



Two new provider license types authorized for Medicare plans effective Jan. 1, 2024

LMFTs and LMHCs will be added to Medicare's Part B covered provider list and your participation agreement with Optum will be updated

To help increase the availability of mental health providers to Medicare beneficiaries, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs) and Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHCs) will be added to the covered provider list under Medicare Part B beginning Jan. 1, 2024. This expansion of providers who can provide services under Medicare Part B is authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, [H.R. 2617 version dated Dec. 29, 2022](#).

This means LMFTs and LMHCs will be able to offer services to Medicare members in most practice settings. This includes private practice, clinical settings, Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics. The expansion of Medicare Part B provider types does not apply to services furnished to a patient in a hospital or skilled nursing facility (SNF).

Here's what you need to know

1. **Appropriate licensure is required.** Providers must be legally authorized to perform behavioral health services under either state law or the state's regulatory mechanism provided by state law.
2. **Optum Behavioral Health participation agreements will automatically be updated.** We'll add these license types for all eligible providers that are a participating group practice for Medicare. You'll receive a letter from us this fall with more information, including the Medicare regulatory addendum and appropriate Medicare fee schedule. Reimbursement for services provided will be in accordance with the provider's contracted master's level rate.
3. **Some providers may be eligible to opt out of adding these license types to their network contract.** Individual providers will need to opt out of the contract update if they prefer. The opt-out period is Sept. 1-30, 2023. If this option is available to you, you'll receive a letter from us in early September with details.

Participation requirements

As outlined in the statute, you are eligible to be reimbursed for services provided to Medicare-covered members provided you meet all of the following requirements:

- Hold a master's degree or doctoral degree which qualifies for licensure as an LMFT or LMHC
- Have had 2 years supervised clinical experience in marriage and family therapy
- Are licensed or certified under state law as an LMFT or LMHC:
 - Marriage and Family Therapist, including Licensed Mental Health Practitioner (LMFT), Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT), Licensed Mental Health Practitioner (LMHP), Independent Marriage and Family Therapist (IMFT)
 - Mental Health Counselor, including Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), Licensed Professional Counselor Mental Health (LPCMH), Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, (LCPC), Licensed Mental Health Counselor, (LMHC), Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioner (LCMHC), Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CMHC)

Questions?

Review these [FAQs](#) for details. For additional information or questions not answered in this document, please call the Optum Behavioral Health Provider Service Line at **1-877-614-0484**.

More than anyone, you know the importance of mental health services in supporting both individuals and communities. We value your participation in our network and your ongoing partnership to make mental health care more accessible and improving outcomes through earlier intervention before mental and health conditions worsen.