical psychologist (AH)
- Licensed nurses, including registered credentialed school nurses, licensed registered nurses, certified public health nurses and certified nurse practitioners (TD)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)
- Registered associate clinical social worker (HM)

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations for Non-IEP/IFSP Health Education and Anticipatory Guidance Assessments Table

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
99401	Health education/anticipatory guidance, each completed 15-minute increment (applies to both initial and re-assessment)	1 unit per day
«99402	Health education/anticipatory guidance, 30 minutes (applies to both initial and re-assessment)	1 unit per day
99403	Health education/anticipatory guidance, 45 minutes (applies to both initial and re-assessment)	1 unit per day
99404	Health education/anticipatory guidance, 60 minutes (applies to both initial and re-assessment)	1 unit per day»

Note: «CPT code 99401 thru 99404 can be billed with modifier CR to conduct COVID-19 vaccine counseling-only visits.»

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Associate marriage and family therapist (HL)
- Credentialed school counselor (no modifier)
- Credentialed school psychologist (AH)
- Credentialed school social worker (AJ)
- Licensed clinical social worker (AJ)

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier) continued:

- Licensed educational psychologist (AH)
- Licensed marriage and family therapist (no modifier)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)
- Licensed psychologist (AH)
- Registered associate clinical social worker (HM)
- Registered credentialed school nurse (TD)

Treatments (Pursuant to IEP, IFSP or IHSP)

Procedure Codes/Service Limitations: Psychology and Counseling Treatments Table

Procedure Code/Modifier	LEA Program Usage	LEA Limitations (Per Student)
96158 TL (IFSP) or 96158 TM (IEP) or 96158 (IHSP)	Psychology/counseling initial service, 15 thru 45 continuous minutes, individual (bill 1 unit per 15-minute increment)	3 units per day
96159 TL (IFSP) or 96159 TM (IEP) or 96159 (IHSP)	Psychology/counseling additional 15-minute increment, individual	21 units per day
96164 TL (IFSP) or 96164 TM (IEP) or 96164 (IHSP)	Psychology/counseling initial service, 15 thru 45 continuous minutes, group (bill 1 unit per 15-minute increment)	3 units per day
96165 TL (IFSP) or 96165 TM (IEP) or 96165 (IHSP)	Psychology/counseling additional 15-minute increment, group	21 units per day

Qualified Practitioners (Modifier):

- Associate marriage and family therapist (HL)
- «Credentialed school counselor (no modifier), effective dates of service on or after January 1, 2023»
- Credentialed school psychologist (AH)
- Credentialed school social worker (AJ)
- Licensed clinical social worker (AJ)
- Licensed educational psychologist (AH)
- Licensed marriage and family therapist (no modifier)
- Licensed physician (AG)
- Licensed physician assistant (U7)
- Licensed psychologist (AH)
- Registered associate clinical social worker (HM)

Legend

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

Symbol	Description
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