

Procedure to Modifier Policy, Professional

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

You are responsible for submission of accurate claims. This reimbursement policy is intended to ensure that you are reimbursed based on the code or codes that correctly describe the health care services provided. UnitedHealthcare reimbursement policies may use Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) or other coding guidelines. References to CPT or other sources are for definitional purposes only and do not imply any right to reimbursement.*

This reimbursement policy applies to all health care services billed on CMS 1500 forms and, when specified, to those billed on UB04 forms. Coding methodology, industry-standard reimbursement logic, regulatory requirements, benefits design and other factors are considered in developing reimbursement policy.

This information is intended to serve only as a general reference resource regarding UnitedHealthcare’s reimbursement policy for the services described and is not intended to address every aspect of a reimbursement situation. Accordingly, UnitedHealthcare may use reasonable discretion in interpreting and applying this policy to health care services provided in a particular case. Further, the policy does not address all issues related to reimbursement for health care services provided to UnitedHealthcare enrollees. Other factors affecting reimbursement may supplement, modify or, in some cases, supersede this policy. These factors may include, but are not limited to: legislative mandates, the physician or other provider contracts, the enrollee’s benefit coverage documents and/or other reimbursement, medical or drug policies. Finally, this policy may not be implemented exactly the same way on the different electronic claims processing systems used by UnitedHealthcare due to programming or other constraints; however, UnitedHealthcare strives to minimize these variations. UnitedHealthcare may modify this reimbursement policy at any time by publishing a new version of the policy on this Website. However, the information presented in this policy is accurate and current as of the date of publication.

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Application
<p>This reimbursement policy applies to services reported using the 1500 Health Insurance Claim Form (a/k/a CMS-1500) or its electronic equivalent or its successor form. This policy applies to all products, all network and non-network physicians and other qualified health care professionals, including, but not limited to, non-network authorized and percent of charge contract physicians and other qualified health care professionals.</p> <p>United Healthcare Commercial This Reimbursement Policy applies to all UnitedHealthcare Commercial benefit plans.</p> <p>UnitedHealthcare Individual Exchange This Reimbursement Policy applies to all Individual Exchange benefit plans.</p>

Policy
<p>Overview</p> <p>According to the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), a modifier provides the means to report or indicate that a service or procedure that has been performed has been altered by some specific circumstance but not changed in its definition or code. It may also provide more information about a service such as it was performed more than once, unusual events occurred, or it was performed by more than one physician and/or in more than one location.</p> <p>Reimbursement Guidelines</p> <p>This policy addresses the appropriate use of modifiers with individual CPT and HCPCS procedure codes. UnitedHealthcare sources its procedure code to modifier relationships to methodologies used and recognized by third-party authorities. Those methodologies can be definitive or interpretive. A Definitive Source is one that is based on</p>

very specific instructions from the given source. An Interpretive Source is one that is based on an interpretation of instructions from the identified source.

Modifiers addressed through this policy are found on the Procedure to Modifier List in the Attachments section.

In accordance with correct coding, UnitedHealthcare will consider reimbursement for a procedure code/modifier combination only when the modifier has been used appropriately. Note that any procedure code reported with an appropriate modifier may also be subject to other UnitedHealthcare reimbursement policies.

For example, the description for modifier 25 (Significant, Separately Identifiable Evaluation and Management Service by the Same Physician on the Same Day of the Procedure or Other Service) specifies that it is to be reported with an Evaluation and Management (E/M) service. Therefore, a surgical code, e.g., 62263, appended with modifier 25 will not be reimbursed because according to its description it should only be appended to E/M codes.

Effective with dates of service on or after July 1, 2020, UnitedHealthcare aligns with CMS and requires HCPCS modifiers GN, GO or GP to be reported with the codes designated by CMS as always therapy services. These codes are considered always therapy services, regardless of who performs them, and require one of the applicable therapy modifiers (GN, GO or GP) to indicate that they are furnished under a physical therapy, occupational therapy, or speech-language pathology plan of care.

For modifiers managed in the Procedure to Modifier Policy and codes requiring a modifier, please see the list below.

Definitions	
Definitive Source	Definitive Sources contain the exact codes, modifiers, or very specific instructions from the given source.
Interpretive Source	An edit source that includes guidelines; however, no exact or specific code or modifier information is listed. Therefore, an interpretation must be made as to what codes correlate to the guidelines. Additionally, an interpretation may be applied to surrounding or similar codes based on related definitively sourced edits.

Questions and Answers	
1	<p>Q: Why aren't all CPT and HCPCS modifiers addressed in this policy?</p> <p>A: The intent of the Procedure to Modifier Policy is to validate appropriate modifier usage and is not meant to address all possible modifier situations. Modifiers not addressed by this policy may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) no third-party industry standard source, policies, or guidelines to direct development of specific coding relationships or edits. b) a more detailed reimbursement methodology than the scope of this policy is intended, e.g., 26, TC, AA, QK or c) contractual or benefit coverage implications, e.g., modifier 33

Attachments	
<u>UnitedHealthcare Procedure to Modifier List</u>	A list of modifiers that apply to the Procedure to Modifier Policy
<u>UnitedHealthcare HCPCS/CPT Required Modifier Table</u>	A list of HCPCS/CPT codes and their required modifiers

Resources	
American Medical Association, <i>Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®)</i> and associated publications and services	
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Manual System and other CMS publications and services	

History	
5/25/2025	Anniversary review and version change UnitedHealthcare HCPCS/CPT Required Modifier Table version update – no changes History Section: Entries prior to 5/25/2023 archived
8/1/2024	Policy Version Change Attachments Section: Procedure to Modifier List update History Section: Entries prior to 8/1/2022 archived
4/1/2024	Template Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferred content to shared policy template that applies to both UnitedHealthcare Commercial and Individual Exchange benefit plans. • Updated Application section to indicate this Reimbursement Policy applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All UnitedHealthcare Commercial benefit plans ○ All Individual Exchange benefit plans
1/1/2024	Policy Version Change Header: Logo updated History Section: Entries prior to 1/1/2022 archived
5/16/2011	Policy implemented by UnitedHealthcare Employer & Individual